



Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru The National Assembly for Wales

Y Pwyllgor Plant a Phobl Ifanc The Children and Young People Committee

**Dydd Mercher, 10 Hydref 2012
Wednesday, 10 October 2012**

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Motion under Standing Order No. 17.42 to Resolve to Exclude the Public for the Remainder of the Meeting and for the Meeting on 18 October

Cofnodir y trafodion hyn yn yr iaith y llefarwyd hwy ynddi yn y pwyllgor. Yn ogystal, cynhwysir trawsgrifiad o'r cyfieithu ar y pryd.

These proceedings are reported in the language in which they were spoken in the committee. In addition, a transcription of the simultaneous interpretation is included.

Aelodau'r pwyllgor yn bresennol
Committee members in attendance

Angela Burns	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Christine Chapman	Llafur (Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor) Labour (Committee Chair)
Jocelyn Davies	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales
Rebecca Evans	Llafur Labour
Julie Morgan	Llafur Labour
Lynne Neagle	Llafur Labour
Jenny Rathbone	Llafur Labour
Aled Roberts	Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru Welsh Liberal Democrats
Simon Thomas	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales

Eraill yn bresennol
Others in attendance

Leighton Andrews	Aelod Cynulliad (Llafur), Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau Assembly Member (Labour), Minister for Education and Skills
Jeff Cuthbert	Aelod Cynulliad (Llafur), Y Dirprwy Weinidog Sgiliau Assembly Member (Labour), Deputy Minister for Skills
Lesley Griffiths	Aelod Cynulliad (Llafur), Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol Assembly Member (Labour), Minister for Health and Social Services
Mark Osland	Dirprwy Gyfarwyddwr Cyllid, Yr Adran Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol Deputy Finance Director, Health and Social Services Department
David Sissling	Cyfarwyddwr Cyffredinol, Iechyd, Gwasanaethau a Phlant Director General, Health, Social Services and Children
Emma Smith	Pennaeth Cyllunio a Pherfformiad, Yr Adran Addysg a Sgiliau Head of Planning and Performance, Department of Education and Skills
Martin Swain	Dirprwy Gyfarwyddwr, Plant, Pobl Ifanc a Theuluoedd, Llywodraeth Cymru Deputy Director, Children, Young People and Families, Welsh Government
Gwenda Thomas	Aelod Cynulliad (Llafur), Y Dirprwy Weinidog Plant a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol Assembly Member (Labour), Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services
Chris Tweedale	Cyfarwyddwr, Grŵp Ysgolion a Phobl Ifanc Director, Schools and Young People Group

Swyddogion Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru yn bresennol
National Assembly for Wales officials in attendance

Kayleigh Driscoll	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk
Sian Hughes	Gwasanaeth Ymchwil Research Service
Claire Morris	Clerc Clerk
Sian Thomas	Gwasanaeth Ymchwil Research Service

*Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 9.58 a.m.
The meeting began at 9.58 a.m.*

Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon Introductions, Apologies and Substitutions

[1] **Christine Chapman:** Good morning and welcome to the Children and Young People Committee. I remind Members to switch off any mobile phones or BlackBerrys. We have one apology today from Suzy Davies.

9.58 a.m.

Cynigion Cyllideb Ddrafft Llywodraeth Cymru ar gyfer 2013-14: Sesiwn i Graffu ar Waith y Gweinidog Welsh Government Draft Budget Proposals for 2013-14: Ministerial Scrutiny Session

[2] **Christine Chapman:** I welcome Leighton Andrews, Minister for Education and Skills, Jeff Cuthbert, Deputy Minister for Skills, Emma Smith, head of planning and performance, and Chris Tweedale, director of the schools and young people group. Thank you, Minister, for providing a paper in advance. Members will have read it. If you are happy, we will go straight into questions. I see that you are, so I will start off.

[3] We know that money is tight. In real terms, the education and skills revenue budget will decrease by 2.6% in 2013-14 compared with the previous year. How is your proposed budget informed by your strategic priorities, and where will the pinch points be?

10.00 a.m.

[4] **The Minister for Education and Skills (Leighton Andrews):** It might be useful to start by reminding Members, particularly Members elected since May 2011, that the overall budget that is set out here was really determined by the UK Government's 2010 comprehensive spending review. Most of the overall budget figures, and the overall direction of the budget, were set in previous budgets presented to the Assembly. With the exception of the discussions that we had at this time last year, where we made some reprioritisations, the overall trends, I think, have been fairly evident in our budgets for some time. These reflect the fact that the Welsh budget is some £2.1 billion lower in real terms over the period of this spending review. Our capital, in particular, has been very significantly hit. The money available to us, for example, to invest in capital projects in 2014-15 will be 55% of what it was in 2009-10 in real terms. That is almost £1 billion lower in real terms than it was in 2009-10. That is despite the additional capital funding that we have had recently for 2013-14 and 2014-15. So, the budget is tight throughout and what we have done over recent years is to ensure that, as far as possible, it is focused on our key priorities.

[5] **Christine Chapman:** What about the problematic areas? Those will come up in other Members' questions, but do you have any comments to make on that overall?

[6] **Leighton Andrews:** I think that the budget is tight. Capital is probably the area where it is tightest. That is why, in the discussions that we have had with local authorities over the last 12 months, we have had to move to a different prioritisation. We have had to expect them to make more provision themselves. However, despite that, I think that we have set out a capital programme that is ambitious and very extensive over a seven-year period.

[7] **Jocelyn Davies:** You mentioned earlier, Minister, that last year you had started reprioritisation of funding within your portfolio to align it to the programme for government; so, how are outcomes now better linked to the resources that you have available to you?

[8] **Leighton Andrews:** Perhaps I could pick out two areas in particular. The first would be in the area of youth engagement, and the Deputy Minister might want to say a word or two more about that. We have drawn together work on young people not in education, employment or training, our youth service work and so on, into one department. The budgets there are clearly aligned with the work of that new department; it is under a new director. I think that that gives us the ability to respond more effectively to the challenges that we face in that area. The other is the school effectiveness grant where, of course, we drew together a number of different grants that were available to schools in order to give them support in areas such as literacy and numeracy. That grant obviously works very much alongside the pupil deprivation grant.

[9] **The Deputy Minister for Skills (Jeff Cuthbert):** Just to reinforce the point that the Minister made, we created the new Youth Engagement and Employment Division under Teresa Holdsworth. This has been done to focus the issues that affect young people, particularly those not in education, employment and training, and in what is—we trust—going to be a very comprehensive way that will enable us to ensure that tackling that issue is key to our main policy drivers and will justify the best use of resources.

[10] **Jocelyn Davies:** Therefore, that was as a result of your reprioritisation within your portfolio to align with the programme for government.

[11] **Leighton Andrews:** Yes, in line with the programme for government.

[12] **Jocelyn Davies:** Are there any other areas where resources may not be fully available to realise the commitments that are in the programme for government?

[13] **Leighton Andrews:** No. I think that we can meet the commitments in the programme for government, but the budget is tight.

[14] **Jocelyn Davies:** Are there any commitments for which resource allocations have been altered to reflect outcomes?

[15] **Leighton Andrews:** I suppose that there have been a number of adjustments. There were discussions, obviously, around the budget last time, which resulted in the pupil deprivation grant being created. That has given us new opportunities that we, no doubt, will want to reflect on further during the course of this discussion. It is worth saying that one of the commitments of the incoming Government was to ensure that we raise the spending on schools by 1% above the money that we get from the UK Government. That is central to the overall programme for government, and that is being delivered.

[16] **Simon Thomas:** Diolch a bore da. **Simon Thomas:** Thank you and good

Trôf at yr arian cyfalaf rydych chi newydd ei grybwyll wrth gyflwyno y bore ma. Dywedoch bod gostyngiad sylweddol o 55% ers 2009, ac hyd yn oed oddi ar y gyllideb y llynedd mae gostyngiad o tua £1 miliwn yn y gyfalaf. A allwch esbonio wrthym pa gamau rydych yn eu cymryd i fynd i'r afael â'r diffyg hwn, a sut mae'n effeithio ar eich cynlluniau?

morning. I will turn to the capital that you have just mentioned in your opening statement this morning. You said that there had been a significant reduction of 55% since 2009, and there is even a decline of around £1 million in capital on last year's budget. Can you explain to us what steps you are taking to tackle this deficit, and how it is affecting your plans?

[17] **Leighton Andrews:** In real terms, the reduction since 2009-10 is 55%. In respect of the overall capital, we had the announcement last week of an additional capital allocation of £33.3 million for 2013-14 and we outlined how some of that investment would take place—£15 million for twenty-first century schools for 2013-14 and in 2014-15, specific projects in respect of a number of authorities in Wales, including Dinefwr and Carmarthenshire, a new school in Tondu in Bridgend, the Merthyr learning quarter, Ysgol y Bont in Anglesey, and, indeed, a new north Wales Welsh-medium school in Wrexham. So, we have been quite successful in bidding to central capital for additional resources and that has been true through the last few years. Most of what we have had to do has already been reflected in the twenty-first century schools programme in the statements I made—with which you will be familiar—earlier this year.

[18] We obviously worked a year or so ago to align all our capital budgets. We brought them together for schools, higher education, further education and so on, so that we were in a position to flex the budgets if we had any projects that were behind the pace and could move money to other areas. So, we have taken the necessary steps internally to ensure that we are as efficient as we can be and we have obviously had those conversations with local authorities.

[19] **Christine Chapman:** Before Simon comes back, Jenny wants to come in. Is it on that point?

[20] **Jenny Rathbone:** It is on capital projects, yes. I just wanted to ask you about the Ysgol y Bont project in Anglesey. In your paper, you talk about £4.7 million for this new state-of-the-art green school. Does that use ground source heat pumps? I am really interested to know a bit more about that.

[21] **Leighton Andrews:** I do not know the exact detail of that specific scheme, but I will get you a note. However, we have a number of schemes in schools that may be using ground source heat pumps. Some of them may use wind energy and many of them have built-in monitoring of the energy that is being used, which the young people themselves can experience and get a wider understanding of energy efficiency issues. There is a whole series of different technologies being used in a variety of schools around Wales, and that is very much part of the twenty-first century schools programme. We are very focused on what we can do to deliver projects with renewable energy. There has been a very successful scheme in a primary school in Caerphilly—Greenhill Primary School—which demonstrates some of these technologies.

[22] **Jenny Rathbone:** Would you expect all the new build schools to incorporate energy efficiency measures and green aspects?

[23] **Leighton Andrews:** Yes, we would; absolutely.

[24] **Jeff Cuthbert:** On the capital build, we have also secured £10 million to enable the start of the post-16 further education campus for Cardiff and the Vale College at some location in the centre of Cardiff.

[25] **Simon Thomas:** I droi'n benodol at awdurdodau lleol, rydych yn sôn am ail-dyfeisio'r rhaglen ysgolion unfed ganrif ar hugain, ac mae nifer o'ch datganiadau yn amlinellu sut byddech yn disgwyl i awdurdodau lleol ymateb i'r diffyg cyfalaf a oedd gyda chi. A ydych chi wedi dod i adnabod unrhyw dystiolaeth erbyn hyn bod awdurdodau lleol wedi rhyddhau cyfalaf er mwyn cwrdd â'r diffyg sydd gyda chi erbyn hyn yn y gyllideb arbennig honno?

Simon Thomas: Turning specifically to local authorities, you mention restructuring the twenty-first century schools programme, and a number of your statements set out how you would expect local authorities to respond to the shortage of capital in your department. Have you now identified any evidence that local authorities have released capital in order to match the deficit in that particular budget?

[26] **Leighton Andrews:** They have had to bring forward strategic outline cases for what they plan to do. Obviously, those cases have to demonstrate how they are going to fund their share of these projects going forward. We will obviously go back to them where we need to on the detail of those, but, in most cases, we are confident.

[27] **Simon Thomas:** Rydych chi'n fodlon, ar y cyfan.

Simon Thomas: You are content, on the whole.

[28] **Leighton Andrews:** I am broadly content. One of the things that I was concerned about, post May, was whether there would be radical changes of priorities in particular local authorities as a result of changes in political control, which will happen from time to time. On the whole, most people have realised that, if they have changes in approach, they have to come through with those changes to us rapidly. I have reinforced to all local authorities the need to address issues of surplus places and catchment area issues early in their new terms, because those also have a bearing on any capital projects that they would subsequently want to develop.

[29] **Simon Thomas:** Yn olaf, gwnaeth y Prif Weinidog gadarnhau i mi ddoe, wrth ateb gwestiwn, bod y Llywodraeth yn edrych ar ryw fath o gynllun buddsoddi cyfalaf amgen. Rydym wedi bod yn sôn am 'Build for Wales', er enghraifft, ac rwyf wedi clywed yr enw WHIP yn y cyd-destun hwn. Os yw'n ddod i fodolaeth—rwyf yn cymryd, yn dilyn cadarnhad y Prif Weinidog, bod y Llywodraeth yn ystyried hwn o ddifrif—a ydych yn paratoi ar gyfer gwneud cais fel adran? A allwch gadarnhau eich bod yn credu y byddwch yn gallu gwneud cais am gynllun o'r fath?

Simon Thomas: Finally, the First Minister confirmed to me yesterday, in response to a question, that the Government is looking at some sort of alternative capital investment plan. We have been talking about 'Build for Wales', for example, and I have heard the name WHIP in this context. If that comes into being—given the First Minister's confirmation, I assume that the Government is taking this seriously—are you preparing to make a bid as a department? Can you confirm that you believe that you will be able to bid for such a scheme?

[30] **Leighton Andrews:** I have made it clear throughout my time in this role that I am always open to sources of alternative finance and we will be ready if the opportunity is there.

[31] **Aled Roberts:** Mae eich tystiolaeth ysgrifenedig yn sôn am drosglwyddo tua £21.8 miliwn ar gyfer costau'r Bil Safonau a Threfniadaeth Ysgolion (Cymru), felly pa ddarpariaeth sydd ar gael ar gyfer Bil addysg bellach ac uwch?

Aled Roberts: Your written evidence mentions transferring around £21.8 million for the costs of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Bill, so what provision is there for a further and higher education Bill?

[32] **Leighton Andrews:** We only concluded the consultation on aspects of that Bill on 24 September, so we are currently determining the scope of the Bill and what will be its provenance as a result of that consultation and other representations. So, it is too early to conclude what resources we will need, but I do not think that we will be stretched on that. I think that anything that we need to do can be accommodated within existing budgets.

[33] **Aled Roberts:** A yw'n gywir, felly, eich bod wedi dweud, os oes costau ychwanegol, y byddai'r rhain yn cael eu cwmpasu gan y gyllideb sydd o'n blaen? A fydd o fewn y £21.8 million? Dyna'r awgrym yn y dystiolaeth ysgrifenedig.

Aled Roberts: Is it correct, therefore, that you have said that, if there are additional costs, those would be covered by the budget that is in front of us? Will those be within the £21.8 million? That is the suggestion in the written evidence.

[34] **Leighton Andrews:** You mean in terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Bill?

[35] **Aled Roberts:** Yes.

[36] **Leighton Andrews:** Yes, and I think that we have discussed that in the legislative process at this committee before.

[37] **Aled Roberts:** Mae rhyw syniad o fewn y pwyllgor nad yw rhai o'r costau'n realistig yn dilyn tystiolaeth a gawsom. Gwn eich bod o'r farn bod y costau'n realistig. Fodd bynnag, os yw'r costau'n uwch na'r hyn yr ydych yn awgrymu ar hyn o bryd, a oes digon o le yn y gyllideb i dalu am y costau hynny?

Aled Roberts: There is an idea in the committee that some of the costs are not realistic, following evidence that we have received. I know that you are of the opinion that the costs are realistic. However, if the costs are higher than you are suggesting at the moment, is there sufficient room in the budget to pay for those costs?

[38] **Leighton Andrews:** I do not accept that the estimates that we made are wrong.

[39] **Rebecca Evans:** You will be aware of research that has found that pupils eligible for free school meals are two and a half times less likely to get a grade A to C in core subjects than those who are not eligible. How do the allocations in the draft budget attempt to address such gaps in attainment?

[40] **Leighton Andrews:** Tackling the link between poverty and poor attainment is one of my three priorities for the school effectiveness programme, so the principal area where this is addressed is through the school effectiveness grant, but allied to that now is the pupil deprivation grant. We have seen good use of that grant by a number of local authorities and by a number of schools in terms of putting in place better tracking of pupils, for example, better support and additional employment of teaching assistants or of teachers when necessary to focus on catch-up programmes, and I think that the resource that we have dedicated there is appreciated by schools.

[41] **Lynne Neagle:** On the pupil deprivation grant, the draft budget shows an increase for 2013-14, but how confident are you that that money is being used effectively by local authorities? We know that there are problems in England with the scheme and you just said in your answer that there are examples of good practice. Could you say more about how that is being delivered uniformly across Wales?

10.15 a.m.

[42] **Leighton Andrews:** I do not think that it is being delivered uniformly. That is one of

the issues. Let me explain. On the pupil deprivation grant, I think there are two differences between the pupil deprivation grant in Wales and the pupil premium in England. The first is, of course, that it is very much aligned with our school effectiveness priorities and our school effectiveness grant. Secondly, we published quite extensive guidance to local authorities and schools as to how the grant could be used. So, the guidance was published on the school effectiveness grant and the pupil deprivation grant as one document for 2012-13.

[43] The initial spending plans by local authorities were weak and the department rejected them in June and July. We thought that the quality of the plans, their adherence to the guidance and the outcomes they were focusing on in schools were poor. So, we have had to work with local authorities very extensively to agree the overall plans. The evidence that we have, so far, and we are about six months into the financial year, is that, principally, the pupil deprivation grant is being used to support staff costs such as teaching assistants, learning support assistants, and community engagement officers—in some cases to work on improving parental engagement and capacity. So, we have a series of opportunities like that. Some areas are identifying year 7 pupils who are at risk of disengagement and providing mentoring. As I said in an answer just now, a number are ensuring that they have very effective one-on-one tracking systems in place and are investing in ICT resources to support that. So, at a school level, we are now starting to see it being used well, but we were concerned, initially, at the way in which local authorities approached this.

[44] **Lynne Neagle:** Is that something that you are planning to monitor throughout the year?

[45] **Leighton Andrews:** Yes.

[46] **Lynne Neagle:** Moving on to literacy and numeracy, that is a standstill budget. Will you tell us a bit more about how you planning to deliver in this area given the particular challenges we face in Wales?

[47] **Leighton Andrews:** Yes, sure. There were some development elements in previous years; so, we are in a position now where we have rolled out the national literacy programme and the national numeracy programme. We are just completing the consultation on the literacy and numeracy framework. Obviously, next year sees the statutory reading and numeracy tests coming in. The literacy and numeracy budgets are not the only budgets that support literacy and numeracy. The school effectiveness grant and the pupil deprivation grant do as well.

[48] **Simon Thomas:** Hoffwn ofyn yn benodol, o roi'r grant amddifadedd disgyblion a'ch cynlluniau chi ar gyfer rhifedd a llythrennedd at ei gilydd, a ydych chi'n disgwyl i'r grant hwnnw gael effaith ar gyrhaeddiad o ran rhifedd a llythrennedd? Ai dyna beth rydych yn ei ofyn i'r awdurdodau lleol ei gyflawni? **Simon Thomas:** I would specifically like to ask, in bringing the pupil deprivation grant together with your plans for numeracy and literacy, do you expect that grant to have an impact on attainment in numeracy and literacy? Is that what you are asking local authorities to achieve?

[49] **Leighton Andrews:** Literacy and numeracy are two of our three priorities for the school effectiveness programme. The third is tackling the link between poverty and poor attainment overall. However, if we do not tackle literacy and numeracy, we do not give people the grounding to address the wider issues and challenges that they will face. So, it is right, I think, that both the school effectiveness grant and the pupil deprivation grant have those principles at their core.

[50] **Simon Thomas:** Dywedoch fod y **Simon Thomas:** You said that the guidelines

canllawiau ar gyfer y ddau wedi'u hysgrifennu a'u cyhoeddi ar y cyd. Felly, a ydych chi'n credu mai anelu at yr un amcan y mae'r ddau grant hyn yn y pen draw?

for both had been written and published simultaneously. Therefore, do you believe that both grants, ultimately, have the same aim?

[51] **Leighton Andrews:** I do not know if they precisely have the same aim, but I think they need to be properly aligned, because the evidence that we have is that if you are not improving schools overall, you are not going to improve the performance of pupils on low incomes. There is quite a complicated set of research that has come out about how school performance has improved, and there is a general thesis that would say that if you do not tackle the overall performance of the school, you may well see that some of the pupils whom you would have expected to do well will do well, but the rest of the school will not. So, in a sense, you have to build the overall capacity at the same time as targeting those who have particular challenges.

[52] **Jocelyn Davies:** Minister, I imagine that you do not expect the problems in literacy and numeracy and with deprivation to disappear in a year or two. How long do you expect to pay those grants?

[53] **Leighton Andrews:** I expect to pay for the lifetime of this Assembly, certainly, in terms of the school effectiveness grant. We did put the pupil deprivation grant in for the budgetary period. Of course, I have to enter the usual caveat, which is that I cannot pre-judge discussions around the budget.

[54] **Simon Thomas:** You have put your bid in.

[55] **Leighton Andrews:** It is not enough for me to bid. I have made my bids for my departmental budgets and they are included in the draft budget.

[56] **Jocelyn Davies:** Okay, but you would like to see this for the lifetime of this Assembly?

[57] **Leighton Andrews:** I would certainly expect the school effectiveness grant to be there for the lifetime of this Assembly. We have put the pupil deprivation grant in place for three years in indicative budgets.

[58] **Angela Burns:** Thank you for the paper, which clearly lays out the budget changes. I have a couple of questions, though. The teaching and leadership budget is decreasing by a very small amount of money, which seems to be a recurring amount. This is in section 18 of your paper. Is that a technical adjustment that happens on a yearly basis?

[59] **Leighton Andrews:** That item is a transfer to another budget.

[60] **Angela Burns:** On the qualifications budget, which is decreasing by £3.8 million, what moneys, if any, have been accrued or set aside in any form for any outcomes from the qualifications and skills review that you are undertaking at the moment, Deputy Minister?

[61] **Jeff Cuthbert:** Much of it is from efficiency savings. Also, the Welsh baccalaureate is well past its development phase now. It is well-established in many learning centres throughout Wales, although there are still new centres coming on board and we welcome those. On the qualifications review, it is fair to say that it is a bit of a moveable feast. I will not try to second guess what the outcome of the review will be, although, when I finish here, I have a meeting with Huw Evans, the chair of that review, to see how things are going and what the initial findings may be. The final report will not be in our hands until the end of November. They have to be given some time. So, we do not know for sure what changes may

be suggested and what our response to them would be. Even if there are significant changes, they are unlikely to have a major effect, in financial terms, on the next financial year. It will be a bit longer away. The events in England, I have to say, have put a few flies in the ointment. Nevertheless, we remain in good contact with Ofqual and we hope to be able to co-ordinate things as far as we can. However, even those changes will probably not have an impact until 2015. So, we have time to judge things and get the best mix that we can. It is probably fair to say that there will be increased divergence with England. We do not know exactly how much yet. We are keeping a close eye on that, but I am not in a position to say what the impact will be for future years. It is not likely to be much for the next financial year.

[62] **Angela Burns:** That is great. In fact, that is very useful because we will be seeing Ofqual shortly. That is something that we can talk to it and the Welsh boards about. I may have got myself into a slight muddle here, because I am not entirely clear on the education structures and education standards budgets. I want to understand what the education structures budget of £2.9 million really covers. On education standards, I know that you have laid out clearly in previous evidence that the budget covers things like the community focused schools grant, the small and rural schools grant, the out-of-hours learning grant, and so on. You are intending to use £10 million of the £20 million within that budget that is set aside for teaching and leadership for the new Master's programme. What effect is that having on other grants within the budget? Generally, how do those two budgets hang together? What is their joint purpose?

[63] **Leighton Andrews:** The Master's programme is now a central part of continuous professional development for newly qualified teachers. Clearly, that takes up some of the budget that had previously been allocated towards that. We explained in our initial paper that the education structures budget is £2.9 million. This budget is about the transformation agenda in further education. We have planned to reduce that budget by £1 million from the current savings that we have identified from our review of budgets. The education standards budget, as you have already indicated, is to do with the issue of supporting teachers in their professional development.

[64] **Angela Burns:** I have two quick questions, Minister. The first question is: do you envisage the education structures budget being completely phased away, eventually, as you finish the transformation agenda? It will have only some £1.9 million left in it, and I guess that will decrease. My second question concerns the education standards budget. The policy concept of the Master's degree is well-supported and understood, and I can appreciate that it will take a substantial sum of money to implement. We are keen to understand what is not happening instead, because you have not overly increased those budgets by huge amounts—certainly not by an additional £10 million. So, have you stopped any other grants or is it just a change of policy focus, which is obviously quite within your—

[65] **Ms Smith:** There was some confusion about the fact that the access funding comes from the teacher development budget line. The education standards budget line is where the school effectiveness grants sit.

[66] **Angela Burns:** So, the teaching and leadership element is not within the education standards.

[67] **Ms Smith:** No, it is a separate budget line.

[68] **Angela Burns:** Thank you, because that is what I have not really clearly understood. I will re-check that I have not read this completely crazily.

[69] **Aled Roberts:** The budget narrative that we have seen suggests that the funding of £10 million for the Master's training course is within the teaching and leadership budget of

£20 million in the education standards budget. Perhaps you could clarify that.

[70] **Ms Smith:** The wording is probably confusing. I will send you a note to clarify exactly what fits where.

[71] **Angela Burns:** I am glad that my eyes were not completely betraying me at some ungodly hour last night.

[72] **Leighton Andrews:** You asked whether the transformation budget will wither away. There has to come a point at which we achieve most of our objectives in that area. We are seeing considerable consolidation within the FE sector. We have Neath Port Talbot College and Coleg Powys talking at the moment, and we have Coleg Morgannwg and The College Ystrad Mynach talking. If you went back to the report that was done by Professor Sir Adrian Webb in 2007, he was recommending 10 FE colleges. I am not sure whether we will get to that, but our current expectation of around 12 is probably about right. Would we need to keep money in this budget? No, I am not certain that we will.

[73] **Christine Chapman:** Minister, or Deputy Minister, I want to ask you a specific question about the career service. Obviously, there will be major changes from next year. The career service will be transferred into public ownership from April. There is a decrease in funding for educational and careers choices. Will you say something about how, with the decrease, this will help to deliver the priorities for you, bearing in mind that we know that youth unemployment is too high?

[74] **Leighton Andrews:** I will bring the Deputy Minister in to answer that in detail. I remind the committee that these budgets were set originally in the 2010 budget. So, we gave quite an early indication of what the overall expectations were going to be for our support for careers at that time, and the Assembly has voted on those budgets on a few occasions.

[75] **Jeff Cuthbert:** The careers service remains a vital part of our offer for all people, but particularly for younger people. That is why we are bringing it in-house as a wholly owned company. It may surprise you—hopefully not now—that it was privatised in the 1990s and split up into six different companies. Inevitably, there were some duplications and different types of offers. There has been criticism that it is a bit of a postcode lottery. Having said that, excellent work has been done by the careers service and it has been highly praised in many Estyn reports.

10.30 a.m.

[76] However, we think that things can be better and more co-ordinated. We want to ensure that the careers service will align closely with labour market intelligence, so that the offer to young people and adult workers is as good as it can be. As the Minister has pointed out, the senior management of the now unified careers service has been aware of the budget situation for some considerable time and is planning towards that. So, the issue really is that we are confident that, with the savings that will inevitably be made due to economies of scale with the six companies becoming one, working with other support providers, the moneys that they have will enable the service to continue as a quality service.

[77] I absolutely appreciate that Unison is clearly concerned. It is its job to look after the interests of its members. I will be having discussions later this month with Unison to, I hope, resolve its concerns. That is the figure, people are aware of it and they have been planning towards it.

[78] **Simon Thomas:** Deputy Minister, can you confirm that the service will still be available to every young person in Wales?

[79] **Jeff Cuthbert:** Yes, that is the guarantee. It will be available up to the age of 24. A face-to-face interview will be available if that is what is required. However, of course, we will also be making use of modern technology. For example, the apprenticeship matching service, which is run by Careers Wales, is a web-based service. More and more young people access information in that way. So, we are determined to use modern technology, but the offer of a face-to-face interview will be there for younger people if that is what is required.

[80] **Julie Morgan:** I want to ask about the budget for post-16 education. I believe that you are expecting an interim report in November from the review of post-16 education funding. What provision has been made in the draft budget for 2013-14 to implement any recommendations from that report?

[81] **Leighton Andrews:** I do not think that we have to plan ahead for any overall changes. We have a quantum of money available, and the new system will have to operate within that.

[82] **Julie Morgan:** The implementation of any recommendations that come from this review of funding will have to come from the existing budget.

[83] **Leighton Andrews:** Indeed.

[84] **Julie Morgan:** Are you still expecting that report in November?

[85] **Leighton Andrews:** Yes; I am expecting it before Christmas.

[86] **Julie Morgan:** Your commitment is to provide financial support to students from the lowest income households. In your earlier statements, Minister, you said that students from lower income households are your big priority. How are you managing to deliver that?

[87] **Leighton Andrews:** As you know, we have retained the education maintenance allowance in Wales, unlike in England. That is an indication of our priorities. The Assembly learning grant is in place, which is available on a means-tested basis. The new tuition fee grant is ensuring that no students from Wales will have to pay higher fees, wherever they study in the United Kingdom.

[88] **Julie Morgan:** Are you committed to retaining all of those things?

[89] **Leighton Andrews:** I am committed to those budgets.

[90] **Jenny Rathbone:** I have a few questions on the wellbeing budget. Sticking with further education for now, I see that you have raised the amount of money available for further education for students with learning difficulties, which I am sure is welcome. Can you tell us a bit about how that will change the situation for students with learning difficulties in FE?

[91] **Leighton Andrews:** The FE sector has a number of approaches in place to give support to young people with learning difficulties, and it has operated those for some time. What we are doing—as you are aware, this is taking place in the context of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Bill—is transferring the grant to the revenue support grant. That is our intention. Of course, that is currently under discussion with local government.

[92] **Jenny Rathbone:** My second question is in relation to special education needs, generally. Parents and teachers continue to raise issues around the difficulties of getting

young people with additional learning needs identified. In your paper, you talk about SEN reform and work being undertaken with eight local authorities. How will that improve the earlier identification of additional learning needs? Will it make a cost saving in that, through earlier identification, it will be cheaper to address that need?

[93] **Leighton Andrews:** I do not know that it will necessarily produce a cost saving. We have had in place a number of pilot schemes that have looked at different aspects of addressing additional learning needs. We have held a consultation on our plans for the future and how we move to ensuring that individual assessments are in place in the future. It is our plan to legislate on those subsequently.

[94] **Christine Chapman:** Before you continue, Jenny, I want to bring in Angela, and then I will come back to you.

[95] **Angela Burns:** On special educational needs, we are often faced with a situation, as you are well aware, in which a child with special educational needs gets torn between the health division and education. I wonder what your view might be on whether we should have a combined budget for special educational needs per se, so that families do not go through the situation of 'I can get a bit from education, but no-one's helping me from health today' and vice versa.

[96] **Leighton Andrews:** That is a fair point. We have had conversations with health and social services colleagues about this whole issue. Where we are coming from is that the starting point has to be the assessment, and we have to ensure that that is a common assessment and that that is understood across the piece. We have had extensive discussions with our colleagues on that basis. Those discussions have informed the consultation that we held, and I hope that they will be reflected in the subsequent legislation.

[97] **Jenny Rathbone:** Many of us are concerned about the impact on children of the welfare reforms of the UK Government. Can you talk us through why the tackling disaffection budget is static, but you have decided to increase the minority ethnic achievement grant by £0.5 million? You have to make hard decisions, but I wondered why you particularly targeted that group, rather than—

[98] **Leighton Andrews:** In some respects, I would like to increase all the budgets, but the budget settlement that we were given by the UK Government as the result of the comprehensive spending review does not allow us to do that. It is the toughest period in education, in fact, since devolution. To tackle disaffection, my view is that we need to ensure that young people have the relevant skills to enable them to take part in education. If we focus on literacy and numeracy, and do so properly, that will have an impact on issues of disaffection later in school life. We know that a large number of young people become disengaged because they are not, in some cases, able to participate in or interested in the work that is in front of them, and their skills may not enable them to take advantage of the teaching and learning that are available. So, we have done a huge amount of work on attendance, on behaviour and on issues of disaffection, and that has informed the attendance work that we have put in place through schools and local authorities in the last 12 months.

[99] We took clear decisions, in respect of the minority ethnic achievement grant and the Gypsy/Traveller grants, a couple of years ago to support those and increase them. We made an increase of £0.5 million available next year as against this year in respect of the minority ethnic achievement grant, and we have some good practice available to us in Wales. For example, we are seeing some good performances among Somali boys in Cardiff compared with expectations and other groups, and we have good performances from minority ethnic pupils in Swansea, particularly at key stages 3 and 4. So, I think that the money that we are putting in is having an effect.

[100] **Jenny Rathbone:** You felt that it was better to invest more in the minority ethnic achievement grant than in the tackling disaffection grant at this stage, did you?

[101] **Leighton Andrews:** As I said, there are other policies that contribute to the tackling of disaffection.

[102] **Simon Thomas:** Ar y pwynt hwnnw, y grant amlwg ar gyfer *tackling disaffection*—beth bynnag yw hynny yn Gymraeg—yw'r grant amddifadedd disgyblion. Rydych newydd amlinellu rhai o'r camau yn y grant hwnnw, a rhai ohonynt—mentora ym mlwyddyn 7, er enghraifft—yn amlwg wedi'u targedu at hwn hefyd. Sut rydych yn osgoi dyblygu yn y grantiau?

Simon Thomas: On that point, the grant that deals with tackling disaffection is the pupil deprivation grant. You have just outlined some of the actions in that grant, some of which, such as mentoring in year 7, have been clearly targeted at this as well. How do you avoid duplication in the grants?

[103] **Leighton Andrews:** Through the monitoring that we put in place.

[104] **Simon Thomas:** A ydych yn hyderus bod hwnnw'n ddigon cryf?

Simon Thomas: Are you confident that that is robust enough?

[105] **Leighton Andrews:** Yes. I think that we are pretty clear about when people are trying to pull the wool over our eyes, where they are duplicating efforts—I think that that will be knocked back by officials.

[106] **Jocelyn Davies:** In the examples that you have just mentioned, are they as a direct result of this grant?

[107] **Leighton Andrews:** Which grant?

[108] **Jocelyn Davies:** The minority ethnic achievement grant and the Traveller grant. You gave specific examples. I was wondering whether we can have a note on what the grants are, because it could very well be that some of the things that the grants pay for are time-limited. It would be good for us to have a feel for the sorts of projects that are run by those grants.

[109] **Leighton Andrews:** I would be very happy to do that. Being honest, I would have to say that those grants will be part of the investment being made in those cities for these minority ethnic groups. I will not claim that the performance is 100% as a result of our grants; I think that our grants supplement work that is going on locally. However, we can point to specific support that has been bought in by schools in particular areas.

[110] **Christine Chapman:** Can we have a note on that, then?

[111] **Aled Roberts:** On the Traveller grant, there were changes in the arrangements some two or three years ago, when a fairer distribution of the grant among local authorities led to a reduction in some authorities' services that had previously been well provided for. Has any evidence emerged that the services have gone backwards in those authorities that previously had well-developed services as far as attainment by pupils from the Traveller community is concerned?

[112] **Leighton Andrews:** My recollection of this is that, initially, our expectations were that local authorities would bid for the grant. Some did, and others did not. Clearly, that was not necessarily the best way of ensuring a fair allocation of the grant across Wales, so changes

were made.

[113] In respect of local authorities withdrawing services, I think that we would have to give you a note on where we have evidence of that.

[114] **Jocelyn Davies:** Some local authorities claim not to have any Travellers, so they would not apply for the grant, would they?

[115] **Leighton Andrews:** I could not possibly comment.

[116] **Christine Chapman:** I want to move on to Welsh in education.

[117] **Simon Thomas:** Gan droi at y gyllideb Cymraeg mewn addysg, mae gostyngiad cymharol fach, ond gostyngiad serch hynny, o £0.2 miliwn mae'n debyg, ond ar yr un pryd, rydym yn trafod y Bil safonau, a fydd yn cryfhau'r ddarpariaeth honno i raddau, ac yn sicr yn ei rhoi ar lefel statudol. Pa asesiad rydych wedi ei wneud o'r gallu i gefnogi'r hyn sy'n debygol o ddeillio o'r Bil o ystyried y gostyngiad yn y gyllideb?

Simon Thomas: Turning to the Welsh in education budget, there seems to have been a relatively small decrease, but a decrease nonetheless, of £0.2 million, but at the same time, we are discussing the standards Bill, which will strengthen the provision to some degree, and certainly place it on a statutory footing. What assessment have you made of the ability to support what is likely to emerge from the Bill, given the reduction in the budget?

[118] **Leighton Andrews:** I think that the decrease is mainly in the area of commissioning of services. It is actually efficiencies at our end rather than delivery on the ground.

[119] **Simon Thomas:** Felly, rydych yn hapus. Rydym yn edrych ar gost y Bil, a byddwn yn cyhoeddi adroddiad ar hynny. A ydych yn dal yn hyderus bod gennych ddigon yn y gyllideb i ddelifro ar y Bil?

Simon Thomas: So, you are content We are looking at the cost of the Bill, and we shall publish a report on that. Do you continue to be confident that you have enough in the budget to deliver on the Bill?

[120] **Leighton Andrews:** Rwy'n dal yn hyderus.

Leighton Andrews: I remain confident.

[121] **Simon Thomas:** Gan droi at yr ail ran, crybwyllodd Jenny Rathbone ysgolion newydd a materion gwyrdd. A ydych wedi cynnal asesiad datblygu cynaliadwy wrth lunio'r gyllideb hon? Pa gamau rydych yn eu cymryd wrth lunio'r gyllideb i sicrhau bod datblygu cynaliadwy yn ganolog iddi?

Simon Thomas: Turning to the second part, Jenny Rathbone mentioned new schools and green issues. Have you made any sustainable development appraisal in drafting this budget? What steps have you taken in drafting the budget to ensure that sustainable development is central to it?

10.45 a.m.

[122] **Leighton Andrews:** That is a core part of where we would approach budget setting. In our case, it is mainly an issue for our capital budgets. It is very important to us that, as we support and develop capital schemes, we are supporting projects that are sustainable and have a meaningful life-span to them.

[123] **Simon Thomas:** How do you measure the outcomes in particular?

[124] **Leighton Andrews:** There have been specific grants that we have given in the past around the teaching of sustainability in schools, which obviously, we have looked at and

appraised. In respect of capital, there is a proper planning process—the five-case Treasury model—and a whole series of expectations on local authorities that are followed through that process. We would expect those to be fulfilled as local authorities are implementing the use of our grant.

[125] **Jeff Cuthbert:** On this point, half of the review of qualifications is looking at the issue of vocational qualifications. We are very keen to ensure that young people, and older people in work who are taking those qualifications, learn that sustainability is embedded in the various criteria that have to be pursued in order to get those qualifications. The Minister and I have begun discussions with John Griffiths, the Minister for environment, on this matter.

[126] **Simon Thomas:** I am glad to hear that you are talking with the Minister for environment. I am hearing some anecdotal evidence, and I think other Members have heard it as well, that some aspects of teaching sustainability, particularly the aspects that may involve people being more hands-on and out of the school or learning environment, are difficult to deliver in a time of decreasing budgets, because you need a little bit of support sometimes. For example, you might need a bus to take pupils somewhere, or whatever it might be. Have you found that evidence at all? Are you confident that you can still deliver on this wide-ranging agenda? It is an important one, but it is not cheap to deliver, is it?

[127] **Jeff Cuthbert:** No, it is not cheap in that sense, but, in terms of vocational qualifications, especially those that are competency based, it is incumbent on the sector skills councils to make sure that what is required in that industry, which takes account of Welsh Government policy on green issues and sustainability, is embedded in those programmes. So, we would expect to see that in any future development work.

[128] **Christine Chapman:** Thank you, Members, for your questions. Thank you, Minister, Deputy Minister and your ministerial team for attending this morning.

*Gohiriwyd y cyfarfod rhwng 10.48 a.m. a 10.58 a.m.
The meeting adjourned between 10.48 a.m. and 10.58 a.m*

**Cynigion Cyllideb Ddrafft Llywodraeth Cymru ar gyfer 2013-14: Sesiwn i
Graffu ar Waith y Gweinidog
Welsh Government Draft Budget Proposals for 2013-14: Ministerial Scrutiny
Session**

[129] **Christine Chapman:** For this item, we will scrutinise the Minister for Health and Social Services and the Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services on the health, social care and children budget and priorities for 2013-14. I welcome the Minister for Health and Social Services, Lesley Griffiths, and the Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services, Gwenda Thomas. I also welcome your officials: Martin Swain, deputy director, children, young people and families; Mark Osland, deputy finance director, health and social services; and David Sissling, director general, health, social services and children. I welcome all of you to this morning's meeting.

[130] I thank the Minister for providing a paper in advance. Given the time factor, I suggest that Members go straight into questions, if you are content with that. I will start with a fairly broad question. What work has been done to reprioritise funding relating to children and young people within your portfolio to better align it to the programme for government?

11.00 a.m.

[131] **The Minister for Health and Social Services (Lesley Griffiths):** The draft budget proposals continue to demonstrate our commitment to key programme for government commitments. In addition to the £55 million revenue funding that we have already invested in the current and next two years in Flying Start, we are now investing £19 million capital for the same period, which makes a total of £74 million. You will appreciate that many of our programme for government commitments are delivered through the NHS. We give core revenue allocations, obviously, to local health boards. In last year's budget we invested an additional £288 million on a recurrent basis for three years in order to put them on a sustainable financial footing. We will continue to assess progress in delivering our commitment to double the number of children benefitting from Flying Start, and we are expecting an additional 9,500 children to have been assisted through Flying Start by the end of 2013-14.

[132] We continue to ring-fence nearly £3 million of the £22 million substance misuse revenue funding allocated to community safety partnerships to develop substance misuse services for under-18s. You will be aware that that has recently come into my portfolio. That funding will significantly improve the quality and capacity of children's substance misuse services through the provision of specialist psycho-social and detoxification provision, specialist midwifery services, and one-stop shops for children and young people.

[133] **Christine Chapman:** The point that I made to the Minister for Education and Skills earlier was that money is tight, and we are all very much aware of that, but are there areas within your portfolio where you have concerns regarding the availability of resources and the ability to deliver on the programme for government commitments?

[134] **Lesley Griffiths:** Clearly, we are in very difficult financial times, but if you take that into account, we have protected the health, social service and children's budgets. We are still spending over 40% of the entire Welsh Government budget in my portfolio. We are always monitoring to be sure that we can deliver, but clearly it is an issue.

[135] **Christine Chapman:** Members will be asking specific questions about different areas, but I have another general question about sustainable development. Was a sustainable development appraisal of your budget as it applies to children and young people carried out as part of the budget planning process?

[136] **Lesley Griffiths:** Yes, we all submit plans on that basis and they demonstrate the actions that we are taking as a Government to deliver our vision for a sustainable Wales. Many of the programmes within the Deputy Minister's portfolio build on that sustainable development. For example, integrated family support services and Flying Start are very sustainable schemes. So, yes, we do that across Government.

[137] **Christine Chapman:** Were any changes made as a result?

[138] **Lesley Griffiths:** No, I think that all those plans were in place before.

[139] **Christine Chapman:** So, it was a continuation. Okay; I want to move on to another specific area now.

[140] **Lynne Neagle:** Turning to the allocation to local health boards, can you tell us what proportion of funding for health boards, if any, is specifically ring-fenced for children and young people?

[141] **Lesley Griffiths:** The mental health allocation is specifically ring-fenced. I am not a huge fan of ring fencing, as you know; I think it can be a very blunt tool, and there are advantages and disadvantages, but we have got mental health allocations that include the

funding for child and adolescent mental health services. That is the main thing that is ring-fenced.

[142] **Lynne Neagle:** Given that the allocation to health boards is a massive part of the Welsh Government's overall budget, how do you ensure that appropriate consideration is given to children's needs when the health boards spend that money? For example, do you put anything in the guidance that you issue to health boards that drives their priorities throughout the year relating to children?

[143] **Lesley Griffiths:** We do, and ahead of this committee I asked for a table showing what could be identified, because, as you say, we give health boards a huge amount of money within their core revenue allocation. It was interesting to see the identifiable NHS spend on children's services, which actually went up by 3% between 2009-10 and 2010-11. We are waiting for the data, which are imminent, for 2011-12.

[144] Certainly, within the NHS, we can identify the spend on children's services: in 2009-10, it was just under £202 million, and it went up to just under £208 million in 2010-11. However, there is clearly a great deal that we cannot identify, and I am thinking about primary care and accident and emergency. So, a lot goes on children and young people outside of what we can identify.

[145] **Lynne Neagle:** Turning to neonatal provision, obviously you are considering the committee's report, and, as you know, we still have significant concerns about neonatal provision in Wales. How confident are you that the draft budget will deliver the kind of improvements in neonatal care that we all want to see?

[146] **Lesley Griffiths:** Clearly, I am considering your report at present. To be blunt, I do not think that a lot of the concerns that I do have about neonatology services are to do with money. We have huge recruitment issues, which is very apparent in the report that you brought forward. Certainly, within the core revenue allocations that we give to health boards, I would expect them to ensure that the funding that was needed for neonatology services would go there.

[147] **Aled Roberts:** You are obviously aware of the reconfiguration proposals in north Wales, but I am more interested in the process. As I understand it, you required the health boards to provide local delivery plans for neonatal services, which I understand have to be in by December, and, presumably, north Wales will have made a decision by then as regards reconfiguration, whether that involves Arwe Park or not. The committee's intention would then be for the reconfigured services to be moving towards the British Association of Perinatal Medicine standards. Acknowledging the problems that you state with recruitment, it is quite clearly the case in north Wales—and our own report identifies that specialist nursing staffing was about 27% below the recommended level even after the recent recruitment campaign—that the current configuration needs eight neonatologists and there is no doubt that, in any reconfigured service, there will be a need for an increase in that number of specialist doctors. How will you ensure that they are putting the finances in place to deliver on that reconfigured service, and is there an expectation on your part that that will be met from their own budgets, rather than your having to face a situation in which you have seven plans in and an expectation from the NHS that you sign a cheque to make up the difference?

[148] **Lesley Griffiths:** I have no cheques to give, I am afraid, so they will have to look at that. From the reconfiguration, we are expecting to see improvements, and the boards believe that their reconfiguration plans will bring those forward. Clearly, as you say, the Betsi Cadwaladr board in north Wales will be the first to bring plans forward, but we will have to have a look at all the plans and I want to take a holistic approach right across Wales. David, do you want to come in on the nursing?

[149] **Mr Sissling:** The Minister has asked me to take a particular interest in neonatology, so I have asked the medical director, the chief nursing officer and the new chief medical officer to undertake an exercise with each health board, which will make sure that the plans that they are producing over the next month allow us to move ahead with pace and certainty to the point that we would all want to reach. That will require changes in working practice. It will require better planning, enhanced leadership and investment in some areas, and the clear expectation is that health boards will make that investment from within their own overall resources. If that means some readjustment from areas, say from the adult area, into neonatology, that would be entirely right in light of the priority that we have given to neonatal care at the moment. It is positioned as one of our absolute keys to improve over the coming months.

[150] **Angela Burns:** I want to talk about the public health and prevention budgets. There is a real-terms decrease of some 2.2%. Given the comment in your paper about children's budgeting and the need to continue to improve the transparency of budgeting for children and young people at Welsh Government level, and the statutory obligations on us because of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, I wanted to ask specifically, on public health and prevention, what moneys within that spending programme area will be spent on children's issues such as preventing smoking, obesity, sexual health and perhaps at other specifically child-orientated issues? Could you talk about how you will be able to deliver targeted health initiatives such as vaccination programmes, and where the money for that will come from, or what percentage of that budget will be spent on children as opposed to general medical services?

[151] **Lesley Griffiths:** The increase of £10.07 million to the budget expenditure line for the sponsorship of public health bodies relates to an increase in the core funding allocation for public health. That increase in funding contains £4.459 million, which relates specifically to children and young people programmes. You referred to anti-smoking measures, for instance, and we have the SmokeBugs. Also included in that SPA are the national breastfeeding programme, the cooking bus programme, the national obesity referral programme, the Welsh network of healthy schools schemes, as well as the funding for the newborn bloodspot screening programme. There will be a further £8.884 million to fund programmes addressing public health challenges relating specifically to children and young people.

[152] **Angela Burns:** That is good news, but, although there is a cash increase, that is a real-terms decrease in respect of what we can buy with it. There will be less than there was last year and the year before. So, where do you anticipate the pinch points might occur?

[153] **Lesley Griffiths:** Public Health Wales has had discussions with me and feels that it can provide the programmes. You will be aware that we have had to make efficiency savings over the past two years, so it is convinced that they can deliver these programmes.

[154] **Angela Burns:** I will wind up by touching briefly on the measles, mumps and rubella immunisation. Will that commitment to attempt to eradicate MMR still be able to stand?

[155] **Lesley Griffiths:** Yes. The immunisation budget is not affected at all.

[156] **Jenny Rathbone:** Another report came out yesterday on the harmful impact of television on the under-threes. This is one of several, and there are other implications to young children's watching screens too often, one of which is to do with obesity as a result of constantly nibbling snacks and so on. On the welcome increase in the public health budget, is that message about the harmful impact of television on under-threes found anywhere in your plan? I am sure that I am not the only person who regularly goes into people's homes and finds that the television is on as if it is wallpaper. It is never off. I do not think that there has

been enough discussion about this. Yesterday's report hints that it is driving up the incidence of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and it is certainly impairing children's direct communication with the adults who are caring for them.

[157] **Lesley Griffiths:** I have not seen the report that you refer to, but I can remember when I had young children, I would hear children speaking with American accents because they had been watching *Sesame Street*, for instance. I can remember thinking then about the impact that television has, particularly on speech and language. I have not read yesterday's report, but perhaps the Deputy Minister has something to say on that.

[158] **The Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services (Gwenda Thomas):** On the wellbeing report that was published yesterday, there was a lot of good news in it, which showed the degree of satisfaction felt by children and young people about their lives, but there was also an underlying serious message. Regarding watching television and other issues, you will know that we are in the process of developing a parenting policy, and a big part of that will be how we engage with parents. That policy needs to be as wide as that, so that it also looks at lifestyles. Within my portfolio, that work is proceeding, and we are committed to producing a paper shortly.

[159] **Christine Chapman:** That is welcome and we look forward to seeing that. We will now move on to another issue with Julie.

11.15 a.m.

[160] **Julie Morgan:** I wanted to ask about autism and about the funding for autism spectrum disorders. I know that we have made a lot of progress in Wales, and I just wanted to ask what resources have been allocated to progress the ASD strategic action plan for Wales and to implement the recommendations.

[161] **Gwenda Thomas:** Since the strategy's launch in 2008, we have invested some £9.4 million, and just about £2 million of that was this year. With regard to funding specifically for children, there has been £1.7 million a year in the revenue support grant on a recurrent basis to fund services to children and young people. The £2.2 million allocated this year, which we anticipate will be repeated in 2013-14, has looked specifically at services.

[162] I am not convinced that we are clear enough on the way forward for the implementation of the plan. That is why we are going to refresh it. In November, we will have three stakeholder events spread across Wales to talk to children and young people, their carers and their parents, and that will lead to informing a consultation process that will open early in 2013. We need to be sure that we are specifically answering the needs of children and young people. The agenda has shifted quite a bit since 2008, so we are catching up in that way.

[163] I also point out that part of the £2 million has been specifically for diagnosis and support. I do think that we have made progress on that, but of course there is more to do. However, the funding is anticipated to continue into 2013-14.

[164] **Julie Morgan:** You mentioned support, and I think that we have all experienced the huge issues of coping with a child who has an ASD.

[165] **Christine Chapman:** Julie, before you move on, I will take supplementary questions from Rebecca and Simon—or is this on the same subject?

[166] **Julie Morgan:** This is on the same subject: the difficulties of support.

[167] Do you feel that there is enough money there to give the support that is needed to

families that are trying to cope?

[168] **Gwenda Thomas:** I do not think that there is ever enough, is there? Support is offered to families in other ways, and some families will benefit from Flying Start and Families First, and the integrated family support service, too, but with regard to funding the implementation plan specifically, I think that we are at a place where we need to reflect on what has been achieved and on the right way forward. The £2 million is, as I said, committed, and the £1.7 million within the RSG is recurrent and will continue to be made available to local authorities. Within that, now is the time to be as sure as we can be that those resources, limited as they are, are used in the best possible way. We have heard a lot about diagnosis and the need for early support on diagnosis, and the Minister has made it absolutely clear that families and children must not wait for services for diagnosis: where the need arises, that support must be in place during the diagnostic process. As I have said, the important thing now is to ensure that we have a clear way forward, and that is the purpose of refreshing the strategy.

[169] **Christine Chapman:** I will come back to you, Julie, after we have heard from Rebecca and Simon.

[170] **Rebecca Evans:** Last year, the funding of the implementation grant for the ASD strategic action plan was moved from the children's budget line to the adult budget line. Did that have any impact on the way in which the strategy could deliver for children, and is it the case this year again that the £2 million is in the adult funding stream? If so, will that cause a problem in delivering for children?

[171] **Gwenda Thomas:** No. We looked at this during last year's budget scrutiny, and although this funding has been placed under one budget line, there are specific policies for children and young people. The concern was, if you remember, that the transition from childhood to adulthood needed to be stronger and needed to be funded. That was where some families told me there was a breakdown, and still is. There is an intention to make it a lifelong process of funding, as I have tried to explain. Some of the £2 million is for adult diagnosis, into older life. That is why we have a strategy in Wales that covers the entire lives of people with autism. Specifically, there is funding for young adults with issues. We know that some have not had a diagnosis of their condition. Some are in the criminal justice system and have not been diagnosed, so the difficulties that these young people face have not been recognised. So, yes, a part of it is for adult diagnosis and support.

[172] **Simon Thomas:** Rwyf am ofyn cwestiwn yn benodol am ddiagnosis. Rwy'n croesawu'r hyn rydych newydd ddweud am eich agwedd tuag at ddarparu gwasanaethau i bobl sy'n aros am ddiagnosis a bod angen sicrhau bod diagnosis yn digwydd. Ond, rwyf i, a llawer o Aelodau eraill, rwy'n siŵr, yn cael llawer o gwynion gan etholwyr mai aros am ddiagnosis yw un o'r pethau mwyaf rhwystredig maent yn ei wynebu wrth ddelio â phobl ifanc sy'n dioddef ar y sbectrum hwn. O ran y gyllideb, a ydych chi wedi edrych ar yr adnoddau ariannol sydd ar gael ar gyfer diagnosis? A ydych wedi gorfod ystyried gwyro arian o'r naill le i'r llall er mwyn sicrhau bod y gwasanaeth diagnosis yn gwella?

Simon Thomas: I want to ask specifically about diagnosis. I welcome what you have just said about your attitude towards providing services to people awaiting diagnosis and the need to ensure that diagnosis happens. However, I, and many other Members I am sure, receive many complaints from constituents that waiting for a diagnosis is one of the most frustrating things they face in dealing with young people who have a condition on this spectrum. In terms of the budget, have you looked at the financial resources available for diagnosis? Have you had to consider diverting money from one place to another in order to ensure that the diagnosis service improves?

[173] **Gwenda Thomas:** Rydym wedi gwneud hynny. Yn ddiweddar, rydym wedi rhoi rhagor o arian, sef £200,000, tuag at ddiagnosis i blant, ac ychydig yn fwy tuag at ddiagnosis i oedolion. Rydym hefyd wedi ceisio rhoi mwy o gymorth i'r bobl sy'n gweithio yn y maes hwn. Ond, mae mwy i'w wneud, a bydd ailedrych ar sut mae'r cynllun gweithredu yn mynd yn ei flaen yn hollbwysig. Buaswn yn croesawu syniadau gan y pwyllgor ar yr hyn y mae'n ystyried fyddai orau. Rwy'n siŵr y bydd y tri digwyddiad y mis nesaf a'r ymgynghoriad ddechrau'r flwyddyn nesaf yn helpu'r ffordd ymlaen.

Gwenda Thomas: Yes, we have. Recently, we placed more money, a total of £200,000, into diagnosis for children, and a little more into diagnosis for adults. We have also tried to provide more support to people who work in this field. However, there is more to be done, and looking again at how the implementation plan progresses will be crucial. I would welcome ideas from the committee on what it considers to be the best thing to do. I am sure that the three events next month and the consultation early next year will help the way forward.

[174] **Julie Morgan:** Moving on to attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, are resources sufficient to provide front-line services with the capacity for early diagnosis and engagement of children and young people with ADHD?

[175] **Gwenda Thomas:** Often, there is no differentiation in the early stages. However, local health boards have looked at that and are developing policies relating to the diagnosis of ADHD.

[176] **Lesley Griffiths:** I do not think that funding alone is the issue. We need to make sure that child and adolescent mental health services are much more involved in getting the diagnosis much earlier. We have also established school-based counselling services in relation to ADHD in each secondary school. The schools can then refer directly to CAMHS, which will help with that.

[177] **Julie Morgan:** The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence has recommended that there should be age-appropriate training for front-line staff. Are there any resources that could be used for that?

[178] **Lesley Griffiths:** I could look at that through 'Together for Mental Health', the new mental health strategy that I will be launching very soon. I am not aware that that has been looked at, but I could write to you with further details if you like.

[179] **Julie Morgan:** That would be great.

[180] **Christine Chapman:** I held a meeting with parents of ADHD children and the health board last week, which was very successful. However, it struck me how lost some of these young people are in the system. It is about agencies, health services, local authorities and education services working together. I wonder whether you are having discussions with other agencies on this, because some of these young people still feel very lost in the system.

[181] **Gwenda Thomas:** There are discussions, particularly with the third sector and organisations that represent children and families. The children and families organisations grant, for example, covers some of this, with regard to supporting the third sector. I am pleased to see the age-specific budgeting that we are developing within our strategies. There is identification of children from very early on, with recognition that bad behaviour sometimes is not just that, and that there is a need to look at these children's needs as soon as we can. Some behavioural aspects are being identified within Flying Start and Families First, and there are clear referral procedures that can be followed from there. That is very positive.

[182] **Lesley Griffiths:** Following on from what Gwenda just said, when we were looking at ‘Together for Mental Health’ and the previous children and young people mental health strategy and the adult one, we could see that there was a gap, if you like, between service transition. That is why it is so important that we have these strategies and, as Gwenda says, we then make sure that budgeting process works in parallel to that.

[183] **Aled Roberts:** Weinidog, mae canllawiau'r Sefydliad Cenedlaethol dros Iechyd a Rhagoriaeth Glinigol yn awgrymu y dylid cael timau arbenigol ym mhob bwrdd iechyd i ddelio â'r cyflwr hwn. A ydych yn fodlon, ar hyn o bryd, fod y timau hynny yn bodoli yng Nghymru? A oes unrhyw waith wedi'i wneud ynglŷn â'r tueddiad i ddelio â'r cyflwr gyda chyffuriau yn hytrach nag ymyrraeth wahanol? Efallai fod mwy o dueddiad yng Nghymru i ddelio â'r mater yn glinigol a rhoi cyffuriau i blant ifanc, yn hytrach na bod ymyrraeth, fel yr ydym wedi'i drafod eisoes, pan fo'r plant yn ifancach.

Aled Roberts: Minister, the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence's guidelines suggest that there should be specialist teams in every health board to deal with this condition. Are you content that, at the moment, those teams exist in Wales? Has any work been done on the tendency to deal with the condition with drugs rather than different intervention? Perhaps there is more of a tendency in Wales to deal with the matter in a clinical way and give drugs to young children, rather than an intervention, as we have already discussed, when children are younger.

[184] **Lesley Griffiths:** I mentioned the school-based counselling service, but that is only in secondary schools, so we need to be looking at something much earlier. In relation to the question about are we just using drugs and a tendency to us—is that what you said?

[185] **Aled Roberts:** I was asking whether these specialist teams are in place in the boards, because, as Simon mentioned, our casework suggests that there is no early intervention and, because of that, it becomes more of an acute problem, which, in the main, is dealt with by prescribing drugs. There is evidence from America, for example, that that is storing up problems for the future as far as adult mental health is concerned.

[186] **Lesley Griffiths:** There are specialist trained teams. I met with psychologists last week just outside Newport—I think it was in Caerleon—who deal with this. Across Wales, the service is perhaps more patchy than I would like, and it is something that we could look at. I am not sure whether Gwenda wants to add anything.

[187] **Gwenda Thomas:** Bydd Dechrau'n Deg, fel rwyf wedi'i ddweud, yn rhoi cyfle i ni ddod i wybod a yw rhai plant ifanc yn dioddef o gyflyrau fel hyn. Ar draws iechyd a gwasanaethau cymdeithasol, mae'r gweithio ar y cyd o fewn Teuluoedd yn Gyntaf a thimau o amgylch y teulu yn arbennig. Maent yn ymwybodol iawn o'r angen i weithio ar draws y ffiniau ac i rannu'r adnoddau sydd ar gael. Rydym yn dechrau gweld bod pethau'n gwella oherwydd y cydweithio rhwng y naill asiantaeth a'r llall. Mae hynny hefyd yn rhoi cyfle inni ddod yn ymwybodol o'r hyn sy'n poeni teuluoedd ac, os oes problemau, gan gynnwys ADHD, gallwn ddod i wybod amdanynt cyn gynted â phosibl. Mae hynny'n esiampl o weithio ar draws iechyd a gwasanaethau cymdeithasol a'r sector gwirfoddol.

Gwenda Thomas: Flying Start, as I have said, will give us an opportunity to identify young children who are affected by conditions such as these. Across health and social services, joint working is excellent within Families First and teams around the family. They are very aware of the need to work across boundaries and to share the resources that are available. We are now starting to see real improvement because of the collaboration between various agencies. That is also providing opportunity for us to become aware of what is causing concern to families and, if there are problems, including ADHD, we can identify them as early as possible. That is an example of us working across health and social services and the voluntary sector.

11.30 a.m.

[188] **Jocelyn Davies:** Minister, in addition to the resources allocated to the local health boards to implement Designed to Smile—because that is ring-fenced as I understand it—are there any additional resources allocated to implement the national oral health plan for Wales, specifically with regard to children and young people?

[189] **Lesley Griffiths:** That is something we are looking at. I am getting ready to launch the national oral health plan, I hope before the end of the year. We consulted on this over the summer. It is something I was very keen to bring in because we did not have one before I was Minister. Designed to Smile is an absolutely brilliant scheme and, as you said, that funding is ring-fenced. It is something we need to look at in relation to funding. We give £3.7 million per annum to local health boards to fund the scheme. You will be aware that the Community Dental Service works with schools and nurseries to deliver it. We now have 78,350 children in 1,211 schools engaged in the scheme. However, officials are now having discussions with dental officials about more funding or realigning funding.

[190] **Jocelyn Davies:** Okay, so the figure of £3.7 million is for Designed to Smile. Are there any additional resources for children and young people in the overall oral health plan, putting the Designed to Smile money to one side because it is ring-fenced and because, as we know from our review, it is not available to every child? Are there any resources in the national plan, in this budget, for children and young people? You could let us have a note on that, Minister. This is not a memory test.

[191] **Lesley Griffiths:** That's good. [*Laughter.*] We are dealing with £6.3 billion.

[192] **Jocelyn Davies:** You could give us a note on that.

[193] **Lesley Griffiths:** Yes, we will have to send you a note. Sorry, Jocelyn.

[194] **Jocelyn Davies:** That is okay. Perhaps you could give us a bit of clarification on something you said earlier. You said that you are not a fan of ring-fencing, but you seem quite pleased that you have ring-fenced Designed to Smile, so perhaps you can explain your reasoning for when you ring-fence and when you do not. What principles do you bring to bear on that? Earlier, you mentioned that child and adolescent mental health services are ring-fenced, but that is not true, is it? Your paper to us clearly says that the ring-fencing for CAMHS disappears this month and that you are going to have an all-age strategy. Therefore, CAMHS will no longer be ring-fenced. So, can you give us a feel for why you ring-fence some things and not others? Can you give us some examples of the budgets you have ring-fenced for children and people?

[195] **Lesley Griffiths:** Right, okay. What I said was that I think it is a blunt tool. Sometimes, when you ring-fence money, that amount is taken as the minimum that people can spend on something. So, if I say that I will ring-fence £3 million, £3 million is what is spent and they never look any further than that £3 million. That is why I do not like ring-fencing. You are right that, because of 'Together for Health', we have moved to an all-age strategy and the ring-fencing for CAMHS will be stopped. You asked why some things are ring-fenced and others are not. The situation is obviously historical. For example, mental health funding was ring-fenced before I became the Minister. You tend to find that third sector organisations in particular—certainly from talking to organisations such as Hafal and Mind Cymru—like ring-fencing because they know that that money will then be spent, which is quite right. However, I cannot think of anything that I have ring-fenced as Minister because, as I say, I find it to be a bit of a blunt tool.

[196] **Jocelyn Davies:** You did say that you are not a fan. I wrote down what you said. You said that you are not fan because it is a blunt tool. So, your expectation is that, if you ring-fence something, organisations tend not to spend a penny more. The funding of £3.7 million for Designed to Smile is ring-fenced, so you are not expecting them to spend any more on that than what you have put in the budget.

[197] **Lesley Griffiths:** Well, I would like them to, but that is for them to prioritise.

[198] **Jocelyn Davies:** If you took away the ring fence perhaps they would. Perhaps that is why they are restricting themselves to that amount. That is your reasoning. Earlier, you did mention CAMHS being ring-fenced. From this month, it no longer is. As we know from evidence to this committee, CAMHS are not perfect—in fact we would all like to see considerable improvements in those services. Are you not fearful that those improvements will not happen now that the ring fence has been removed, or, from your reasoning, that the opposite will happen that, because the ring fence has been removed, much more money will be spent on CAMHS and the service will therefore improve?

[199] **Lesley Griffiths:** I think that CAMHS has improved hugely. I opened the new CAMHS unit in Bridgend earlier this year and we have a new unit up in north Wales. ‘Together for Mental Health’ is one of the best strategies that I have seen—not just in my portfolio, but since I became an Assembly Member. We have consulted over the summer; we have had huge involvement from service users, and we specifically targeted children and young people, so that they could have their input to the policy. It is a 10-year strategy. We are bringing forward the 10-year strategy alongside a three-year delivery plan, because strategies are great, but it is all about delivery and implementation. There is an all-age approach because of what I said earlier about the gap—we have all heard about the gap in the transition from children and young people’s services to adult services. So, within the delivery plan, we have the plans in place to deliver that strategy, which the previous strategies—the separate ones—may have lost a little bit.

[200] **Jocelyn Davies:** So, would you expect more money to be spent on CAMHS because you have removed the ring fence? As you mentioned earlier—

[201] **Lesley Griffiths:** Would I expect more money to be spent? It is for the health boards to decide whether they want to spend more or not.

[202] **Jocelyn Davies:** But you will not know, will you?

[203] **Lesley Griffiths:** It will be monitored.

[204] **Jocelyn Davies:** So, you will be able to tell us specifically how much is spent on CAMHS now that the ring fence has been removed.

[205] **Lesley Griffiths:** Yes.

[206] **Jocelyn Davies:** It is not specifically identified in this budget.

[207] **Mr Osland:** The total budget for mental health is allocated to the health boards, as you probably know, in their core allocation up front. That, in itself, is ring-fenced. That is a huge amount of money—in fact, I think it is the largest area of individual expenditure on health programmes. It is about 11% or 12%, which is about £570 million. That is ring-fenced and we monitor and see reports on the expenditure incurred within that overall envelope. On the CAMHS budget—this might have been reported in your paper—the expenditure is estimated to be around £42 million to £43 million. That is the extent of the expenditure that we expect to continue going forward. However, in answer to your question, yes, we can

monitor and we can report on that.

[208] **Christine Chapman:** We have Lynne next, then Aled. We need to move on because we have quite a lot to get through.

[209] **Lynne Neagle:** My question is on the CAMHS ring-fenced money. We are all worried that, given the financial pressures we face, there is a danger that, with all the services being rolled out together, the focus on children's mental health might be lost. How will you ensure that that does not happen? Nobody wants to see people waiting for services, but six months, say, is a long time in the life of a child, when every month is precious in their development. How will you ensure that appropriate focus is given to children's mental health services when they all get rolled up into one?

[210] **Lesley Griffiths:** I mentioned that I think the strategy is one of the best I have seen: it is clear, ambitious and outcome-focused. For the first time, a strategy is not just about treating mental health, but about preventing mental health issues, because there has not been enough of a focus on that. So, it is about building resilience and recognising the transition that I mentioned between children's services and adult services. There will be plenty of monitoring going on. We have the three-year delivery plan and I think that the two go hand-in-hand very well. It is the first three-year delivery plan of a 10-year strategy, and, to me, the plans are much more focused on delivery than they were.

[211] **Aled Roberts:** I have been told that reports will be available regarding the—
[Inaudible.]

[212] **Christine Chapman:** We will move on now to Jenny.

[213] **Jenny Rathbone:** I want to ask you about Flying Start. Obviously, it is extremely welcome that you have been able to identify an additional £12 million, and I understand that another £3 million still has not been put into the budget lines for the capital programme for Flying Start, which is obviously a considerable achievement, given the 40% cut in capital funding, overall, in the Government's budget. That is very important. How will that £19 million, overall, be spent in the 131 projects that you talk about in your briefing document? It still remains a very challenging ask. If you divide 131 by 19, that does not add up to very much in terms of bricks and mortar. Obviously, I appreciate that it is, nevertheless, a huge increase on what was in the budget before.

[214] **Gwenda Thomas:** The £3 million that has not been shown in the budget yet is part of the £6 million that was originally committed for capital projects for Flying Start. I understand that this will appear in the supplementary budget that will be produced in February. So, the £6 million is accounted for in that way: the £3 million that has already been spent, and the £3 million that is now earmarked for projects that meet the criteria that we have set down. It is very important that the infrastructure is there because Flying Start cannot operate without capital funding. The capital funding and the £12 million that is in the budget for 2013-14 will allow further development, and this is for childcare settings. I am sure that you will agree that that is key to success. It will also provide venues for group-based activities and parenting support programmes, along with office space, which we must have. The capital development is crucial in order to develop the childcare element. I anticipate that that will allow us to further develop 4,500 childcare places.

[215] **Jenny Rathbone:** That is considerable.

[216] **Lesley Griffiths:** We are also now funding an initial wave of 63 trainee health visitors this year.

[217] **Jenny Rathbone:** That is excellent. We obviously look forward to the next wave of evaluation of the existing Flying Start programmes in the spring. Could you tell us how the learning from Flying Start is being embedded or mainstreamed across children's services? Also, could you specifically talk about how we are addressing the concerns that there were about certain vulnerable groups not accessing Flying Start? Black and ethnic minority groups were identified as some of them. I wonder whether you could just tell us a little about that.

[218] **Gwenda Thomas:** We have published an interim evaluation report, and we will publish the final one in the spring. This is a continuous learning process. It is a new programme. However, I want to be clear that Flying Start does not discriminate against children or parents, whatever their background. Specifically, the projects are required to reach out to minority groups, which include black and ethnic minority groups. I have been encouraged by examples in Newport, Swansea and Cardiff, and we have seen joint working with the voluntary sector, which has produced welcome translation facilities, for example, to break down the barriers of language. This is not only about Welsh-English bilingualism, but minority ethnic languages as well. Some excellent work is being done, and there is excellent engagement with parents where we see, perhaps, the greatest number of black and ethnic minority families.

11.45 a.m.

[219] The Cardiff example is worth seeing, as is the joint working with Barnardo's—I believe that that is in Newport. Swansea is offering diverse policies in order to engage parents and children from ethnic minorities and difficult-to-reach parents, who are blighted by poverty and are sometimes difficult to engage with.

[220] **Jenny Rathbone:** So, is there anything in the budget for mainstreaming the good practice that has been identified in Flying Start? You have mentioned several instances where you are very content with the way that it has reached hard-to-reach groups.

[221] **Gwenda Thomas:** The whole ethos of Flying Start is that it is intended to reach hard-to-reach families, and we know now that we are beginning to see good results from that policy. The way that health visitors are able to work intensively with these families, and the limited caseload of 110, are really producing the results that we had hoped for. We are seeing how health visitors are working intensely, for example, on breastfeeding and immunisation. These are early days and it takes a while for the policies to bed in, but I am convinced that the policy, as it is developed, will increase in its effect and its support for these families.

[222] **Christine Chapman:** We are very tight for time and I know that other Members want to come in now, so I will move on to Rebecca.

[223] **Rebecca Evans:** What is delivered by the child poverty budget expenditure line, and what outcomes do you expect from the additional £138,000 that has been allocated to it in the 2013-14 draft budget?

[224] **Gwenda Thomas:** This is focused on looked-after children and care leavers. We must look upon these children and young people, I believe, as children of the state, and therefore must be very sober about the responsibility that we have towards them. This must be a key national priority for us. I believe that it is being realised that this is of paramount importance, including in our work with local government. That is why these children and young people are at the heart of 'Sustainable Social Services', and this budget line—this little bit of extra money—will allow us to develop and prioritise a national outcomes framework for this very vulnerable group. I would like to move on quickly with that, and we need to kick start that process. We are well on the way to developing the national outcomes. There has to be consistency and equality of provision; that is what 'Sustainable Social Services' has

spelled out quite clearly as our intention.

[225] **Rebecca Evans:** Why is the budget line for supporting children's rights reduced by almost 10% in real terms at such an early stage in the implementation of the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011?

[226] **Gwenda Thomas:** The budget still stands at £1,305,000, and I am quite pleased about that, and about what we can achieve through that. It is not a big amount, but this is a good example of doing a lot with a little. It is there to raise awareness of the children's rights Measure, and the development of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child app. I am not that good, myself, at downloading these things, but children have showed me how well they relate to this. The app is there and I think that it allows children, in their own way, to get to know about children's rights. There is also a YouTube clip; I do not know if you have seen that. It was developed by children and, again, here are children raising the awareness of their peers. There is also the refresh of Let's Get it Right, our policy on the UNCRC. There is training of professionals who train people. I am happy to say that section 5 of the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010 relates specifically to article 42 of the UNCRC, and that is specifically about raising awareness of the rights of children.

[227] **Lesley Griffiths:** The £108,000 that has been moved from the support for children's rights BEL has gone into the children's commissioner budget, because we thought that it was really important to keep parity between the budget of the children's commissioner and the older people's commissioner. So, it is a straight transfer from the support for children's rights into the children's commissioner's line.

[228] **Christine Chapman:** The children's commissioner said in the evidence that he gave last week that the Welsh Government needs to do more to raise awareness of the UNCRC. I do not know whether you have any comments on that.

[229] **Gwenda Thomas:** I have explained to Members that the scheme that we have launched to coincide with the introduction of the duty from 1 May this year is in the development stage. By the time that this duty is fully rolled out by 1 May 2014, the scheme that we have now will have to have developed to be able to support that and complement it. I am pleased that the children's commissioner is part of this, and we will want to work with him and his office to achieve the best possible scheme by 2014.

[230] **Christine Chapman:** I will move on to Simon now. I advise Members that we do not have an awful lot of time, and I would like to cover as many aspects as possible.

[231] **Simon Thomas:** Gan droi at wasanaethau cymdeithasol i blant ac edrych yn benodol ar y cynnydd yn y gyllideb o ryw £1 miliwn yn y llinell weithredu, mae'n edrych yn debyg eich bod wedi ei throsglwyddo o'r llinell plant agored i niwed. O dan yr holl weithredu hwn, mae gwasanaethau integredig cymorth i deuluoedd rydych wedi bod yn sôn amdanynt. A allwch esbonio sut rydych yn bwriadu defnyddio'r £1 miliwn ychwanegol? A ydych wedi trosglwyddo'r arian er mwyn canolbwyntio ar blant agored i niwed neu er mwyn cefnogi elusennau a'r trydydd sector? Sut rydych yn rhagweld y bydd yn cael ei wario?

Simon Thomas: Turning to children's social services and looking particularly at the increase in the budget of some £1 million in the action line, it appears that you transferred that from the vulnerable children line. Integrated family support services, which you have mentioned, come under all of this action. Can you explain how you intend to use this additional £1 million? Have you transferred to it in order to concentrate on vulnerable children or in order to support charities and the third sector? How do you anticipate that that money will be spent?

[232] **Gwenda Thomas:** I gynorthwyo'r cynlluniau IFSS a'u cyflwyno ar draws Cymru gyfan. Rydym eisiau gwneud hynny cyn diwedd 2013, yn gynharach nag roeddem wedi meddwl y gallem wneud, ac rydym yn eu cyflwyno yn awr yn ardal y bae gorllewinol, sy'n cynnwys Castell-nedd Port Talbot, Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr ac Abertawe. Bydd hynny'n golygu, erbyn inni gyrraedd y nod, y bydd 10 tîm yn gweithredu ar draws Cymru. Mae gallu cyflwyno hyn wedi rhoi hwb i mi.

[233] **Simon Thomas:** Diolch am gadarnhau hynny, Ddirprwy Weinidog. Sut mae hyn yn ffitio gyda'i gilydd? Mae'r adroddiad cynnydd ar y rhaglen lywodraethu yn dweud y byddwch yn gwerthuso'r prosiectau arloesol hyn yn ystod y flwyddyn nesaf, ond mae'r gyllideb yn dweud y byddwch yn eu cyflwyno beth bynnag. Rwyf eisiau cadarnhad nad ydych yn rhoi'r gert o flaen y ceffyl a'ch bod am ddysgu'r gwersi cyn symud ymlaen i ehangu'r cynllun.

[234] **Gwenda Thomas:** Nid oes cwestiwn yn fy meddwl bod teuluoedd a phlant agored i niwed yn elwa o'r cynllun hwn. Mae'n rhaid ystyried inni ddechrau hwn yn 2010 gyda'r prosiectau arloesol. Rwy'n meddwl ein bod wedi gweld digon o dystiolaeth bod rhaid inni symud ymlaen yn y ffordd hon. Mae'n rhaid i wasanaethau cymdeithasol ac iechyd weithio ar y cyd.

[235] Rydym wedi deddfu; dyma esiampl o ddeddfu i wneud yn siŵr bod hynny'n digwydd ac i rannu'r arian a'r adnoddau sydd ar gael gyda'r sector gwirfoddol hefyd. Rwy'n hollol siŵr ei fod yn iawn i fynd â hwn yn ei flaen fel bod y timau hyn ar gael ar draws Cymru.

[236] **Simon Thomas:** Diolch am hynny. Hoffwn droi at y gwasanaeth mabwysiadu arfaethedig. Byddwch yn gwybod bod y pwyllgor wedi bod yn edrych ar y gwasanaeth hwn ac wedi derbyn tystiolaeth sy'n awgrymu bod rhai yn chwilio am asiantaeth yn hytrach na gwasanaeth. Boed hynny fel y bo, a allwch esbonio pa ddarpariaeth rydych wedi ei gwneud yn y gyllideb ar gyfer y gwasanaeth arfaethedig hwn? Yn ogystal, pa ddarpariaeth neu ba

Gwenda Thomas: To assist the IFSS schemes and to roll them out across Wales. We want to do that before the end of 2013, which is earlier than we had anticipated that we could do it, and we are rolling it out now in the western bay area, which includes Neath Port Talbot, Bridgend and Swansea. That will mean that, by the time that we have reached our aim, there will be 10 teams operating across Wales. Our ability to roll this out has given me a boost.

Simon Thomas: Thank you for giving us that confirmation, Deputy Minister. How does this all fit together? The progress report on the programme for government says that you will evaluate these pioneer projects next year, but the budget says that you will roll them out anyway. I want an assurance that you are not putting the cart before the horse and that you will learn the lessons before you progress to roll out the scheme.

Gwenda Thomas: There is no question in my mind that this scheme is of benefit to vulnerable families and children. We must consider that we started this back in 2010 with the pioneer projects. I think that we have seen sufficient evidence that we have to move forward in this way. Social services and health have to work jointly.

We have legislated; this is an example of legislating to ensure that that happens and to share the money and the resources that are available with the voluntary sector as well. I am quite sure that it is correct to move this on so that these teams are available across Wales.

Simon Thomas: Thank you for that. I would like to turn to the proposed adoption service. You will know that the committee has been looking at this service and has received evidence that suggests that some might be looking for an agency as opposed to a service. Be that as it may, can you explain to us what provision you have made in the budget for this proposed service? In addition to that, what provision or what flexibility do you have to deal with any changes? For

hyblygrwydd sydd gennych i ddelio ag unrhyw newidiadau? Er enghraifft, pe bai'r pwyllgor a phawb arall yn awgrymu newidiadau i'r model rydych yn bwriadu ei gyflwyno, a oes gennych y gallu i newid y gyllideb i ddelifro'r asiantaeth hon?

[237] **Gwenda Thomas:** Rwyf wedi bod yn hollol eglur, ynglŷn â'r Bil gwasanaethau cymdeithasol, nad oes rhagor o arian ar gael. Mae hynny'n wir ar gyfer y gwasanaeth mabwysiadu cenedlaethol hefyd. Rwyf hefyd yn hollol siŵr y gall arbedion mawr gael eu gwneud wrth i awdurdodau lleol ddod at ei gilydd i sefydlu'r gwasanaeth cenedlaethol a gweithio ar y cyd â'r sector annibynnol a'r sector gwirfoddol. Mae'r enillion cymdeithasol ar gyfer pob plentyn sy'n cael ei fabwysiadu yn llwyddiannus yn cyfateb i £1 miliwn; dyna faint y gellir ei arbed ar gyfer cymdeithas a'r system. Mae hynny'n beth mawr inni ganolbwyntio arno. Nid wyf yn rhagweld y bydd newidiadau mawr i'r hyn rydym yn ei gynnig yn awr. Mae ychydig o waith i'w wneud, ond y peth pwysig yw y bydd hwn yn well i blant bach sy'n aros i gael eu mabwysiadu a bydd yn well i'r rhieni sy'n barod i gymryd y cam hwnnw.

[238] **Simon Thomas:** I fod yn glir—ac rwy'n derbyn y pwynt cyffredinol rydych yn ei wneud—mae'r £1 miliwn yn dod yn nes ymlaen ym mywyd y person ifanc; nid ydych yn ei weld yn syth. Felly, os oes costau o ran sefydlu'r gwasanaeth newydd, rydych yn disgwyl talu'r costau sefydlu hynny allan o'r arbedion a ddaw o ganlyniad i ddod â phawb at ei gilydd.

[239] **Gwenda Thomas:** Bydd yn rhaid inni wneud hynny.

[240] **Aled Roberts:** Mae'r gyllideb ddrafft yn dangos bod £527,000 yn ychwanegol wedi'i ddyrannu ar gyfer costau rhedeg Gwasanaeth Cynghori a Chynorthwyo Llys i Blant a Theuluoedd Cymru. Ar gyfer beth yn union y mae'r cyllid ychwanegol hwn?

[241] **Gwenda Thomas:** Hoffwn ddweud fy mod yn falch iawn â'r ffordd y mae CAF/CASS wedi datblygu dros y flwyddyn ddiwethaf a'r ffordd y mae pethau'n mynd. Mae 90% o'r gyllideb i dalu am staff. Rydym

example, should the committee and everyone else suggest changes to the model that you intend to introduce, do you have the ability to change the budget to deliver this agency?

Gwenda Thomas: I have been completely clear, with regard to the social services Bill, that there is no more money available. That is also true for the national adoption service, but I am also completely certain that substantial savings can be made as a result of local authorities coming together to establish the national service and work in partnership with the independent and voluntary sectors. The social return for each child who is adopted successfully corresponds to £1 million; that is how much can be saved for society and the system. That is a substantial thing for us to concentrate on. I do not foresee that there will be major changes to what we are offering at present. There is a bit more work to do, but the important thing is that this will improve the situation for the children who are waiting to be adopted and it will be better for the parents who are ready to take that step.

Simon Thomas: To be clear—and I accept the general point that you are making—the £1 million comes later in the life of the young person; you do not see it immediately. Therefore, if there are costs associated with establishing the new service, you expect to pay those set-up costs from the savings that will be achieved by everyone working together.

Gwenda Thomas: We will have to do that.

Aled Roberts: The draft budget shows that an additional £527,000 has been allocated for Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service Cymru's running costs. What specifically is this additional funding for?

Gwenda Thomas: I would like to say that I am very pleased with the way in which CAF/CASS has developed over the last year and with how things are progressing. Ninety per cent of the budget is to pay staff. We

wedi gweld gostyngiad yn y timau o 10 i bump, a'r rheini ag ôl troed, fel rydym yn awgrymu, yn y gwasanaeth iechyd. Mae CAFCASS yn cynnig gwasanaeth i 8,000 o blant bob blwyddyn. Rydym wedi gweld gostyngiad o hyd at 85% yn yr amser aros. Credaf fod hynny'n llwyddiant. Mae CAFCASS hefyd yn helpu i yrru ymlaen y gwaith o ddiwygio cyfiawnder teuluol. Mae hynny'n hollbwysig ac yn mynd law yn llaw â'r cynllun mabwysiadu, wrth gwrs. Rydym hefyd wedi gweld y nifer uchaf rydym wedi ei gweld erioed o blant sydd am dderbyn gwasanaeth oddi wrth CAFCASS. Mae'r gwasanaeth hefyd yn ystyried gwahanol ffyrdd o weithio. Credaf y bydd y buddsoddiad yn CAFCASS yn beth positif iawn o ran hybu'r gwaith sy'n cael ei wneud i wella'r gwasanaeth.

[242] **Aled Roberts:** Felly, costau staff ychwanegol yw hwn.

12.00 p.m.

[243] **Gwenda Thomas:** Na, ni ddywedais hynny; mae 90% o'r gyllideb yn talu am staff. Mae'n rhaid cael staff sy'n arbenigo yn y gwaith hwn ac yn cydweithio â'r llysoedd. Bydd yr adolygiad cyfiawnder teuluol yn ei gwneud yn ofynnol fod y broses hon yn mynd yn ei blaen yn gynt o lawer. Mae rôl CAFCASS yn hynny yn hollbwysig. Rwy'n ddiolchgar i brif weithredwr CAFCASS am y gwelliannau a wnaed i'r broses hon, a hefyd yng ngwaith CAFCASS yn gyffredinol.

[244] **Christine Chapman:** We are over time, but I will take a final question from Aled.

[245] **Aled Roberts:** Rydych yn dweud yn eich tystiolaeth bod swyddogion wedi rhoi sicrwydd i chi eu bod wedi cwblhau asesiadau effaith ar hawliau plant, ac, o ganlyniad, bod unrhyw benderfyniad o ran cyllideb yn adlewyrchu hawliau plant. Pa dystiolaeth sydd gennych i wneud y datganiad hwnnw?

[246] **Gwenda Thomas:** Ers mis Mai, mae'n ofynnol i Weinidogion sylwi a chanolbwyntio ar hawliau plant. Rwy'n meddwl ein bod wedi gweld y broses yn datblygu o hynny. Rydym yn gweld yn awr bod yn rhaid i swyddogion ddweud wrth Weinidogion a yw'r effaith ar hawliau plant

have seen a reduction in the teams from 10 to five and, as we have suggested, they have a footprint in the health service. CAFCASS provides a service to 8,000 children in any given year. We have seen a reduction of up to 85% in waiting times. I believe that that is a mark of success. CAFCASS is also helping to drive forward the family justice reform. That is crucial and goes hand in hand with the adoption scheme, of course. We have also seen the highest figures ever of children requiring services from CAFCASS. The service is also looking at different ways of working. I believe that the investment in CAFCASS is extremely positive in promoting the work that is being done to improve the service.

Aled Roberts: So, they are additional staff costs.

Gwenda Thomas: No, I did not say that; 90% of the budget goes to pay for staff. It is necessary to have staff who specialise in this work and work jointly with courts. The family justice review will make it a requirement that this process goes ahead much more quickly. CAFCASS's role in that is extremely important. I am grateful to the chief executive of CAFCASS for the improvements made to this process, and also in the general work of CAFCASS.

Aled Roberts: You say in your evidence that officials have given you an assurance that they have completed impact assessments on children's rights, and that, as a result, any budget decisions reflect children's rights. What evidence do you have for making that statement?

Gwenda Thomas: Since last May, Ministers have been required to note and focus on children's rights. I believe that we have seen the process develop from that. We now see that officials have to tell Ministers whether the impact on children's rights has been considered. I believe that that ensures that the

wedi cael ei hystyried. Rwy'n meddwl bod hynny'n gallu sicrhau bod y polisiâu a'r gyllideb yn ymatebol i hawliau plant, sy'n hollbwysig. Mae'n dda gweld faint rydym yn gwrando ar blant.

policies and the budget are responsive to children's rights, which is vital. It is good to see how much we listen to children.

[247] O ran gwasanaethau cymdeithasol a'r Bil, rwy'n sefydlu panel o ddinasyddion sy'n cynnwys plant a phobl ifanc. Mae'n bwysig gwrando arnynt. Mae'r Gweinidog Cyllid, Jane Hutt, hefyd wedi cynhyrchu taflen—rwy'n siŵr eich bod wedi ei gweld—yn esbonio'r gyllideb i blant. Roedd yn esbonio llawer i minnau hefyd—roeddwn yn falch iawn o'i darllen fy hun, a dweud y gwir. Rwyf hefyd yn cymeradwyo'r ffaith y byddwn yn siarad â phlant a phobl ifanc yn ystod y broses o lunio'r gyllideb derfynol.

In terms of social services and the Bill, I am establishing a citizen panel that will include children and young people. It is important to listen to them. The Minister for Finance, Jane Hutt, has also produced a leaflet—I am sure that you have seen it—explaining the budget to children. It explained much to me, too—I was very pleased to read it myself, to be honest. I also applaud the fact that we will be talking to children and young people in the process of drawing up the final budget.

[248] **Christine Chapman:** Committee members also welcomed that leaflet from the Minister for Finance. I thank the Minister, Deputy Minister and the ministerial team for attending this morning and for answering Members' questions.

12.03 p.m.

**Cynnig o dan Reol Sefydlog Rhif 17.42 i Benderfynu Gwahardd y Cyhoedd o
Weddill y Cyfarfod a'r Cyfarfod ar 18 Hydref
Motion under Standing Order No. 17.42 to Resolve to Exclude the Public for the
Remainder of the Meeting and for the Meeting on 18 October**

[249] **Christine Chapman:** I move that

the committee resolves to exclude the public from the remainder of the meeting and for the next meeting on 18 October in accordance with Standing Order No. 17.42(ix).

[250] I see that the committee is in agreement.

*Derbyniwyd y cynnig.
Motion agreed.*

*Daeth rhan gyhoeddus y cyfarfod i ben am 12.03 p.m.
The public part of the meeting ended at 12.03 p.m.*