



**Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru  
The National Assembly for Wales**

**Y Pwyllgor Cymunedau, Cydraddoldeb a Llywodraeth Leol  
The Communities, Equality and Local Government  
Committee**

**Dydd Iau, 13 Mawrth 2014  
Thursday, 13 March 2014**

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

The 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**

Leighton Andrews

Llafur

	Labour
Peter Black	Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru Welsh Liberal Democrats
Christine Chapman	Llafur (Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor) Labour (Committee Chair)
Jocelyn Davies	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales
Janet Finch-Saunders	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Mike Hedges	Llafur Labour
Mark Isherwood	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Gwyn R. Price	Llafur Labour
Jenny Rathbone	Llafur Labour
Rhodri Glyn Thomas	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales
Joyce Watson	Llafur (yn dirprwyo ar ran Jenny Rathbone) Labour (substitute for Jenny Rathbone)

**Eraill yn bresennol**  
**Others in attendance**

Stephen Chapman	Cydgysylltydd Atal Masnachu Pobl Anti-Human-Trafficking Co-ordinator
Huw Evans	Tim Datblygu Llyfrgelloedd CyMAL CyMAL Library Development Team
John Griffiths	Y Gweinidog Diwylliant a Chwaraeon Minister for Culture and Sport
Lesley Griffiths	Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Busnes y Llywodraeth Minister for Local Government and Government Business
Linda Tomos	Cyfarwyddwr CyMAL CyMAL Director

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

Sarah Beasley	Clerc Clerk
Leanne Hatcher	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk
Hannah Johnson	Y Gwasanaeth Ymchwil Research Service
Robin Wilkinson	Y Gwasanaeth Ymchwil Research Service

*Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 09:17.*  
*The meeting began at 09:17.*

**Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon  
Introductions, Apologies and Substitutions**

[1] **Christine Chapman:** Good morning and welcome to the National Assembly for Wales's Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee. I remind Members that if they have any mobile phones they should be switched off as they affect the transmission. We have not had any apologies this morning.

09:17

**Ymchwiliad i Lyfrgelloedd Cyhoeddus yng Nghymru: Sesiwn Dystiolaeth—Y  
Gweinidog Diwylliant a Chwaraeon  
Inquiry into Public Libraries in Wales: Evidence Session—The Minister for  
Culture and Sport**

[2] **Christine Chapman:** I am very pleased that we have with us the Minister for Culture and Sport. This is the final evidence session of our inquiry into public libraries in Wales. I welcome the Minister, John Griffiths AM; Linda Tomos, director of CyMAL: Museums Archives and Libraries Wales; and Huw Evans, from the CyMAL library development team. I welcome you all. I know that you have sent a paper in advance and that Members will have read it, so if you are happy, we will go straight into questions. I will start off. First of all, we know that the Welsh Government has conducted a review into public library services at this particular time. What were the reasons behind your decision to do that?

[3] **The Minister for Culture and Sport (John Griffiths):** It was partly because of the difficult financial circumstances that Welsh Government and local authorities across Wales face. There is a short-term element to it in order to understand those financial pressures and my duty to superintend to make sure that services are of an adequate level and quality in Wales. So, it is partly to help me to fulfil my statutory duties, but it is also to look at the standards that we have. We are moving to a fifth framework in terms of our library standards and our Libraries Inspire strategy ends in 2016, so there is a future-look element to the review as well. We want to make sure that we have resilient, top-quality library services as we move forward. The review was about those two aspects: dealing with the more immediate challenges that we all face together and making sure that we continue the progress that we have made in recent years as we move ahead.

[4] **Christine Chapman:** You have outlined a number of concerns there. We have taken evidence on this, but have you disaggregated data showing the use of libraries by, for example, different demographic groups, such as children, young people, older people and disabled people? If you have, will you publish the data?

[5] **John Griffiths:** We have conducted quite a lot of research ourselves through Welsh Government officials. There have also been a number of surveys. I have with me Carnegie UK Trust-commissioned research into public library services, which was UK wide, but involved over 1,000 participants from Wales. It is very positive in terms of the public in Wales valuing our library services and the progress that we have made. Some of this work is broken down by age—adults and children—by gender, and, I think, by socioeconomic background. So, there is quite a wealth of information that will feed into the review, together with the evidence that this committee has taken.

[6] **Christine Chapman:** Could you provide that data to us?

[7] **John Griffiths:** I would very happy to; I believe that it is all publicly available, but we will provide it.

[8] **Christine Chapman:** We will make sure that committee members have that. Thank you. Jenny, I think that you have a question.

[9] **Jenny Rathbone:** Following that up, the reason that you have this profile of individuals is because these are data that they are asked to provide when they sign up for their library card initially. Is that how you know what socioeconomic group these are within?

[10] **John Griffiths:** There are a variety of sources for the information. It is mainly survey based.

[11] **Jenny Rathbone:** Okay, so that is asking people whether or not they use a library. I am interested to know exactly how you measure the excellent 11% increase in library use in Wales, compared with a decline in England; that is very important. If someone goes into the library, just browses and does not take out a book, is that captured, or is it only someone who asks to use the internet or takes a book out that is captured?

[12] **John Griffiths:** Basically, it is usage of services. If someone wandered into the library and wandered out again without using any services, I do not think that would be captured. I will ask Huw to come in here.

[13] **Christine Chapman:** Linda wanted to come in as well. It is up to you, but—

[14] **Ms Tomos:** I bow to the superior knowledge of my colleague. [*Laughter.*]

[15] **Mr Evans:** Some of the information is captured in annual surveys by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, which collects statistics every year. Part of those statistics is around visits. So, if you visit a library without being a member, that visit would be captured. CIPFA statistics also capture things like book loans, non-multimedia items loaned and internet use—things like 1.9 million of internet hours in public libraries annually and that sort of stuff. So, between the Carnegie UK Trust survey, the CIPFA statistics and the research commissioned by CyMAL, there is a wide range of evidence available to inform policy.

[16] **Jenny Rathbone:** So, the person who goes into the library every day to read the newspaper, but does not take out any books is captured.

[17] **Mr Evans:** It is captured as a visit.

[18] **Jenny Rathbone:** Excellent; thank you.

[19] **Christine Chapman:** Jenny, before you move on to your next one, I think that Janet had a supplementary.

[20] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** Apart from research by CIPFA and the Carnegie survey that you have mentioned, which to a lot of people would be considered as being far removed, how much interaction with the general public goes into your survey work?

[21] **Mr Evans:** I will mention another survey, therefore, called CIPFA plus.

[22] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** It would not mean a lot to a lot of people.

[23] **Mr Evans:** As part of the public library standards, every library authority has to conduct, within a three-year period, a survey of child and adult usage in their library to capture things like satisfaction, et cetera. Also, as part of the evaluation of Libraries Inspire, Scotinform, which undertakes the independent evaluation for us, conducts focus groups et

cetera.

[24] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** Thank you. The same question to the Minister: how do you feel that the Welsh Government interacts generally with our public, library users and non-users in Wales, so as to give you really good, definitive evidence?

[25] **John Griffiths:** It is through the surveys and the focus groups, as Huw has mentioned. We rely on our local authorities and library services to interact with the public very strongly, which they do in terms of providing the library service and collecting that information, and it is very much part of the standards that there should be that close working with other local communities throughout Wales.

[26] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** Does CyMAL interact widely with the public?

[27] **John Griffiths:** Yes, particularly through local authority library services.

[28] **Jenny Rathbone:** Just coming back to the financial situation that all libraries face and, indeed, the Government faces—we all have to do more with less—on the free internet access that everybody can enjoy in libraries, is that paid for as a single contract, or do local authorities have to have their own arrangement with the internet provider?

[29] **John Griffiths:** Each local authority has its own contract in terms of computer systems and internet provision, but we are moving towards an all-Wales management system and we will procure that and lead that procurement from Welsh Government. It will mean that all the systems are compatible and it would then be possible to have a library card that allowed access to public libraries across Wales, which would be very useful. However, it would also be more cost-effective. It would be a procurement that would save money for our local library services, so it really would improve quality. It would be more comprehensive and consistent across Wales and save money at the same time. So, that will be a very important development and, in the next financial year, we will be rolling out the first phase of that procurement in north Wales.

[30] **Jenny Rathbone:** So, you see it as a stepped measure. Why is it not possible to do an all-Wales procurement?

[31] **John Griffiths:** It will be all-Wales, but it will be rolled out in a phased way, which is to do with available resource.

[32] **Mr Evans:** Also, the companies have indicated that they prefer to do it in a phased way, because of their capacity et cetera. We will probably learn a lot from that first phase, as with any ICT project, that we can fine-tune for the second and third phase.

[33] **Jenny Rathbone:** Thank you very much for that. Similarly, magazines are now offered through the public library service as an e-service. Once again, is it each local authority contracting with x, y, or z motoring magazine? How is that done?

[34] **John Griffiths:** I will bring Huw in on the detail, but this is very much an all-Wales scheme that we invite local library services to be part of. The National Library of Wales is very important to us, of course, in terms of digital inclusion and rolling out access to online services. Neath Port Talbot library service is taking a lead role as well, so we are coordinating right across Wales to make sure that it is as comprehensive and consistent as possible. So, it is very much an all-Wales service that we are working towards, but in terms of where we are on that journey and the technical details, perhaps Huw, or possibly Linda, could—

[35] **Ms Tomos:** The digital library offer, certainly in UK terms, and I think internationally as well, is going to be a rather unique product. For the first time, we will be not only involving public libraries getting together, as the Minister has indicated, with immediate cost savings there, but also university, further education and health libraries coming together to form a genuine Welsh digital library. The National Library of Wales is leading on the initial work here to do with the scope and to bring things together. It is a very exciting development and certainly one that is very much in tune with the collaboration and co-operation that, to be fair, has always been there, but what has been missing is some leadership. Through Welsh Government, the national library is providing that initial leadership and scope.

[36] **Christine Chapman:** Jocelyn has a question.

[37] **Jocelyn Davies:** I joined this quite recently, because of the evidence that I heard. You have to be a member of a local library and then you just go on to the Welsh Libraries website and you can sign up for the magazines and get them on your tablet; it is as simple as that.

[38] **John Griffiths:** We should say as well, Chair, that it is quite an amazing offer when you think that you can get all these, what would otherwise be very expensive magazines, free of charge, whether it is the *National Geographic* or any other magazine. Many people, now that they are becoming aware of that offer, are very keen to be part of it.

09:30

[39] **Jenny Rathbone:** From the library user's perspective, that is excellent, but who pays? The BMJ or whoever will want to get some sort of subscription for this offer.

[40] **Mr Evans:** It is a partnership between Welsh Government and local authorities. At the moment, it is part grant funded, and part funded by the local authorities, to get it off the ground. So, it really is a true collaboration and a wonderful service. I would recommend it to everybody.

[41] **Jocelyn Davies:** Perhaps we could have some figures from you on how many people have signed up for that.

[42] **Mr Evans:** It has trebled in three months, I think, from the start.

[43] **Jocelyn Davies:** Yes, but if there was one person before and there are two now, it depends what trebling means, does it not?

[44] **Mr Evans:** In January, there were 15,800 downloads, which, in a short period of time, is very good progress.

[45] **Jenny Rathbone:** It sounds fantastic, but in the context of the reduction in everybody's budget, I am keen to find out how it is being paid for, what it costs and whether there is any potential for future savings by having it procured as an all-Wales service.

[46] **Mr Evans:** It is procured as an all-Wales service. Those savings have been achieved; it is procured on an all-Wales basis by a lead authority. So, once again, it is an excellent example of Welsh Government working closely with local authorities. The saving has been made, and our job now is to promote it and get as many people as possible to benefit from the usage.

[47] **Jenny Rathbone:** In terms of the challenge, Minister, of continuing to deliver excellent library services with less money, is there any other particular thing that you would

like to highlight that libraries could all be thinking about doing?

[48] **John Griffiths:** Absolutely. Co-location is a very good example of how library services can both increase the value of the work that they do, by reaching new audiences and increasing usage quite substantially while at the same time saving money, because they are sharing overhead costs with other services.

[49] Since I have been Minister, I have seen some really good examples. I went to Caerphilly library, for example, which benefited from a Welsh Government community library development grant and is co-located with the council's one-stop shop services. It has a museum space, it is in a very good location, it has a range of community activities and it is well used.

[50] I went to Bridgend, where they co-located the library service with the leisure centre, and they have had impressive increases in usage, because people who previously used the leisure centre but not the library service are now using both. It also works in reverse; people who used the library service, but not the leisure centre, are now increasingly using leisure services.

[51] There are all sorts of examples around Wales. There are community cafes, community development activity and a range of services being delivered, including advice services, such as Citizens Advice for example. So, there are all sorts of new and exciting partnership collaborations building, partly, perhaps, driven by the financial circumstances at the time, but also because it is just a better way of delivery that suits all the partners.

[52] **Christine Chapman:** Before I move on to other Members, I will ask you a question. Could you clarify why the amount available under the community learning library grants programme has reduced in recent years? How does that relate to a value-for-money assessment of the programme? I wonder if you could reflect on that.

[53] **John Griffiths:** We started with around £1.5 million per annum, it then increased to £3 million, and now it is £1 million. It is really a matter of available resource at any particular time. I have mentioned already, as we are all acutely aware, that the financial situation is very difficult for us and local government. However, something like 89 libraries have benefited from these grants. A great deal of good work has been done, and it has produced the increased usage and wider range of activities that are so important. Although the money has reduced, there will still be schemes in Wales moving forward. It is really important that we still have a capital grant scheme in current circumstances. Although the amounts involved will vary from year to year, we will ensure that that money is well used and we will continue to partner with local authorities around the bidding process.

[54] **Peter Black:** Following up on that particular point, local authorities are struggling to keep a library service alive in the present financial situation, and for the same reason you have cut this particular grant. However, a number of local authorities are looking at different ways of delivering library services, to provide them more efficiently and effectively within the budgets that they have available to them. Is this not exactly the right time to have more money for grants, to facilitate that process?

[55] **John Griffiths:** There are a variety of funding sources available to local authorities and it is not simply a matter of the Welsh Government community library development grant but we understand that there is not a great deal of resource available at the moment. Nonetheless, the Welsh Government's grant is not the only potential source. As I say, we have made substantial process, with something like 89 of our static libraries having benefited from grants and more will benefit as we move forward. I think that it is really important that the alternative models are taken forward in Wales. That is about understanding the benefits

delivered. It is investment for a purpose that will reap dividends. We are not pretending that it is easy at the current time—of course, it is not. It is difficult to find that resource.

[56] **Peter Black:** What other grants are available? How are you and CyMal working with local authorities to help them to source the funding to restructure library services within the current parameters?

[57] **John Griffiths:** There are possible sources. European money has been accessed in the past and we hope that it will be accessed in the future. There are possibilities around Big Lottery funding, which we will explore. Jeff Cuthbert, the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty, announced a £10 million pot of money for community facilities and their development. There are possibilities. Local authorities are able to borrow as well. We work with local authorities to explore this potential and to spread best practice and point them in the right direction, as it were.

[58] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** A gaf i eglurhad ynglŷn â'r arian a gyhoeddodd Jeff Cuthbert? A ydym yn sôn am arian cyfalaf ynteu arian refeniw? A ydym yn sôn am un taliad ynteu arian blynyddol?

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Could I have clarification on the funding that Jeff Cuthbert announced? Is it capital funding or revenue funding? Are we talking about one-off funding or recurrent funding?

[59] **John Griffiths:** I am not sure whether officials can help with this—this is not their department.

[60] **Mr Evans:** Arian cyfalaf yw hwn ac rwy'n meddwl mai taliad unwaith yn unig ydyw i ddatblygu gwasanaethau cymunedol, nid arian blynyddol i gynnal gwasanaeth. Yn y datganiad i'r wasg i gyd-fynd â'r arian, crybwyllwyd y byddai'n addas ar gyfer llyfrgelloedd sy'n cael eu rheoli gan y gymuned a'r math hwnnw o ddatblygiad. Fodd bynnag, un o'r ffynonellau yn unig yw hwn. Mae enghreifftiau eraill o lyfrgelloedd sydd wedi cael eu hadnewyddu drwy arian adfywio—ym Margoed drwy arian Ewropeaidd ac yn llyfrgell Bangor drwy arian loteri. Mae nifer o wahanol enghreifftiau o sut y mae llyfrgelloedd yn cael eu hariannu—manteision pan gaiff archfarchnad ei datblygu. Rwy'n gwybod fod Caerdydd wedi datblygu llyfrgelloedd gydag arian yn sgîl arian cynllunio—manteision cynllunio ac yn y blaen. Mae amryw o ffynonellau wedi cael eu defnyddio ac, yn amlwg, rydym yn edrych am unrhyw rai newydd i gynorthwyo gwasanaethau lleol i ddatblygu llyfrgelloedd.

**Mr Evans:** It is capital funding and I think that it is a one-off payment to develop community services, rather than recurrent funding. In the press release to coincide with the funding, it mentioned that it would be appropriate for libraries that are managed by the community and that kind of development. However, it is only one source. There are other examples of libraries that have been renewed with regeneration funding—in Bargoed with European funding and in Bangor with lottery money. There are many different examples of how libraries are funded—the benefits that arise as a result of supermarkets being developed. I know that Cardiff has developed libraries with funding from planning funds—planning benefits and so on. A variety of sources have been used and, obviously, we are looking for any new ones to support the development of local library services.

[61] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Mae'n amlwg bod hynny i'w groesawu yn fawr ond gallai greu problemau yn y dyfodol, oherwydd os ydych yn cael un taliad cyfalaf, mae'r problemau o gynnal y gwasanaeth hwnnw yn y blynyddoedd sy'n dilyn yn codi.

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** It is clear that that is to be welcomed but it could create problems in the future, because if you get a capital payment, the problems of sustaining that service in the years to come arise. We all know about projects where the initial funding



Rydym i gyd yn gwybod am brosiectau lle mae'r arian cychwynnol wedi bod yn fanteisiol iawn ond mae problemau wedi codi o ran cynnal y gwasanaeth. Gallai'r taliad hwnnw, yn eironig, greu problemau i chi yn y dyfodol. Gallai pobl droi atoch chi a gofyn am gymorth i gynnal gwasanaeth a sefydlwyd gyda'r arian hwnnw.

has been helpful but there have been problems in terms of maintaining that service. That one-off payment, ironically, could create problems for you in the future. People could turn to you and ask for help to support the services that were established through that funding.

[62] **John Griffiths:** Well, I think that is where we come back to what Peter Black said. If it is money that is going to produce a better and more cost-effective way of working, in terms of the alternative models for delivery, obviously there is a strong connection between that and achieving resilience for the future through the expenditure of that money.

[63] **Mike Hedges:** [*Inaudible.*]—In Swansea, we have two university libraries, we have a load of council libraries, every school has a library, and we have the school library service. I do not think that I have missed anything, but I may have. Is there not some way that we can rationalise that somewhat, so that we can provide the same service but people can perhaps share a bit better? Everybody is very tight on looking after what is theirs, and so sharing does not work.

[64] **John Griffiths:** I think that that is absolutely right. We have three regional collaborations or partnerships in Wales that are very much about pulling together those that provide library services and making sure that there is access to all of those libraries for the community in general. I am hoping very much to take forward a scheme to make every child in Wales a library member in the short term. We need to look at how we connect our school libraries with our public libraries more effectively. I think the universities in Wales have been very good in allowing access to their collections, which is very important, given the wealth of knowledge and material contained within those collections. So, we have a good story to tell in terms of joining up, and it is the regional partnerships that drive that.

[65] **Peter Black:** I was going to say, in response to Rhodri Glyn, that that is quite an extension of what the community facilities and activities programme has been used for in the past. I think it needs to be tested with that particular Minister as to exactly how it is going to be used in that way.

[66] Moving on to the statutory basis of the library service, I was wondering whether you consider the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 is fit for purpose and whether you are considering revising it, Minister.

[67] **John Griffiths:** This is the province of the review that I have set up. The review panel will look at our current statutory framework, and at whether any changes are needed. So, that will be a significant aspect of the work that it carries out for us.

[68] **Peter Black:** You obviously have powers under that Act. Although the Wales public library standards are not statutory guidance, they set out what you expect of local authorities, in terms of how they deliver libraries. Given that some of the local authorities' changes will possibly step outside that guidance, in terms of the final outcome of their restructuring, have you ever considered using the powers available to you, and under what circumstances would you use those powers?

[69] **John Griffiths:** I regard the powers as a last resort. It is obviously a very draconian step to hold an inquiry into a local library service or to withdraw that service from the local authority concerned. So, we are much more about working with our local authorities in taking forward improvements through the standards. The standards help me fulfil my duty to

superintend the public library service in Wales, and they are very much a development and improvement toolkit, working towards continuous improvement. So, the Act is important. The requirement, obviously, is to have a comprehensive and efficient library service, but that is not defined within the Act. The standards are important in helping me decide whether the statutory requirements are being met. Again, this is something that the review will look at. As I said earlier, it is looking at the short term, as well as into the future.

[70] **Peter Black:** You are obviously reviewing the Welsh public library standards as well, and you are looking towards a more outcome-based model.

[71] **John Griffiths:** Yes.

[72] **Peter Black:** What exactly does that mean, and how will it be measured?

09:45

[73] **John Griffiths:** Obviously, we have yet to finalise the new framework for the standards, but it will be much more output-based. It is going to be about the skills, for example, that people develop, and the knowledge that people are able to acquire. We know that there is a whole new purpose, really, for library access in Wales, which is about developing IT skills, which are so necessary, and our requirements, obviously, around Jobmatch and universal credit. So, developing those IT skills for people, and moving nearer to the labour market, as it is described, is a very important developing purpose for our libraries. I think that the new framework for standards will want to make sure that we are entirely up to date with the current challenges facing our communities in Wales.

[74] **Peter Black:** Have you considered a site-by-site accreditation of each library based on the quality of services offered as a way of not just measuring the quality but also demonstrating to the public what qualities are available there?

[75] **John Griffiths:** I think that this is something that the review could look at. Obviously, we have an accreditation scheme for our museums in Wales, but I think that the standards are very much about that model of libraries satisfying certain requirements, which show that they are providing the quality of service that the Welsh Government expects and, indeed, our communities expect. If you look at the standards, I think you will see that they are very much about accreditation, even if it is not described in those terms as it is for our local museums in Wales.

[76] **Peter Black:** There is no formal accreditation process.

[77] **John Griffiths:** No.

[78] **Peter Black:** As you are reviewing the standards, will you consider a formal accreditation process?

[79] **John Griffiths:** We will certainly consider how the new framework for standards is best shaped. Again, as I have said, our review will deal with those matters also.

[80] **Christine Chapman:** Mark, did you have any questions?

[81] **Mark Isherwood:** Yes, thank you. First, I just have a supplementary question, if I may. In your paper, you say that there is 'no tradition of intervention' by UK Governments using the powers under the 1964 Act. Does that mean that there has been no intervention, or are there any examples that could be shared with us?

[82] **John Griffiths:** I will ask our officials whether they are aware of any examples. I am not aware of any myself, but, when we spoke of there being no tradition of intervention, the main point was that, for the rest of the UK, as for Wales, it has been very much about working with local authorities and local library services in a spirit of partnership in a very constructive way. A lot of improvement and enhancement of services has taken place through that approach. So, it has not been a matter of wielding a big stick, as it were; it has been a matter of working together in a strengthening partnership. I do not know whether our officials are aware of any examples of the use of statutory powers in the UK.

[83] **Christine Chapman:** Would you like to comment, Linda?

[84] **Ms Tomos:** There are some examples, although not all that recent, but there is a recent influential report on the Wirral library service, done by Sue Charteris, where she was asked to look at these sorts of issues and came back with some quite helpful guidelines around public consultation and whether that was adequate before libraries were considered for closure, and also looking at equality impacts, and what difference not having the library would make to those people in that community. Those guidelines, I think, certainly were incorporated in our policy work, because they did seem very much like common sense. One would hope that local authorities would be taking out those measures and, certainly, in terms of the advice that the Minister provides, it is about asking local authorities, if they are radically changing the provision of libraries in a community, to certainly undertake full public consultation and equality impacts. That certainly was the influence of that recent report. For me, that is probably the most influential intervention in terms of changing attitudes and behaviours. I do not think that you had anything to add, Huw.

[85] **Mr Evans:** No, that was the main one.

[86] **Mark Isherwood:** Of course, Wirral was part of the ancient kingdom of Gwynedd, apparently, but there we are. Moving on, in the Minister's paper you indicate a number of other important delivery areas linked to the services provided by libraries, such as lifelong learning, social inclusion, digital development and so on. To what extent are you able to ensure that these varying contributions made by libraries are recognised across the policy spectrum within the Welsh Government?

[87] **John Griffiths:** Well, libraries play a very important and wide-ranging role in our communities. I said in the Chamber the other week that the local library that I was familiar with growing up still has 'knowledge is power' written on a keystone at the front of the building. It is very much about empowering communities and individuals, so the acquisition of knowledge is obviously a core part of the purpose of our libraries, but their purpose has become increasingly wide as the years have gone by and all sorts of community activities take place in our libraries now. We have links with the health department here in Welsh Government through the prescription of books for mental health issues, and that is recognised in the funding to provide that service. Obviously, we work very closely with our education department around literacy. The summer reading challenge and World Book Day are examples. Again, funding reflects that. As I say, I hope that we will be able to make every child in Wales a member of our libraries, and joint working with schools will, hopefully, strengthen as a result.

[88] I also mentioned that universal credit and Jobmatch are very important recent developments. There has been a pilot scheme in Caerphilly, for example, where DWP job centres have worked with the local authority to make sure that people are upskilled and that they have the skills to use the ICT equipment and are able to use the ICT equipment in the library to fulfil the requirements made of them. It is important that that new role of our libraries is recognised. I would hope that that is recognised by funding from UK Government. That is a case we will be making and have made.

[89] **Mark Isherwood:** On that point, have the libraries on Deeside been brought on board for the roll-out of universal credit on 8 April in Shotton?

[90] **John Griffiths:** I do not know whether officials are able to assist in answering that, Chair. I am not aware of that myself.

[91] **Mr Evans:** I am not aware of any details to date.

[92] **Mark Isherwood:** Given your reference to universal credit as one of the projects in which libraries are engaged, quite rightly, and given that that is the first full roll-out in Wales, it would be important to hear about that.

[93] **John Griffiths:** We will certainly pursue details on that following this committee meeting today.

[94] **Christine Chapman:** Please could you send details of what you find to the committee?

[95] **John Griffiths:** Certainly. Yes.

[96] **Christine Chapman:** Mark, do you want to continue?

[97] **Mark Isherwood:** What assessment has been made of the role of CyMAL as an organisation within Government, supporting and developing libraries, by comparison with England, where, as I am sure you are aware, the equivalent role is undertaken outside Government by the Arts Council England? Is CyMAL able to operate sufficiently at arm's length to operate with independence when appropriate? Is everything desirable by comparison with the situation in England?

[98] **John Griffiths:** We think that the model we have here in Wales is working very well. If you look at the Carnegie Trust-commissioned work, for example, you will see that it shows that public satisfaction with our library services is stronger and better in Wales than in England. Our usage figures are also better than those in England. So, we feel that we have made very substantial progress with our library services here in Wales with the model we have. The partnership with local authorities and the valuing of the support that comes from CyMAL are very strong. So, I think that we are in a good position. However, we obviously never rest on our laurels and we face new challenges. So, we will, through the review and other work, continually assess where we are in Wales and how we make further improvement.

[99] **Mark Isherwood:** I do not know whether CyMAL can comment or whether, as it is a political decision, you have to reserve judgment publicly.

[100] **John Griffiths:** I think that these are largely political matters. [*Laughter.*]

[101] **Ms Tomos:** Minister, may I make a professional comment? I think that it has been helped by the fact that three quarters of the staff of CyMAL are from the sector or the profession themselves and are therefore very experienced in the sector's work. That does not argue for or against the model, but that is in very direct contrast with the situation in ACE, the Arts Council England, where they do not have that strength of professional advice to advise the Minister.

[102] **Christine Chapman:** Huw, do you want—

[103] **Mark Isherwood:** So, it has expertise—

[104] **Christine Chapman:** Sorry, Huw wanted to answer as well, Mark.

[105] **Mark Isherwood:** Oh, sorry, Huw.

[106] **Mr Evans:** I have read with interest the written and oral evidence that you have received, and I think that some of the comments regarding the value of the 'Libraries Inspire' strategy speak for themselves. I think that the strategy has been well received in Wales and has been looked at enviously by people from some of the other UK countries.

[107] **John Griffiths:** I will just add to that, Chair, that I think that it is very valuable that this committee is undertaking this work at the current time; it is going to be important for our review. The evidence that you have gathered and the report that you will produce will be very significant.

[108] **Christine Chapman:** I know that Mark wants to come in again, but I just want to remind Members that we are running very short of time, because we have another Minister coming in, as you know, later on. I ask that you are as concise as possible, because we should try to finish at 10.15 a.m.

[109] **Mark Isherwood:** This is my final question. The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals recommended an annual report on the state of libraries in Wales. Will you commit to publishing such a report?

[110] **John Griffiths:** We have annual reports published for all of the local authorities in Wales as part of the monitoring and assessment that take place under the standards; all of that is publicly available. However, I am very happy to consider again, perhaps, through the review process that we have under way, whether there might be a Wales-wide annual report by me, as Minister, particularly if the committee feels that that would be useful.

[111] **Christine Chapman:** Thank you. I now move on to Gwyn.

[112] **Gwyn R. Price:** Good morning, everybody. Could you tell me how you ensure that local authorities' plans to reduce the levels of library services do not have a disproportionately large effect on vulnerable members of society? Also, do the local authorities tell you in advance of their plans, so that you could, perhaps, co-operate?

[113] **John Griffiths:** We work with local authorities very closely, and I have regular meetings with the lead officials and cabinet members. Of course, our officials are constantly working with local authorities to understand their current thinking and plans. So, it is a close working relationship, but local authorities obviously have their autonomy. Ultimately, they have to take their own decisions, to some extent, within the parameters of legal requirements and, hopefully, our standards.

[114] However, as part of any changes that they might make, as we mentioned earlier, we expect proper consultation and we expect impact assessments to be made. They would be very much about understanding the potential impact on the more vulnerable people in our communities. I think that it is also important to say that the grant system that we discussed earlier has made some important improvements in terms of understanding access difficulties and ensuring that the more vulnerable members of our community have better access to those services.

[115] **Gwyn R. Price:** I am very grateful to you for that. Obviously, Caerphilly is an example to hold up of where they are putting services together with a one-stop shop, and places, such as Newbridge, have benefited. Thank you for that, and thank you for your

answer.

[116] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Wrth gwrs, Weinidog, mae gan awdurdodau lleol gyfrifoldebau statudol o ran darparu gwasanaethau llyfrgell. A ydych yn pryderu bod unrhyw awdurdod lleol yng Nghymru yn agos at fethu â darparu'r cyfrifoldeb statudol hwnnw? Sut ydych yn monitro'r sefyllfa, a pha gamau fydddech chi'n eu cymryd pe tasech chi'n pryderu bod yna fethiant yn digwydd o ran y ddarpariaeth statudol honno?

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Of course, Minister, local authorities have a statutory responsibility in terms of providing library services. Are you concerned that any local authorities in Wales are close to failing to fulfil that statutory responsibility? How are you monitoring that situation and what steps would you take if you were concerned that there could be a failure in terms of that statutory provision?

[117] **John Griffiths:** As I have said, I have had meetings, and I will continue to meet with officials in local authorities and with cabinet members. Our officials are engaged on a day-to-day basis. I do not think that it would be sensible to pre-empt any of the process that is yet to take place, because local authorities are still going through their decision-making procedures and are making final decisions. We have already seen, as part of that process of consultation and impact assessment that I mentioned, local authorities revisiting some of the initial proposals that they made, so, we have seen some movement. We discussed the powers that are available to me earlier, but, as I have said, I think that using them is very much a last resort. It is far more constructive and effective to work in close partnership.

10:00

[118] Therefore, we are at a stage at the moment where we are in constant contact with local authorities and when final decisions are eventually made, obviously, we will have to consider the position at that stage.

[119] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Rwy'n cytuno'n llwyr â'r strategaeth honno, Weinidog. Yn amlwg, y peth pwysicaf yw eich bod chi mewn cysylltiad gyda'r awdurdodau lleol. Fodd bynnag, gyda'r toriadau mewn cyllideb maent yn wynebu, mae perygl y byddant yn gweld llyfrgelloedd fel ffordd rwydd o geisio sicrhau eu bod yn gallu gweithredu o fewn y gyllideb. Mae'r cyfrifoldeb statudol hwnnw'n un pwysig iawn i'w ddiogelu yn y dyfodol.

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** I agree entirely with that strategy, Minister. Evidently, the most important thing is that you are in contact with local authorities. However, with the budget cuts that they are facing, there is a risk that they will see libraries as an easy way of trying to ensure that they can operate within those budgets. The statutory responsibility is a very important one to safeguard in the future.

[120] Hoffwn ofyn cwestiwn ynglŷn â'r system reoli Cymru gyfan hon, ar gyfer llyfrgelloedd. Sut ydych chi'n meddwl y bydd y system honno'n mynd i gynorthwyo i gynnal gwasanaeth llyfrgell a'i ddatblygu i'r dyfodol?

I want to ask a question about the all-Wales library management system. How do you think that that system will assist in sustaining library services and developing them in the future?

[121] **John Griffiths:** As we mentioned earlier, it will be more cost-effective than the current procurement by individual local authorities. So, we will see economies of scale; it will save money. However, at the same time, it will provide a better service, so it is very good news for libraries across Wales and that is why we are very committed to it. We will be rolling out that first phase in north Wales in the next financial year. It is currently very welcome.

[122] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Mae gennyf gwestiwn cyffredinol i orffen. Mae'r bobl fwyaf bregus yn y gymdeithas yn aml iawn yn bobl sy'n dibynnu ar y gwasanaeth llyfrgell am bob math o bethau erbyn hyn—mae'r hen syniad o fenthyg llyfrau wedi hen fynd. Mae cyfleoedd digidol—cyfle i ddefnyddio'r we ac yn y blaen—a dyma'r unig ffordd y gallant fanteisio ar y rheini. A ydych chi'n gysurus yn eich meddwl nad yw'r toriadau rydym yn eu gweld yn digwydd ledled Cymru o ran y gwasanaeth llyfrgell yn effeithio'n andwyol ar y bobl fregus hynny a'r cyfleoedd sy'n cael eu cynnig iddynt ar hyn o bryd?

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** I have a general question to finish. The most vulnerable people in society are often people who depend on library services for all kinds of things these days—the old idea of borrowing books has long gone. There are digital opportunities—and opportunity to use the internet and so forth—and this is the only way that they can take advantage of those. Are you comfortable in your mind that these cuts that we are seeing across Wales in terms of the library service are not detrimental to those vulnerable people and the opportunities that are being offered to them at present?

[123] **John Griffiths:** That is why there must be this process of consultation and impact assessments before final decisions are made, and we have been very clear with local authorities that those are basic requirements, as Linda stated, in terms of meeting statutory requirements. It is quite clear that those are necessary parts of the process. So, if local authorities abide by those requirements, as we expect them to do right across Wales, those would be factors that help determine the eventual decisions that they make.

[124] **Christine Chapman:** Thank you. Jocelyn is next.

[125] **Jocelyn Davies:** Minister, I am sure that you would not want these decisions made in courts. That is the last thing that we want. So, could you just remind us what your statutory duties for libraries are?

[126] **John Griffiths:** My duty is to superintend the service to make sure that there is a comprehensive and efficient library service provided across Wales.

[127] **Jocelyn Davies:** In relation to the establishment of community-managed libraries—obviously, some people see that as an option if they think that they will be losing their local authority-run service—do you see that as part of the local authority's statutory provision?

[128] **John Griffiths:** There is a role for volunteers, of course. They currently play a very important part in library service provision in Wales and that is absolutely right. There is no reason why we should not look to develop that volunteer involvement. However, we are very clear that it is a professional library service and in striking the appropriate balance, there must be that professional oversight.

[129] **Jocelyn Davies:** So, if it had a professional oversight, you would consider that a part of the statutory provision?

[130] **John Griffiths:** As long as there is that professional oversight, but I have asked for the review to look very carefully at what is an appropriate balance between volunteer involvement and professional oversight, because this is emerging as a major issue, and we want to make sure that we get the balance right.

[131] **Jocelyn Davies:** Yes. I am sure that you would not want things to be patchy and, of course, we know that even though a community-managed library can exist today, we have heard that if the people who are running the library move, that finishes, so it is a matter of succession. The communities facilities grant that would be available for libraries is, as you have said, in another Minister's department, so what will your involvement be in determining

the outcome of those grant applications?

[132] **John Griffiths:** It will be up to the relevant Minister, Jeff Cuthbert, to decide on applications, but we have had applications and we will work together because the Minister for communities very much understands the importance of libraries to communities, and we have already discussed a number of areas where communities very much rely on our libraries. They are very much the hub of local communities, as I think that all Members would recognise, and they provide a range of services and a variety of activities and they really are valued by local people. So, with that sort of background, I would hope that there will be some success for our libraries in accessing that fund.

[133] **Jocelyn Davies:** However, you would want that to be a systematic approach, would you not, rather than the Minister giving grants to open libraries without taking into consideration your statutory duty that there is an efficient and effective service across the country?

[134] **John Griffiths:** Obviously, Jeff Cuthbert has that pot of money for a variety of possible uses, and we are a part of that picture, but we have our own funding available for libraries right across Wales, and there are also the other possible sources of funding that we covered earlier. So, it is one part of the picture.

[135] **Mike Hedges:** Assuming that librarians do not have a degree in stamping books and logging on, there are skills that they have. What advice or best practice note are you providing or going to provide for volunteers running libraries to know when to refer matters or requirements to a qualified librarian, rather than trying to deal with it themselves? Perhaps not now, but at some time, would you like to talk about the provision of library services by people who are involved in talking books, and talking books in Welsh—if Rhodri Glyn Thomas was still here, he could tell me what it is called—which provide a good library service to people who have sensory loss?

[136] **John Griffiths:** To deal with the latter point, I think that that is a very important part of what we discussed earlier in terms of understanding the needs of the more vulnerable members of our society and impact assessments of any cuts that might be made. We have guidance in terms of the volunteer role and the professional oversight that is necessary, but I do feel, as I mentioned just now, that this is an important part of the work of the review process, because of the increasing importance of that volunteer element and the plans that some local library services have. So, although there is guidance in place, I think that that review body needs to look very closely at what is the most appropriate balance.

[137] **Christine Chapman:** Mike, are you finished?

[138] **Mike Hedges:** I am happy.

[139] **Christine Chapman:** Lovely. Leighton, did you have any questions?

[140] **Leighton Andrews:** Yes, you were talking about the DWP and Jobcentre Plus earlier on and the importance of libraries in that context. Do you have any data yet on the impact of local authority reductions in library services and the availability of means for people to access DWP services through digital routes?

[141] **John Griffiths:** I will bring officials in in a moment, Leighton, but, as far as I am aware, that provision of online services and help with the necessary skills is in place right across Wales and has not been damaged, as yet, by any of the changes that have taken place or been proposed in terms of people's ability to do what is required of them as part of universal credit and universal jobmatch. However, I do not know whether either Huw or



Linda have more information.

[142] **Mr Evans:** I just wanted to mention a fantastic collaborative project between Communities 2.0, Jobcentre Plus and public libraries, led by Cathryn Marcus. It is an excellent project, and she is monitoring some of this impact. I know that she is concerned about the ability in some areas to deliver some of these digital inclusion activities in the future if some of the libraries are closed. She is monitoring the situation.

[143] **Leighton Andrews:** What is the name of the project?

[144] **Mr Evans:** Communities 2.0—

[145] **Leighton Andrews:** Yes, I know that Communities 2.0 is involved, but what is the project called?

[146] **Mr Evans:** It is about delivering digital inclusion, so I suppose it is part of the Welsh Government digital inclusion strategy and it will be referenced in the new delivery plan, which is due to be published soon.

[147] **Leighton Andrews:** What has the Welsh Government specifically done in respect of the digital-by-default welfare reforms?

[148] **John Griffiths:** We have tried to work with DWP to make clear that these are additional responsibilities for our library staff in Wales and that there are training aspects in terms of library staff fulfilling a role that was not traditionally one that they delivered and that has funding implications. So, I think that our case to DWP is and will be that it should provide funding to recognise these additional requirements, which are so important for people, but whether that case is recognised and acted upon in terms of funding availability remains to be seen. However, it is certainly a case that we have made and will continue to make.

[149] **Leighton Andrews:** Are there other things that you think that you can do to improve the publicising of this wider range of services by local authorities?

[150] **John Griffiths:** Yes, I think that the promotional aspect of library services is important for us, and Wrexham library service is leading across Wales in terms of doing some work and taking action around social media, for example, and newspaper advertisements to get the central message across about what our library services offer today, which, given how wide-ranging they are, would perhaps surprise some people.

[151] **Christine Chapman:** Thank you. Janet, did you have any further questions?

[152] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** Not really; I think that most of the questions on this have been covered.

[153] **Christine Chapman:** Lovely. On that point, Minister, I thank you, Huw and Linda for attending today. I think that it has been very useful to test out some of the evidence that we have had. We will send you a transcript of the meeting, so that you can check it for factual accuracy. Thank you for attending.

[154] **John Griffiths:** Diolch yn fawr, **John Griffiths:** Thank you very much, Gadeirydd. Chair.

[155] **Christine Chapman:** The committee will be moving into a break shortly, but I wonder whether Members could stay for a couple of minutes so that we can informally

discuss some of the evidence that we have seen.

*Gohiriwyd y cyfarfod rhwng 10:12 a 10:30.  
The meeting adjourned between 10:12 and 10:30.*

**Sesiwn Graffu ar Fasnachu Pobl: Sesiwn Dystiolaeth—Y Gweinidog  
Llywodraeth Leol a Busnes y Llywodraeth  
Scrutiny Session on Human Trafficking: Evidence Session—The Minister for  
Local Government and Government Business**

[156] **Christine Chapman:** Our next item on today's agenda is a scrutiny session on human trafficking. I would like to welcome the Minister for Local Government and Government Business. I welcome, first of all, Lesley Griffiths AM, the Minister for Local Government and Government Business, and also Steve Chapman, the anti-human-trafficking co-ordinator. I welcome you both. Before we start, I also want to give a warm welcome to Joyce Watson, who is substituting for Jenny Rathbone for this item. So, welcome, Joyce.

[157] We have read the paper that you sent, Minister, so we will go straight into questions. I just wanted to point out as well that I know that Welsh Government is now referring to human trafficking as slavery. We are aware of that, but we may use the former term as well—human trafficking. I just wanted to put that on the record.

[158] I just want to start off then, Minister. Could you tell me how you are working across all ministerial portfolios to highlight the cross-cutting nature of human trafficking, particularly, as we know, in health, education, housing and business?

[159] **The Minister for Local Government and Government Business (Lesley Griffiths):** Thank you, Chair. I am very pleased to be here this morning to discuss slavery. As you say, we have recently changed the terminology, and we will probably come on to that a bit more later, but I think that slavery is absolutely what it is, and it is right that we use that word.

[160] I do work across portfolios and, in January, just before I came into post—I have been in post for just a year—the Wales anti-slavery leadership group had been set up. Senior officials from across Government work with us on that, along with officials from safeguarding and health. You will be aware that, back in January of this year, I issued a written statement that I think showed the Welsh Government's commitment to making Wales hostile to modern slavery. The statement also included a link to the anti-slavery co-ordinator's annual report. Steve also works across Government with officials.

[161] One example where we have had some good cross-departmental working was that, recently, the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty launched the future generations Bill and the national conversation around that. At the launch of that, there was reference to slavery and the work being undertaken by Welsh Government. One of the good things about having Steve in-house is that he is able to build links with all departments of Government.

[162] **Christine Chapman:** Just on Steve Chapman's role, we had a comment from the Dyfed-Powys police and crime commissioner, who told the committee that he had never heard of the anti-human-trafficking co-ordinator. I just wondered whether you would like to respond to that.

[163] **Lesley Griffiths:** I certainly would. I am absolutely stunned to hear that. I meet regularly with the PCCs—I think, over the past year, I have met them at least three times. I can honestly say that I have mentioned slavery at every meeting. If it is not an agenda item, it

has certainly been mentioned. I can remember that at the very first meeting I had in this portfolio, the Dyfed-Powys PCC did not come—he sent his deputy, Tim Burton. It was definitely raised at the first meeting, because there was something specific that I raised around it, so if Tim Burton did not go back and tell his PCC about it, clearly that is an issue. I think that it is a great shame that he said that. Clearly, that is not my recollection at all. I do know that he has a meeting coming up with you, Steve, has he not? He is coming over to Cardiff to have a meeting. Is it this month or next month?

[164] **Mr Chapman:** It is actually next Thursday.

[165] **Lesley Griffiths:** So, we have that. The other issue is that I am trying to do all I can to raise awareness. You will be aware that I had a play this week, called *Sold*, on Tuesday night; Joyce Watson was there, as was Jenny Rathbone, who I know is not here this morning, and there was one PCC who came along. I invited all the PCCs and the south Wales PCC was there.

[166] **Christine Chapman:** I know Joyce wants to come in, and then I will bring Leighton in.

[167] **Joyce Watson:** Thank you for that. I also had a meeting with the Dyfed-Powys PCC where I did raise the issue of trafficking. I have to say that I am staggered that he did not know anything about the anti-slavery co-ordinator, because the biggest ever case that has been recorded so far in terms of money being made from slavery was actually in Pembrokeshire.

[168] **Lesley Griffiths:** I should, perhaps, also say that I am aware that, at the present time, all four police forces in Wales have anti-slavery activity going on.

[169] **Christine Chapman:** Okay; I am sure that he knows about it now, after what has been said this morning.

[170] **Lesley Griffiths:** I am sure he does.

[171] **Leighton Andrews:** You are running a publicity campaign, as you said. How will you monitor the effectiveness of that, and is the move to rebrand human trafficking as slavery, as it were, part of the way in which you expect that to be indicated?

[172] **Lesley Griffiths:** The change of terminology was not a direct part of it. You will be aware that the UK Government is about to introduce a modern slavery Bill, and it is using the terminology of ‘slavery’ rather than ‘human trafficking’, ‘survivors’ rather than ‘victims’ and ‘criminals’—which is what they are; these people are criminals. So, my reason for changing the terminology was to bring it in line with the UK Government. There is something called the interdepartmental ministerial anti-slavery team, and the Prime Minister chaired an extraordinary meeting of the team back in October or November; I went along to it. That was when it really hit me that we needed our terminology to be the same.

[173] With regard to the television awareness-raising campaign and the posters on the back of the buses, which some of you may have seen, it is difficult to monitor it, because we do not know how many people will come forward and say that they are victims of slavery. So, it is something that we will have to look at—how we monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of that. Certainly, the feedback that we have had from Crimestoppers, which is the helpline, is that there has been an increase in activity. There were more than 2,000 hits on the Welsh Government’s slavery page in February, and that is something that I am monitoring. However, with regard to the strategic communications around this, I am overhauling all communications within my department, and this is an area that I particularly want to focus on.

[174] **Leighton Andrews:** To what extent is there now a sufficient evidence base on the scale of human trafficking in Wales?

[175] **Lesley Griffiths:** Unfortunately, that is an area where we do not have the evidence base that we want. I came into post a year ago and met Steve about a week after that. I knew very little about slavery, I have to say, and I asked him about the number of cases that we had had. As soon as he said the number, I realised straight away that it was a very low number. It is absolutely crucial that we have this evidence base, but there is a paucity around it, not just here, but across all Governments. The only reliable primary data source that we have is the national referral mechanism and the criminal justice system's data—the primary data. Steve decided, when he came to this post, that he would build up a secondary data system, which is something that, perhaps, I will ask him to say a bit more about. Again, this is how I know that I have discussed it with the PCCs and with the chief constables, who I meet regularly, because one of the things that the police told me was that, quite often, the crime is not reported as slavery; it is reported as something else. It could be rape, and it would be reported as rape, but really it is slavery. So, there is a huge amount of awareness-raising needed and training with the police. That is, again, something that Steve has set up and I hope that all these things that we are doing will give us the evidence base that is so crucial.

[176] **Leighton Andrews:** Okay. Do you anticipate that the change in terminology to 'slavery' will heighten awareness and heighten response?

[177] **Lesley Griffiths:** I think that it will. Due to the fact that we are doing so much work—we are really ahead of the game in Wales compared with the other UK countries—and with the modern slavery Bill that the UK Government is bringing forward, I think that it is generally being raised. We were talking outside with Peter Black. You will be aware of the film *12 Years a Slave* and when its director, Steve McQueen, won an Oscar, he said that modern slavery is going on out there. If you looked on Twitter, you could see that people were starting to be quite taken aback that this was going on out there. So, I think that all of these things together will heighten people's awareness.

[178] **Christine Chapman:** Peter is next and then Jocelyn.

[179] **Peter Black:** I would like to pick up on that. My issue with using the term 'slavery'—and I know that it is the UK Government that has effectively adopted this term anyway—is that people think of it as happening elsewhere. They think of it as happening in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in America and not in Britain; we abolished it centuries ago, and people do not think about slavery as happening here. However, people do understand the term 'human trafficking' because they have seen more cases of it. I just wonder whether we will have a problem in relating this term 'slavery' to people in Britain and making them understand that it is actually happening on their doorstep.

[180] **Lesley Griffiths:** I do not think that we will. You are absolutely right—it is going on; it is going on in our villages, in our towns and in our communities. A good example was on Tuesday night when we had the play here in the Assembly. The play focuses on a variety of characters: there is the prostitute; there is the woman whose husband forced her to have sex when he lost to people playing poker; there was the young boy who just disappeared off the street; and there was the drug dealer who was being forced to sell drugs. Somebody attended the play and then drove home. The next day, he said to me, 'When I was driving home, I passed a prostitute on the street and I thought, "It is right here; it is going on right here"'.

[181] We do not know whether that person was a slave, but do you know what I mean? It made that person realise that these things are happening in our cities and towns. It is something that we will perhaps have to monitor. I do not know, Steve, whether you want to

say anything about the terminology.

[182] **Mr Chapman:** The modern slavery Bill has the name ‘slavery’ in it because—. The Home Office used to have the human trafficking unit, but it has now changed to the modern slavery unit. The Home Office Minister used to be the Minister for Security, and then it was the Minister for Human Trafficking. She has now changed her title to the Minister for Modern Slavery and Organised Crime. So, the ‘slave’ word is being used out there. I find that when I talk about human trafficking, sometimes people look at me blankly, but when I mention ‘slave’, it catches their imagination straight away. Interestingly, on the film *12 Years a Slave*, it might have been a couple of hundred years ago, but that is going on right now. At our event on Tuesday night, we had an exhibition by Ffotogallery from Cardiff and it was able to make that link between the past and the future on cases of slavery.

[183] **Christine Chapman:** Before I bring Jocelyn in, I did not, unfortunately, but I know that some of us did see the play and it was a very powerful play. Did you say, Minister, that it would be able to be circulated more widely?

[184] **Lesley Griffiths:** Yes, what we are going to do is have a DVD made and I will ensure that every Assembly Member has a copy.

[185] **Christine Chapman:** I think that would be very useful.

[186] **Lesley Griffiths:** I think that it will be.

[187] **Christine Chapman:** I know that people made a lot of comments about it.

[188] **Lesley Griffiths:** It was very, very powerful.

[189] **Jocelyn Davies:** I am quite happy that you are using ‘modern slavery’ or ‘slavery’ although it is different, perhaps, from the images that people conjure up, especially those in *12 Years a Slave*. It is different but it is—. So, I am quite happy. I think that it is important—I am sure you would agree—that everybody uses the same term, and then we just get that message out there. In terms of the statistics, however, I know you had to use official statistics, so the figures look very small, but they are referrals into a system that people who are slaves, or have been slaves, will perhaps not want to refer themselves into. However, if you use, say, the statistics on criminal cases of rape to establish the rape figures, you would be very wrong, would you not? It is the same sort of thing, that even though those figures are small, this is a huge underestimation because these are just official statistics of the people who refer themselves.

[190] **Lesley Griffiths:** Absolutely.

[191] **Jocelyn Davies:** So, is there any way that you can think of to get a more realistic figure, so that we would at least have some idea of how widespread this is? If there are figures that just say, I do not know, 12 or something, people will think, ‘Oh, this is so rare, I do not have to look next door and I do not have to look down the street because it is so rare that it cannot possibly be happening right under my nose’.

[192] **Lesley Griffiths:** Yes, I think that you are right. One of the main achievements of your role, Steve, is the fact that we saw an increase in the first year. We have seen a significant increase. Okay, the figures are still only small, but we have seen a significant increase. So, I think that by raising awareness, people are referring themselves, but you are quite right. That is what we are saying about the secondary data and I did say that I would bring you in, Steve, to explain more about the secondary data.

[193] **Mr Chapman:** The first point is that you probably all read the newspapers a couple of weeks ago, where a man and a woman were imprisoned for running prostitutes—those two unfortunate young ladies. They did not want to enter into the national referral mechanism, so we do not have those data. If we were elsewhere, other than Wales, we would not have collected those data.

10:45

[194] Due to the fact that we have our own first responders now of New Pathways and BAWSO, for people who do not want to refer themselves, we are collecting those data. It is anonymous at the moment. I am building a secondary data set, so, while we had 50 people volunteer themselves for the national referral mechanism, we know that there were a lot more people who did not go in. I have just given you an example of just one simple case. So, what I can tell you is that my colleagues from the rest of the UK also think that it is a good idea because we are looking for the grain of truth in this, are we not? Search for the truth and—. The numbers are very small and we all know that the evidence base is crucial, but I would also say that, if we rescue one person, that is very good.

[195] **Christine Chapman:** The point is well made, Steve. Obviously, this is so devastating that it is no comfort to those few people who may be affected because their lives are absolutely traumatised.

[196] **Mr Chapman:** In addition to the national referral mechanism, the criminal justice statistics are quite right. It could start off as a slavery case and the charges could end up being money-laundering, rape—you name it—there could be a great amount of them. We are very fortunate that we have the Crown Prosecution Service on the leadership group. In Wales, we are flagging up cases from last year and, hopefully, we will be able to see any case that has a connection to slavery and, again, we will use that. However, that will be a secondary data set because the main dataset will probably be rape or money-laundering and so on.

[197] **Jocelyn Davies:** Surely your problem is that, often, it was the slaves who were being prosecuted because they were the ones who were being forced into criminal activity. Do you not have a difficulty there?

[198] **Mr Chapman:** We are working with the National Offender Management Service and the Crown Prosecution Service now, so we are looking at examples of where people have been arrested for criminal offences that they have been forced into. They are being forced to plead guilty because the criminals who are running them tell them to plead guilty. If you come from Vietnam and your family are still at home and that person has your passport, you do what that person says. So, we are looking at that and we are reviewing cases. There are new guidelines for the Crown Prosecution Service as well for prosecuting.

[199] **Christine Chapman:** I have a question from Joyce before we move on.

[200] **Joyce Watson:** I thought that it might be useful for this part of the debate to say that the NRM, the national referral mechanism, is not mandatory at the moment for adults, only for children. That is what the new modern slavery Bill seeks to address. Therefore, people have a choice whether they go through that system, and that system is the only one at the moment that actually records official data. I just thought that it might be useful to say that and to point out, as I have already done, the case that happened in Pembrokeshire. The people were not prosecuted under slavery legislation, and there were large numbers of women involved, but under money-laundering legislation. So, all those figures were lost because of the prosecution. A third point is that the training that has been put in place by this Government to help people to recognise, record and then take cases to prosecution, so that we do end up with official statistics, will, I am sure and I hope, show the true numbers. It is all

about prosecution. Yes, Jocelyn, you are absolutely right that there are a lot of people who do not get prosecuted, and that, again, skews the figures.

[201] **Lesley Griffiths:** Joyce has just raised a really important point. There is an issue around raising awareness, not just out there but with the police, and the training for the police is really important if we want to get that database. We cannot make Wales hostile to modern slavery on our own as a Government. We have to work with our partners, and the police obviously have a massive role to play.

[202] **Christine Chapman:** I think that Janet possibly wanted to come on to those issues as well. Do you have any questions, Janet?

[203] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** Yes, I have questions on resources. How does the Minister respond to the Association of Chief Police Officers on having adequate resources to cope with an increase in referrals if you have a publicity campaign?

[204] **Lesley Griffiths:** Slavery is very hidden; it is very under-reported. We have established that that is the crux of the problem. We are raising awareness to make sure that more survivors are rescued and more of the criminals who are responsible for this are arrested. Steve works very closely with the ACPO England and Wales lead for anti-slavery, who is the chief constable of Devon and Cornwall Police. We also have ACPO Cymru on the leadership group—Jeff Farrar sits on that. I appreciate their concerns around our resources, but the thing is that slavery has such an impact on public services anyway. Steve just gave me an example of somebody in England, not in Wales, who was working on a farm as a slave, and had his arm ripped off in farm machinery, and was just dumped at accident and emergency. Imagine the cost to public services then. This guy was then left in hospital for the aftercare that was needed, so it may be that we need to have a look at the resources and make sure that the police have ample resources. What we want to do is stop that case that I have just mentioned from happening. We work very closely with ACPO. As I say, Jeff Farrar sits on the leadership group and we can hear their concerns on that.

[205] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** Do you think there is any merit in the theory that if you raise awareness of this, you would start having more referrals, and then there is the point about whether somebody could walk into an agency or a police station and say, ‘Oh, I didn’t know anything about that’? You have to make sure that that awareness runs right across all areas—the support agencies as well. I have to be honest with you, when we started on this inquiry I was shocked to learn the numbers, and that it was, or could be, going on right around us as AMs. So, for us to only just be getting that message, I think that there is an awful lot of work that needs to be done.

[206] **Lesley Griffiths:** I absolutely agree. I think that I said at the beginning that I came into post a year ago, and at one of my very first meetings—you meet your new officials—I met with the anti-human-trafficking co-ordinator at the time, and I had had no idea. I think that is why I have had such a focus on it because, to me, it is such a horrific crime, and I am determined to do all I can while I am in this post to raise awareness. I think we have had some success. I mentioned that the number of people who have come forward via NRM has increased, and I think it is because of this work. In fact, the other night after the play, which was so powerful, and people were so taken aback, Steve said to me, ‘That’s my world’. When you think that, it is just amazing, the work that he does.

[207] **Christine Chapman:** Mike, did you want to come in?

[208] **Mike Hedges:** I have two questions and one comment. I think ‘slavery’ is the right word. It is blunt, and it actually puts it there. ‘Human trafficking’ sounds at least mildly cuddly—sort of just helping people to come into the country—whereas with ‘slavery’ it is

what it says on the tin, so I welcome that.

[209] Two questions: one is, have you, in your role as Minister for local government, considered asking or advising local authorities to set a lead councillor for this? Have you further thought about suggesting that the leader of the council should be the lead councillor for that? If you make the leader of the council the lead councillor for it, the chief executive would become the lead officer for it by default.

[210] **Lesley Griffiths:** I welcome what you say about slavery and I agree with you. I started to use 'slavery' because I preferred it to 'human trafficking', because that is absolutely what it is. It is slavery. So, I welcome that.

[211] In relation to local authorities, I have done quite a lot of work with local authorities around this, and we have got fora set up now around the country—again, we are way ahead of the game. I think that there is only one outside Wales, and I think that is in the west midlands, in England. In north Wales, we have a co-ordinator, called Jim Coy, and that is because Mohammed Mehmet, who is the chief executive of Denbighshire, had done a great deal of work in north Wales, and applied for funding through the regional collaboration fund, and we have set this up. The other local authorities and regional areas are seeing this now, and I would very much like to see that spread out among all local authorities.

[212] **Mike Hedges:** The point that I was trying to make was that if you suggest by letter, or by law, that the leader of the council becomes the lead politician for it, then it will increase the interest of the chief executive in it by a substantial amount, across Wales. The other question that I have got is: what would be the outcome of the review of violence against women, and domestic and sexual violence services, in terms of human trafficking? If you remember, Steve, when you came to speak to us last, we were told that that was in the process of being done.

[213] **Lesley Griffiths:** It is still in the process of being done. I am expecting the report at the end of March.

[214] **Mike Hedges:** And you will publish it.

[215] **Lesley Griffiths:** Of course.

[216] **Christine Chapman:** We will move on now, then. I have got Peter.

[217] **Peter Black:** Sorry; I have lost the question.

[218] Minister, what impact will the UK modern slavery Bill have on Wales, particularly with regard to the way in which the role of the Wales anti-human-trafficking co-ordinator will interact with the new UK anti-slavery commissioner?

[219] **Lesley Griffiths:** It will have an impact. We will bring them up to our level, actually. It would be very good to, once again, be leading the way because, as I said, Steve's role is the only one of its kind in the UK and, because of that, I think that we will bring them up.

[220] I mentioned that I was a member of the interdepartmental ministerial group on modern slavery. I have been to only one of the meetings, because they tend to be held on Wednesdays or Tuesdays, so I often cannot go to them. However, I went to the one that the Prime Minister chaired, and it was truly interdepartmental. The Home Secretary was there and, although I do not believe that the Foreign Secretary himself was there, there was somebody from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, as well as someone from the Department for Work and Pensions and the Minister for Health. It was a very welcome



meeting, because it was good to be able to talk about the modern slavery Bill. Obviously, that is being developed at the moment, but we are feeding in to that. So, it will enhance strategic co-ordination across the UK but, for us, we are so ahead of the game, they will be just catching us up.

[221] We hope that, with the Bill, comes money. So, we might see more funding coming in to Wales in relation to this, which will be very welcome. It will provide much more consistency and much more interaction with the Governments. I really do welcome it and I believe that it will build upon our work.

[222] **Peter Black:** Will there be any overlap between what we are doing and what the UK Government is catching us up to do?

[223] **Lesley Griffiths:** Well, as I said, it is still being developed. Certainly, my understanding from the meeting that I went to—and I presume that there has been another one since that, which Steve will have been to—is that what is being brought forward could still be subject to change. We are working very closely with them and the most important thing is that they complement each other.

[224] **Peter Black:** Obviously, the UK commissioner will have the statutory role; is there a statutory role for the Welsh Government, particularly given that Wales has a number of justice responsibilities and we are seeking more through Silk?

[225] **Lesley Griffiths:** At the moment, I have no plans to make Steve's role statutory. There are many benefits that arise from the fact that it is not statutory. I do not know whether Steve would agree with that. However, the fact that he is in-house—

[226] **Peter Black:** However, with the Silk process, for example, we have bid for policing and there is a very clear role there. Will the Welsh Government be looking for any statutory responsibilities as part of this Bill?

[227] **Lesley Griffiths:** As I have said, it is being developed, and Steve is feeding in to that. Have you had any discussions about that, Steve?

[228] **Christine Chapman:** Steve, do you want to come in on that point?

[229] **Mr Chapman:** I firmly believe that, at this moment in time, I am better where I am. I am right here with the Government; I work with colleagues, I am in Cathays park, and I meet people from health, education and safeguarding teams. As my role is not statutory, I do not usually have to make appointments to see people. However, I firmly believe that when we get a commissioner, that commissioner will be bringing together the work of the UK, whereas at this moment in time it seems to be only us who are forging forward. In the new Bill, the Government mentions that it wants to bring in regional co-ordinators and it is saying that we have the blueprint here.

[230] **Peter Black:** So, you may become a national co-ordinator in terms of Wales, as part of that Bill?

[231] **Mr Chapman:** I see myself as a national co-ordinator, but not statutorily.

[232] **Lesley Griffiths:** Certainly, the UK Government's plans at the moment are to have regional co-ordinators. I do not know how it will do that. The commissioner will obviously report to the Home Secretary, as it is not a devolved area.

[233] **Peter Black:** However, the Welsh Government's position is that you are happy for

this to stay at a UK level, despite the fact that you are also bidding for the devolution of police and various other matters through Silk.

[234] **Lesley Griffiths:** Yes, at the moment.

[235] **Peter Black:** Okay; that is fine.

[236] **Christine Chapman:** Jocelyn, do you have a supplementary question?

[237] **Jocelyn Davies:** Yes, it is on this point. Steve, I would be a bit shocked if you came to give evidence with the Minister and disagreed with her in front of us in terms of this, but would you not like to have statutory powers?

[238] **Mr Chapman:** No, I do not think that I would, because if I did, I would not be operational. My role is very much about the fact that I live in the here and now, and what you saw on Tuesday night—those people who saw *Sold*—is that someone needs to be grabbing things at an operational level now. The modern slavery Bill is still going through the legislative process, and it will probably be a year before it becomes an Act of Parliament. It may be, as the Minister says, that we do review things in the future. At the moment, on what we have done, I am really proud of our achievements and that it is the Welsh Government leading on this with the Minister leading me, not any other organisation. I would not want to go for the commissioner's job and I—

11:00

[239] **Jocelyn Davies:** Perhaps there is a place for another role that it is a statutory role, rather than the role that you carry out. It is possible, is it not?

[240] **Christine Chapman:** I think that that is for the Minister to answer.

[241] **Lesley Griffiths:** What Steve says is right: you need that operational background and that operational activity. We will have to see. The modern slavery Bill is still in development. We are feeding into it, and we are making sure that we are watching developments very closely. At present, I am very happy with the position that we are in.

[242] **Christine Chapman:** Mark has a supplementary question on this, and then we come back to Joyce.

[243] **Mark Isherwood:** I am sorry that I was not able to be there on Tuesday; I was chairing a meeting on disability unemployment in the Pierhead—another very worthy issue, I am sure you will agree. You referred to possible funding coming to Wales as a consequence of the Bill—presumably, you mean Barnettised funding. Whatever the outcome of Silk, as you have indicated, we have to work with partners elsewhere because once they are on the island people can be settled anywhere. We know from evidence given by your predecessor, Minister, that west Wales ports are a major entry point into the UK for modern slaves. What discussions have you had on resource, on an all-island basis, to focus on the main entry points, supporting the services that have to respond to those, wherever they may be?

[244] **Mr Chapman:** We have set up a number of regional groups. West Wales was the last group to be set up. It will have its first meeting on 2 April. The groups are set up to reflect the leadership group but more as an operational delivery group. I also sit on the all-ports group, which covers all ports across Wales—airports and seaports. We are training the border force in anti-slavery awareness, and we have invited it to join a senior investigating officer course that we have put together—it will be attending that as well. The Minister will go to Cardiff Airport, where, as well as the signs that you will have seen on buses and on television, we are

displaying our posters. We do see that, if we want to make ourselves hostile, we have to go to those pinch points. The ports are obvious, but our most porous border is probably from England into Wales. I hear what you are saying. We are working with the border force, with the police and all of the security services.

[245] You will be interested to know that the training that we do—if I may talk about the airport training—is not just for police and the border force; it is for the carriers as well, and for the security people there. We want to make sure that it is inclusive, not exclusive. A security officer is more likely to see someone, so they will be able to react. We are very conscious of that. Our north Wales co-ordinator is already training people at Holyhead—not just the security people but management and other people who work at the airport, including people who work in the shops and the support services around it.

[246] **Mark Isherwood:** At a UK discussion level, is future resource allocation focusing on the main entry points to the island or will Wales simply receive a Barnettised sum?

[247] **Lesley Griffiths:** I do not think that I know the answer to that question at the moment. I am just hopeful that more money will come forward from the Bill, but it is all in development at the moment, so we do not know. It has not even been introduced yet; it will not be introduced until May.

[248] **Mark Isherwood:** May I suggest that it might be worth bringing that up in discussions?

[249] **Lesley Griffiths:** We do that. We are feeding in at an official level. We will make sure that is discussed.

[250] **Joyce Watson:** Following on from that last point, I was invited, as chair of the all-party group, to give evidence to the joint committee on the new anti-slavery Bill. I made some of the points that have been made here this morning. One of the points that I made was that, because we have an existing position, which is unique, a protocol must be established before they proceed with that Bill. I wondered, Minister and Steve, how you felt that should look.

[251] **Lesley Griffiths:** As we are feeding into the discussions on the development of the Bill, that is something that they are aware of. When I went to the interdepartmental meeting myself, my counterparts from Northern Ireland and Scotland were there. They were so far behind Wales. The issue of protocol came up in terms of how they would look at that. It is really important that we are there at the table, feeding into this Bill as it is being developed. However, as I say, I think that we will be bringing them up to our standards.

[252] **Joyce Watson:** I started asking earlier on about the national referral mechanism. The priorities of UK Border Agency officials very often lead to the criminalisation of trafficked victims. Have you discussed that with the Home Office, particularly with regard to under-reporting?

[253] **Lesley Griffiths:** Yes. On my behalf, Steve has brought my concerns around this to the attention of the Home Office. Steve, I believe that you have been co-opted onto the NRM oversight review board, have you not?

[254] **Mr Chapman:** Yes, I have.

[255] **Lesley Griffiths:** I will ask Steve to say a bit more about that in a minute. A non-legislative consideration of the modern slavery Bill is to review that process, including making it mandatory for survivors to be referred. That is something that they are looking at within the Bill. Steve, perhaps you would like to say a bit more about the group.

[256] **Mr Chapman:** The oversight group is chaired by the Home Office. The border force and what was the UK Border Agency—the Home Office’s visas and immigration section—are there now. Currently, with the national referral mechanism, there are two competent authorities. One is the United Kingdom human trafficking centre, and the other is the Home Office’s visas and immigration section. What we would prefer is for there to be one competent authority, and for that to be the UK human trafficking centre. One of the non-legislative considerations in the Bill is the harmonising of the national referral mechanism and making it mandatory, although some of the data would be anonymous. Therefore, when people are rescued, like the example I gave, their details would go into the NRM, even though they did not want to take part in it.

[257] On the review board that I sit on, I have been able to talk also about the need for secondary data sets. It seems like common sense, and it has been accepted, so we are going ahead with it. The Bill is still in its early stages, but we are feeding into it. As the Minister says, we are leading, and that is good to see. The board has accepted my annual report and seen the achievements and next steps that we want to take here in Wales.

[258] **Joyce Watson:** There is an issue that I would like to bring to the table. At the moment, it is mandatory for children to go through the NRM in any case. However, there have been large amounts of anecdotal evidence that suggests that, when children are rescued, like everybody else, they have no papers with them whatsoever, so no identity. Therefore, it becomes a guessing game for the UK Border Agency or whoever to decide what age they are—in other words, to decide whether they are children or adults. There have been problems with that. In every case that is deemed borderline—where they are maybe 15, 16, 17 or 18—they are always aged upwards, and they become adults. There are two things that happen. They do not have to then go through the mandatory reporting mechanism. The other issue, of course, is that nobody has to provide services, because they are not children, so they are not subject to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Is this an area that is worthy of further exploration, and is this an area that has been brought to your attention?

[259] **Mr Chapman:** I can answer that. This is precisely what I am taking forward with the national referral mechanism oversight review board. If we had one competency there, it would take all of the age-assessment issues out of it. It would just be down to the UK human trafficking centre. You are quite correct in saying that.

[260] We also understand that a lot of young people are not put into the national referral mechanism because the priority of social services is to get them into safeguarding, which is paramount. So, there is under-reporting by a lot of people of putting young people into the NRM. That, again, is something that I am addressing. Incidentally, I am speaking at a social workers conference in Cardiff next week at which I want to be saying that. If you look at the NRM first responders, you will see that local authorities are first responders. Last year, there were only three referrals in Wales by local authorities—they refer young people. We know that it is a winning battle. We have to win. The national referral mechanism form is eight pages long. It is about getting the social workers. They want to know what is in it for them, and, as we say, primarily, it is the child safeguarded. However, we need that information and intelligence. We need to know what countries they come from, what their sexes are and where they have been exploited, if we want to tackle and turn off the tap to slavery. That is what we are doing.

[261] **Christine Chapman:** I think that Gwyn wants to come in next.

[262] **Gwyn R. Price:** Following on from that, on victim support, the committee heard evidence that there is a lack of safe accommodation, particularly for male victims. How has this been addressed?

[263] **Lesley Griffiths:** It is UK Government that is responsible for delivering support for any survivors of slavery, not Welsh Government. The Ministry of Justice is responsible for that. It has contracted support services to be delivered by the Salvation Army and, in Wales, that has been subcontracted to BAWSO.

[264] You are quite right, Gwyn, that there is no dedicated safe accommodation in Wales for male survivors funded by the UK Government. However, under the contract that BAWSO has, it can provide bed-and-breakfast accommodation and other support services locally to male survivors if that is required. That is only if they are not at risk. Obviously, if those survivors are in danger, they can be referred to the Salvation Army and a safe accommodation place would then be found for them, but that is in England. It is a matter of concern, I think—I am sure that Members agree with me—that we do not have that accommodation in Wales for males.

[265] We recognised, as a Government, that there were specific needs in north Wales to have some secure accommodation for females, and we fund the Diogel project—we have done that since 2010—for female survivors and children. I visited one of the safe houses where three women stayed, when I came into this portfolio, and it made me realise the extent of the harm to these people and how important it is to have that accommodation.

[266] **Gwyn R. Price:** You mentioned north Wales, but, in its evidence, Barnardo's said that it is a bit of a postcode lottery and that all of Wales is not covered in certain circumstances. Could you expand on that?

[267] **Lesley Griffiths:** It is not perfect and we know that there is more to be done. We are addressing that by having the regional fora, the establishment of which is a matter for local stakeholders. I think that Steve mentioned that west Wales is the last area to come up with one. It has just set up and it will have its first meeting in April. Then, we will have all areas of Wales covered. We work very closely with key partners, local authorities and third sector bodies. In such a short space of time, it is a significant achievement that we will have the whole of Wales covered, but I recognise that there is more to be done. As I said, at the moment, there is only one forum in England and that is in the west midlands. So, again, I think that we are ahead of the game.

[268] **Gwyn R. Price:** Yes. I congratulate you on that and, in time, hopefully, you will achieve coverage of the whole of Wales.

[269] **Jocelyn Davies:** We cannot make the claim that Wales is hostile to slavery if we do not protect the victims. I have noticed that, when we talk, we say that we want to use the term 'slavery', but we do not want to use the term 'slave'.

[270] **Lesley Griffiths:** The term 'slave'.

[271] **Jocelyn Davies:** Yes. I notice that people have said 'rescued' or 'trafficked' in this meeting, but we do not like to use the word 'slave'. What term are you using for the victims?

11:15

[272] **Lesley Griffiths:** I tend to use 'victims'.

[273] **Mr Chapman:** 'Victims', and when they are rescued they are 'survivors'. That fits in with the domestic abuse agenda. You do go out there to rescue slaves. I think that it is the language that is developing.

[274] **Jocelyn Davies:** From the other BAWSO evidence that we have had, if 40% of the cases are men, there does not seem to be a gender bias in terms of victims. Obviously, we do not know, because the figures are very small. In order to access the help and support, do those who are rescued have to go through the referral system to get that?

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

[276] **Jocelyn Davies:** They do. So, there is a barrier to that, and there is nothing in Wales for men.

[277] **Lesley Griffiths:** Only what I explained—if they were at risk, it would be found for them in England.

[278] **Jocelyn Davies:** In England; so, there is nothing in Wales.

[279] **Lesley Griffiths:** Not safe accommodation for males, but that is the responsibility of the Ministry of Justice. However, BAWSO can provide bed-and-breakfast accommodation, but only if they were not at risk. If they were in a dangerous position—

[280] **Jocelyn Davies:** They would have to go to England. However, you have decided to set up something for female victims—

[281] **Lesley Griffiths:** In north Wales.

[282] **Jocelyn Davies:** So, perhaps you would look at that, because there does not seem to be a gender bias in terms of the victims. Perhaps you would look at that. I would feel strongly about that. What about the situation in relation to children? You will know that, in Scotland, there is this scheme of guardianship of unaccompanied minors. I take Joyce Watson's point on board that, actually, we should always underestimate the age if there is doubt—we should always go down and not up, in order to give more protection to people. Are you thinking of something along similar lines for children and very young people, in terms of giving them some extra protection?

[283] **Lesley Griffiths:** Yes. I certainly think that the guardian scheme that they have in Scotland is a good idea. I am planning to go up to Scotland in the near future to have a look at it. I am very keen on best practice, so it would be good to see what they are doing. The safeguarding of minors is absolutely paramount for everything that we do in Welsh Government. We mentioned that only eight minors were referred to the NRM process last year, but you would have to say that they are probably the ones most at risk and the most vulnerable of them all. Again, the scheme in Scotland is a matter for the Home Office. I know that Steve has discussed it with officials in the Home Office. We understand that the Home Office is planning to hold some sort of pilot scheme similar to the one in Scotland. I think that it is thinking about setting up six schemes; we have staked our claim very quickly, that we want one in Wales. So, once they announce it, we can bid for it. We will be doing that, but we have staked an early claim, if you like. I certainly think that the scheme in Scotland is a good idea. I do not know whether Steve wants to say anything more about it.

[284] **Mr Chapman:** Yes.

[285] **Jocelyn Davies:** What difference does it make for the young person or the child?

[286] **Mr Chapman:** The difference that it makes is not having a raft of people looking after them, if you think about it, such as social workers, interpreters and health officials. The guardian is the next best thing to a parent. That parent takes all of the pressure away, and that guardian will deal with the interpreters, the border force. If there are any issues on nationality,

they will deal with solicitors, and they will deal with health issues. They are there to advocate. We see it as a very good issue. The Home Office, as the Minister says, is looking at bringing this in for England and Wales. There will be six areas, we are told. I sit in on the Home Office meetings and I have already said that we would like at least one of those—in fact, probably six. Looking at Scotland, it only has small numbers as well. However, if you think about it, we are really looking after the interests of the minor.

[287] **Jocelyn Davies:** What about feeding into the Bill? What about people who have this activity going on in their premises on their land? You mentioned a farm worker having his arm ripped off, as a result of slavery. What about the land where that happens? Are you feeding in in terms of—

[288] **Lesley Griffiths:** It is the modern slavery Bill.

[289] **Jocelyn Davies:** Yes.

[290] **Mr Chapman:** The modern slavery Bill is really a narrow Bill. It is mainly to bring the legislation together to create the role of anti-slavery commissioner. I am not aware of that provision. However, the Bill is still very much at a draft stage, and people will be consulted on this as the stages go through. I have not heard anything on land yet.

[291] **Lesley Griffiths:** I would have thought that that would be covered in existing legislation.

[292] **Jocelyn Davies:** It might be happening inside a building that you own, on land that you own, even though you might not be directly involved. Surely there is responsibility there.

[293] **Lesley Griffiths:** Perhaps we could look into that, Chair and send a note.

[294] **Christine Chapman:** I have Mark then Joyce, but, to remind Members, we have about nine minutes left before we finish this session.

[295] **Mark Isherwood:** In reference to children and BAWSO, what consideration has been given to the call by BAWSO previously for support, positive outlets and positive role models for children of survivors as they reach adolescence?

[296] **Mr Chapman:** At this moment in time, we are nowhere near there. That would probably be for safeguarding teams to take through. Without being blunt, we are rescuing people and making sure that they are put on to the services. It is something that is under consideration, I am sure.

[297] **Christine Chapman:** Mark, do you want to continue with the other questions?

[298] **Mark Isherwood:** Going into the final section of questions, will modern slavery be included in the forthcoming Ending Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Bill, or in any specific sections, such as sexual education?

[299] **Lesley Griffiths:** My next meeting will involve looking at the definitions for the Bill and finalising it all, but my intention is to have slavery in the Bill.

[300] **Mark Isherwood:** Thank you. You have already answered the middle question on the suggested list of questions. To what extent will the Bill co-ordinate the Welsh Government's response to modern slavery as a form of violence against women, as well as children and young men?

[301] **Lesley Griffiths:** As I say, we are currently working up the final part of the legislation. The most important aspect of that legislation is to make sure that we have the most appropriate services for victims and potential victims. We are looking at how the relevant public bodies address violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. We are looking at preventative, protective and supportive aspects of it. Within that, we can certainly look at slavery and the services that are being provided to support slaves.

[302] **Mark Isherwood:** Will the Bill have sufficient scope to incorporate children—not necessarily female, but all children—and young men into that? Barnardo's and the NSPCC have reported to the all-party group on looked-after children about growing numbers of referrals relating to boys and young men, in particular. Although the higher proportion is still female, the biggest growth is among young males.

[303] **Lesley Griffiths:** Within the Bill, I have asked officials to look at all of our current strategies to see whether we can bring them all in line within the context of the Bill. I think that it is timely to consider a new strategy so that we can co-ordinate all national actions in one place. So, that is something that we can look at alongside the Bill.

[304] **Mark Isherwood:** Finally, going back to the previous question, you will know that BAWSO Wrexham highlighted the fact that it was able to put in projects to support young women—often their own children, the next generation—but that young men, in particular, needed positive role models and outputs because of the bullying and isolation that they might have suffered. It felt that they were now forming gangs and were at risk, themselves, of getting into difficulty. I know that it is the next stage of the agenda, but it is related to so many other agendas with which Welsh Government is engaged. Has any action resulted from that?

[305] **Lesley Griffiths:** One thing that we are looking at is the education aspect, and teaching young people about healthy relationships. We could perhaps look at that within that context too.

[306] **Christine Chapman:** On that note, there are no other questions, Minister, so I thank you and Steve for attending this morning. It has been a very useful session and update on the progress that has been made in Wales. We will send you a copy of the transcript, so that you can check it for factual accuracy. Thank you both for attending this morning.

11:25

### **Papurau i'w Nodi Papers to Note**

[307] **Christine Chapman:** There are a number of papers to note.

#### **Cynnig o dan Reol Sefydlog 17.42 i Benderfynu Gwahardd y Cyhoedd o'r Cyfarfod Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to Resolve to Exclude the Public from the Meeting**

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

*the committee resolves to exclude the public from items 6 and 7 of the meeting and from the meeting to be held on 19 March 2014 in accordance with Standing Order 17.42(vi).*

[309] I see that Members are content to do so. The next meeting will take place on



Wednesday, 19 March. I now close the public meeting.

*Derbyniwyd y cynnig.  
Motion agreed.*

*Daeth rhan gyhoeddus y cyfarfod i ben am 11:25.  
The public part of the meeting ended at 11:25.*