



Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru The National Assembly for Wales

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

**Dydd Mercher, 19 Hydref 2011
Wednesday, 19 October 2011**

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Cofnodir y trafodion hyn yn yr iaith y llefarwyd hwy ynndi yn y pwyllgor. Yn ogystal, cynhwysir cyfieithiad Saesneg o gyfraniadau yn y Gymraeg.

These proceedings are reported in the language in which they were spoken in the committee. In addition, an English translation of Welsh speeches is included.

Aelodau'r pwyllgor yn bresennol
Committee members in attendance

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

Eraill yn bresennol
Others in attendance

Leighton Andrews	Aelod Cynulliad, Llafur (Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau) Assembly Member, Labour (Minister for Education and Skills)
Jeff Cuthbert	Aelod Cynulliad, Llafur (Y Dirprwy Weinidog Sgiliau) Assembly Member, Labour (Deputy Minister for Skills)
Lesley Griffiths	Aelod Cynulliad, Llafur (Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol) Assembly Member, Labour (Minister for Health and Social Services)
Gwen Kohler	Pennaeth Cynllunio Corfforaethol, Perfformiad a Rheolaeth Ariannol Head of Corporate Planning, Performance and Financial Management
Steve Milsom	Dirprwy Gyfarwyddwr yr Is-adran Polisi Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol Oedolion Deputy Director of Adult Social Services Policy Division
Mark Osland	Dirprwy Gyfarwyddwr Cyllid, Yr Adran Iechyd, Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol a Phlant Deputy Director of Finance, Department of Health, Social Services and Children
Dr Heather Payne	Uwch-swyddog Meddygol, Iechyd Mamau a Phlant Senior Medical Officer, Maternal and Child Health
Martin Swain	Pennaeth yr Is-adran Strategaeth Plant a Phobl Ifanc Head of Children and Young People Division
Gwenda Thomas	Aelod Cynulliad, Llafur (Y Dirprwy Weinidog Plant a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol) Assembly Member, Labour (Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services)
Chris Tweedale	Cyfarwyddwr y Grŵp Ysgolion a Phobl Ifanc Director of Schools and Young People Group

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

Claire Griffiths	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk
Siân Hughes	Gwasanaeth Ymchwil Research Service
Claire Morris	Clerc Clerk

Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 9.15 a.m.
The meeting began at 9.15 a.m.

Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon
Introduction, Apologies and Substitutions

[1] **Christine Chapman:** Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the Assembly's Children and Young People Committee. We have one apology from Angela Burns, but she will be here later.

Cynigion Cyllideb Ddrafft Llywodraeth Cymru ar gyfer 2012-13: Sesiwn Craffu ar Waith y Gweinidog
Welsh Government Draft Budget Proposals for 2012-13: Ministerial Scrutiny Session

[2] **Christine Chapman:** The purpose of this session is to scrutinise the Minister for Education and Skills and the Deputy Minister for Skills on the education and skills budget and priorities for 2013-13. I welcome Leighton Andrews, the Minister for Education and Skills; Jeff Cuthbert, the Deputy Minister for Skills; Gwen Kohler, head of corporate planning, performance and financial management; and Chris Tweedale, director of the schools and young people group. I welcome you all. We have received a paper from you and Members have read that paper. I understand that the Minister and the Deputy Minister would like to make some brief opening remarks.

[3] **The Minister for Education and Skills (Leighton Andrews):** Thank you, Chair. We have set a budget that will deliver on the programme for government, which builds on the manifesto that we took to the people of Wales. However, this budget is set in the context of the constraints imposed by the UK Government in the last budget planning round. We have reviewed previous spending plans and have released in excess of £17.6 million to meet other programme for government pledges, such as the establishment of a Master's qualification for teachers, through reprioritisation. We have also directed more funding to the front line through increases to the school effectiveness grant. In addition, we have secured additional funding of £12.5 million per annum for Jobs Growth Wales. I announced the details of how we will take that forward in my statement in Plenary last week. Previous plans to increase schools budgets by an additional 1 per cent above the overall changes to the Welsh budget are maintained with additional funding announced for 2014-15. Our commitment to free school milk and free breakfasts is also maintained. The Adapt programme, which assists displaced public sector workers to return to work or start their own business, is extended with £5 million additional funding per annum. Earlier this year, I announced that, from the academic year 2012-13, part-time higher education students will benefit from access to the same student finance package as full-time students. I have secured additional funding of £4.3 million, rising to £13.8 million over the budget period, to cover these additional costs.

[4] Of course, it is not just about extra money; it is about how we spend that money and the results that it delivers for children and young people in Wales. The Welsh Government

has a clear mandate to implement the 20 action points outlined in my statement to the Assembly in February this year. We need to look to the future and find ways of improving every aspect of our system, especially standards and performance. The focus must be on good leadership and rigorous accountability. Every sector in our education system has a part to play in this. Our proposed education Bills should be seen in this context and as tools that will allow us to drive through the necessary changes to the systems to help us deliver. We need to focus again on literacy, we need to focus again on numeracy and we need to break the link between low attainment and poverty. Those are our three priorities. We need to ensure that as much of the funding as possible is directed to protect the most vulnerable, to protect and support economic renewal and to provide the high standard of education that the people of Wales deserve.

[5] **The Deputy Minister for Skills (Jeff Cuthbert):** I will reiterate what the Minister has said. These budget proposals will enable us to take forward our programme for government. In terms of skill development, that additional funding of £75 million for Jobs Growth Wales will aim to create, within the first year of operation, 4,000 placements in Wales for unemployed young people aged 16 to 24. It will offer these young people paid employment for a six-month period at or above the national minimum wage for a minimum of 25 hours per week. We have funding in place to deliver the full programme, which will commence on 1 April next year. In the meantime, we are planning a small pilot this autumn to test new elements of the model. We will work with Jobcentre Plus and Careers Wales to ensure effective alignment with existing programmes, to avoid duplication and ensure added value. It will link directly with the apprenticeship programme to enable progression.

[6] The programme for government reaffirms our commitment to increasing apprenticeship opportunities for young people. We will seek an outcome that will enable young people to enter sustained employment through such opportunities. Employers and trade unions have identified the benefits of targeted skills programmes that support employers to grow business opportunities through investment, which increase the skill levels of the workforce and, subsequently, create additional jobs. The direct link between jobs growth in the private sector and the identification of young people seeking work will support our commitment to tackle youth unemployment and provide employers with a skilled workforce, fit for their future needs. We have produced a budget that sets out to protect jobs and skills and to provide support to Welsh businesses in these difficult economic times. It is a budget for jobs and growth. This clearly demonstrates our commitment to that pledge.

[7] **Christine Chapman:** In the next hour, we want to delve into the specifics of the budget. Thank you for the opening statement. Jocelyn Davies will start with some general questions, before we look at the specifics.

[8] **Jocelyn Davies:** Good morning, Minister. In your evidence, you say that £17.6 million has been reprioritised to meet your pledges and to direct funding to the front line. Can you tell us which areas have been reprioritised? You mentioned front-line services in your opening remarks. I would therefore like to know how you will ensure that that money goes to the front line, when we can expect to see improved outcomes and what success will look like.

[9] **Leighton Andrews:** The Member will appreciate the difficult financial constraints facing the Welsh Government as a result of the decisions taken by the UK Government in respect of our budgets. As committee members are aware, the Welsh Government's budgets are £1.8 billion lower in real terms than they would have been, and we have taken a hit of some £900 million in this financial year from capital. Our capital budgets have been particularly depleted. You may want to ask us about that subsequently.

[10] In terms of the specifics on the savings of £17.6 million, we have gone through our budgets line by line to try to identify where we can move money in line with our priorities,

which, as you rightly said, are to protect front-line spending. So, within the teaching and leadership area, for example, we have refocused around £4 million to help us to develop the Master's qualification for teachers by redirecting resources from existing programmes. Within the skills in the workplace and the employability budget, we have identified a further £3 million that we can move into supporting Skills Growth Wales, which is, as you know, the successor programme to ProAct. Within wellbeing of children and young people, we have reprioritised around £2 million for post-16 special educational needs. We have been able to release £2 million from support functions to move to the front line. Within our curriculum budgets, we have been able to release £4 million in 2012-13 and £5 million in 2013-15, mainly from the 14-19 learning pathways area, where money that has been spent on a local basis we think can be saved through regional working. In the qualifications budget, £1.7 million has been found, and, from 2013-14, we have identified savings of £5 million in the Careers Wales budget.

[11] Chair, these have not been easy decisions. We have literally gone through these budgets line by line to identify money to move, where we can, in line with our priorities.

[12] **Jocelyn Davies:** I appreciate the fact that, from what you have told us, you have had a forensic look at all the budgets, but how will you measure the effectiveness of your reprioritisation, and what will success look like?

[13] **Leighton Andrews:** Success can be measured in two ways. First of all, we have to look at our success in moving money to the front line. You will be familiar with the work that I commissioned shortly after becoming a Minister in the last Government looking at the cost of administering the education system in Wales, which was carried out for us by PricewaterhouseCoopers. That identified that a 2 per cent shift from support services to the front line could result in over £80 million being saved in the education system. We have to play our part in moving money to the front line, just as local government has to play its part, because the bulk of schools spending goes through local government. Local government has made a commitment to us that it will raise the amount of money delegated to schools from roughly 75 per cent currently to 85 per cent within four years. That is a commitment by local government that I welcome; it shows the seriousness with which it is responding to our agenda.

[14] In terms of actual outcomes, there are financial outcomes and then there are educational performance outcomes, and we have set clear targets in respect of where we want Wales to be in the Programme for International Student Assessment results—not the next set of PISA results, but the subsequent set in 2015. That is the time when we will start to see the evidence of the work that is currently being done to prioritise the focus on attainment.

[15] **Christine Chapman:** I want to move on to some questions about educational achievement and deprivation.

[16] **Aled Roberts:** Yr ydym yn ymwybodol bod perfformiad disgyblion yng nghyfnod allweddol 4 wedi gwella bob blwyddyn ers 2006, ond mae'r bwlch o ran perfformiad rhwng y disgyblion hynny sy'n gymwys i gael prydau ysgol am ddim a'r rheini nad ydynt yn gymwys wedi cynyddu bob blwyddyn dros y pum mlynedd diwethaf. Sut bydd y gyllideb ddrafft yn helpu i fynd i'r afael â lleihau'r bwlch a gwella'r sefyllfa i blant o gefndiroedd difreintiedig?

Aled Roberts: We are aware that the performance of pupils at key stage 4 has improved every year since 2006, but the gap in performance between those pupils who are eligible for free school meals and those who are not has increased every year over the last five years. How will the draft budget help to reduce the gap and improve the situation for children from deprived backgrounds?

[17] **Leighton Andrews:** I am glad that you have acknowledged the overall improvement that there has been in performance. It is important to acknowledge that one of the things that we have done in the school banding proposals that we are introducing—we have sent provisional school banding proposals to secondary schools, and final banding proposals will be produced just before Christmas—is to focus on free school meal attainment in the structure for banding. In other words, we are introducing new measures into the system, which will enable us to track progress and will enable schools to look at their own performance. They will also enable the governing bodies of schools to look at the performance, and allow local authorities and consortia to identify which schools have been successful in this process and which have not.

[18] Within the context of the budget, we are maintaining the support to the school effectiveness programme. As I said in my opening remarks, there are three priorities within that, one of which is breaking the link between poverty and low attainment. We are also maintaining our commitment to the education maintenance allowance, which has been abolished over the border.

[19] **Keith Davies:** Yr oeddwn mewn cyfarfod llywodraethwyr ysgol nos Lun yn edrych ar ganlyniadau TGAU a lefel A, ac yr oeddwn yn synnu o weld y gwahaniaeth mewn perfformiad rhwng y bechgyn a'r merched. Nid oedd mor wir o ran lefel A, ond o ran TGAU, yr oedd 20 y cant o wahaniaeth rhwng perfformiad y merched a'r bechgyn. A oes rhaglen gennych mewn golwg i geisio gwella'r sefyllfa hon? Credaf ei fod yn ofnadwy bod gymaint o fwllch rhyngddynt.

Keith Davies: I was in a school governor's meeting on Monday night, looking at GCSE and A-level results, and I was surprised to see the difference between the performance of the boys and that of the girls. This was not as true at A-level, but for GCSEs, there was a 20 per cent difference between the performance level of the boys and that of the girls. Do you have a programme in mind to try to remedy this situation? It is terrible that there is such a gap between them.

[20] **Leighton Andrews:** You have raised a very important question, which is not unique to Wales by any stretch of the imagination. It is a common problem in most developed societies, particularly in western Europe. Our equalities task and finish group has considered this issue. We received a lot of expert advice from Alan Evans at Cardiff University, among others. In terms of the literacy and numeracy programmes, we are developing specific programmes to try to address the gap between boys and girls, because, while this is something that continues in secondary schools, sadly, it starts much earlier.

[21] There is some anecdotal evidence that suggests that the foundation phase may be helping to address this. The teachers and the headteachers that I have talked to have remarked on the greater engagement by boys in the context of the foundation phase. However, this is a genuine challenge. If we could raise the level of boys' attainment to that of girls in Wales, we would probably plug any attainment gap that exists with almost any society within the countries that contribute to PISA. So, it is a major issue for us to grapple with, but we have put plans in place within our overall numeracy and literacy approaches.

9.30 a.m.

[22] There have been some very good schemes around Wales. The Only Boys Allowed scheme in my constituency, which I think the Chair might also be familiar with, has done a huge amount to engage boys and improve their reading by focusing on the things that they like to read, such as football programmes and so on. So, we want to build on the best success that is out there.

[23] **Simon Thomas:** Hoffwn ddod yn ôl **Simon Thomas:** I would like to come back at y cwestiwn ynglŷn ag amddifadedd a to the question of deprivation and attainment

chyrrhaeddiad mewn ysgolion. A ydych yn parhau i fod o'r farn bod cymharu plant sy'n derbyn prydiau ysgol am ddim a'r plant nad dydynt yn *proxy* dibynadwy o ran mesur amddifadedd mewn ysgolion?

in schools. Are you still of the opinion that using a comparison between children who receive free school meals and those who do not is a reliable proxy to use when measuring levels of deprivation in schools?

[24] **Leighton Andrews:** You have to have a measure and you are right to say that it is a proxy. It remains our view that that is the most relevant measure that we have. It is always difficult when you are relying on measures that are proxies. However, on the basis of the discussions that we have had within the department, what others have said to us outside and what our statisticians tell us, that seems to be the best one for us to rely on.

[25] **Jenny Rathbone:** Where does nursery education fit into the aspiration to close the gap? There is a lot of evidence, such as the evidence from the effective provision of pre-school education project, that good-quality inclusiveness for education is an effective way of combatting deprivation in those very early years.

[26] **Leighton Andrews:** We have been very successful in Wales in pioneering work in early years. The programmes that we have in the field of education from the earliest years onwards dovetail with work that is supported by other departments, such as the Flying Start programme and other pre-school programmes. So, we have pioneered best practice in Wales in the early years. We have drawn on experience and a significant amount of academic input, which we have also drawn on in the development of the work on the foundation phase.

[27] **Jenny Rathbone:** That is fantastic for those who are in nursery education, but in Cardiff, for example, only around half of three and four-year-olds are in receipt of their entitlement. I do not know how representative that is across the board, but I am not entirely clear where the financial drivers are for that.

[28] **Leighton Andrews:** We have committed ourselves in our manifesto to, for example, doubling the amount of money that we put into the Flying Start programme. So, we will be rolling that out to many more venues for the next few years. That is within the budget of my colleague the Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services, Gwenda Thomas. We have expectations in terms of what local authorities are spending on nursery education, which will be supported through the general budget, the revenue support grant. We have put additional money into early years education and we are supporting the foundation phase in a number of environments—not just in school environments but in other environments as well. So, I am very happy to provide a fuller note on this if you wish me to, Chair, but I think that, in Wales, we have pioneered a lot of work in this area, which I know that you are particularly familiar with.

[29] **Christine Chapman:** I am very happy for you to do that.

[30] **Jenny Rathbone:** I am fully aware that we have done pioneering work, but it is about understanding whether there are disincentives for local authorities to provide more nursery education. I presume that the provision for that is within the general curriculum budget, is it?

[31] **Leighton Andrews:** We can set this out in more detail if you wish, Chair. There is funding from my department and there is also funding through the revenue support grant. We can give you the detail on that, if you wish.

[32] **Christine Chapman:** If we could have a note, that would be good. Jenny, did you want to ask another question?

[33] **Jenny Rathbone:** I would just like to follow up on your initial remarks on the

increase in the money for literacy and numeracy, Minister. You have mentioned specific books that will encourage boys to read; how much of this £2 million will be spent on books and other materials and how much will be spent on training teachers to teach children to read? Is the increase for something specific?

[34] **Leighton Andrews:** We are talking about £2 million in 2012-13, Chair, which is in the next financial year, and there will be a further £2 million in 2013-14, which is in the subsequent financial year. We have not finalised the spending in detail on those programmes because the budget has yet to be approved.

[35] **Aled Roberts:** I barhau â'r **Aled Roberts:** To continue with the cwestiwn, a fydd yr arian hwnnw yn mynd i question, will that money go to local lywodraeth leol, ynteu a oes cynlluniau government, or are there plans to spend the mewn rhaglenni canolog i wario'r £2 filiwn? £2 million in central programmes?

[36] **Leighton Andrews:** The programmes are run centrally, but they are run in co-operation with local authorities and we distribute that money to local partners. It is important to understand that that money will be used on schemes that we wish to see being developed, running alongside what we expect local authorities to do to implement the national reading test from years 2 to 9, which they will be doing this year. We will be procuring a national reading test in Welsh and English. This year, the reading tests will be undertaken by local authorities on a voluntary basis, and I am glad that they have all signed up to do that. This will provide us with consistency across the piece in terms of how these tests are undertaken in Wales. We know from the research that we commissioned earlier this year that there is inconsistency in the tests that are currently used. Quite important research was carried out for us on this, and we are clear about how we need to go forward.

[37] **Aled Roberts:** Yn seiliedig ar fy mhrofiad yn Wrecsam, yr wyf yn ymwybodol bod diffyg cysondeb rhwng y prawf Saesneg a'r prawf Cymraeg, oherwydd bod y safonau'n hollol wahanol. A fydd un prawf ar gael yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg? **Aled Roberts:** Based on my experience in Wrexham, I am aware that there is a lack of consistency between the English test and the Welsh test, as the standards are completely different. Will a single test be available in Welsh and English?

[38] **Leighton Andrews:** We will need tests in both languages. One of the problems that we are experiencing at the moment is that the English test not only tests reading, but also comprehension. On the Welsh-language side, there has been less emphasis on the comprehension, and that is where we need to make progress.

[39] **Simon Thomas:** Yn y gyllideb ar gyfer addysg 14-19, yr ydych yn dangos yn glir bod arbedion gweddol sylweddol yn cael eu gwneud o rhwng £3 miliwn a £4 miliwn bob blwyddyn, ac y byddwch yn gwneud yr arbedion hynny drwy gydweithio rhanbarthol. A yw'r arbedion hynny yn rhan o'r ddarpariaeth hyd at 85 y cant yr ydych eisoes wedi ei chytuno gyda llywodraeth leol, ynteu a yw'r arbedion hynny ar ben y cytundeb hwnnw? **Simon Thomas:** In the budget for 14-19 education, you clearly show that relatively significant savings will be made of between £3 million and £4 million every year, and that that those savings will be made through regional collaboration. Are those savings part of the provision of up to 85 per cent that you have already agreed with local government, or are those savings on top of that agreement?

[40] **Leighton Andrews:** We convened a working group to look at the long-term sustainability of 14-19 learning pathways, which included representatives from local authorities and the Welsh Local Government Association. One thing that that group looked at was the extent to which a move to regional working could deliver savings in administrative

costs without compromising delivery. From the appraisal that was undertaken by officials, it was concluded that it would be possible to make savings over that period by moving to regional working.

[41] **Simon Thomas:** A yw'r arbedion hynny ar ben yr hyn yr ydych wedi gofyn amdano eisoes gan awdurdodau lleol, sef symud o wneud arbedion o 75 y cant i 85 y cant yn y ddarpariaeth rheng flaen?

Simon Thomas: Are those savings on top of what you have already asked of local authorities, namely a move from savings of 75 per cent to 85 per cent in front-line provision?

[42] **Leighton Andrews:** The move from 75 per cent to 85 per cent relates to the money that is given to local authorities through the revenue support grant, so this is the money that we give separately on top of that for 14-19 education.

[43] **Simon Thomas:** In identifying these savings in co-operation with local government, what confidence do you have that you will meet the remaining challenges in the 14-19 agenda, particularly in ensuring that that range of subjects is available throughout Wales in English and Welsh?

[44] **Leighton Andrews:** I have pretty good confidence, because as the pathways have been rolled out over recent years, people have been meeting the targets that we have set for them. We are conscious that it is more challenging in some areas in respect of the Welsh language, and that is something that we are trying to address. However, what we are really looking at here is how to maximise what is spent at the front line. The work that has gone on in local government over the last 12 months has probably found new ways of working that have been helpful to us.

[45] **Keith Davies:** Yr wyf wedi cadeirio rhwydwaith ysgolion a'r coleg yn ardal Llanelli yn fy etholaeth, ac mae'r Mesur yn gweithio'n iawn gan fod pobl ifanc yn cael y dewis. Mae'r tair ysgol cyfrwng Cymraeg yn sir Gâr yn rhedeg 13 o gyrsiau lefel A gyda'i gilydd. Fodd bynnag, maent yn dweud wrthyf—a dyma pam yr wyf yn gofyn y cwestiwn hwn, ac o ystyried yr hyn y mae Simon wedi dweud hefyd—eu bod yn pryderu, oherwydd wrth bod mwy o gydweithio rhwng yr ysgolion a'r colegau, mae costau cludiant yn cynyddu, ac mae nhw'n poeni, wrth i'r arian fynd yn llai, o le y daw'r arian i gludo'r bobl ifanc o ganolfan i ganolfan.

Keith Davies: I have been chairing a network of schools and the college in the Llanelli area in my constituency, and the Measure is working well as young people are given the options. The three Welsh-medium schools in Carmarthenshire run 13 A-level courses jointly. However, they are telling me—and that is why I am asking this question, considering what Simon has just mentioned as well—that they are concerned because as there is greater collaboration between the schools and colleges, the transport costs increase, and they are worried, as the budgets shrink, where the money will come from to transport the young people from one centre to another.

[46] **Leighton Andrews:** That is a fair question; I think there have been examples of collaboration in rural areas and in Valleys areas, which have involved schools specialising in the subjects that they are teaching, and, therefore, learners are travelling. Sometimes, the situation is resolved by having teachers doing the travelling rather than the learners, which obviously can be more cost-effective. Sometimes, people have been undertaking distance learning through ICT-supported work, and it may well be that people will have to turn their hands to that more in the future. There is no question that some of this is challenging because of the rising costs of fuel and the pressure that is putting on local government to deliver. However, you are aware of the financial constraints in which we are working and the financial constraints that have been imposed upon by us by the Conservative and Liberal Democrat administration in Westminster.

[47] **Jocelyn Davies:** I just wanted to press the Minister on this. You mentioned that you have identified savings that are possible through regional working. If you require local partners to deliver, that does not guarantee that those savings will be made. How confident are you that you will get the co-operation of local partners in this, and what are the implications for your budget if there is resistance?

[48] **Leighton Andrews:** That is a very fair question. I am sometimes accused of being rather Napoleonic and centralist in my approach to my role as Minister for education—

[49] **Jocelyn Davies:** I cannot understand how you have got that reputation, Minister. *[Laughter.]*

[50] **Aled Roberts:** Stalinist, I heard.

[51] **Leighton Andrews:** I think that I have been accused of being a Stalinist, a Thatcherite and a Labour Valleys gang boss. I have been accused of all things in my time in politics, but never in the same sentence before.

[52] **Jocelyn Davies:** But certainly in the last week.

[53] **Leighton Andrews:** Indeed. There is a genuine challenge here. We work with partners and we seek to get them to deliver. We have made it clear over this last year that the school effectiveness framework money will be available only to local authorities that are prepared to co-operate in regional consortia. You will be aware, having been a Minister, that one of the main ways in which you can incentivise local authorities to work together is through the constructive and creative use of the money and the grants that we retain centrally.

[54] **Lynne Neagle:** You have placed a lot of emphasis on the importance of quality teaching, and you have already alluded to some of the reprioritisation, for example, with the £4 million for the Masters qualification. However, in general terms, how confident are you that the funding in the draft budget that you have allocated for teaching and leadership will be enough to meet the demands?

[55] **Leighton Andrews:** We are at an early stage of developing some of those plans. We have undertaken a number of projects over the last few months. We have looked at the headship qualification, for example, the national professional qualification for headship, and we have been looking at the whole issue of performance standards for teachers and headteachers and consulting on those. Work is also under way to develop the Masters at the present time and there will be further conversations that we will need to have with providers of teacher training. On the basis of the evidence that has come to me from my officials, I am confident that we can roll this out. Clearly, we will not be looking for every teacher or headteacher to earn that qualification in a single year, so it will be a phased programme.

[56] **Julie Morgan:** In the evidence, you say that there have been savings of £1.7 million in the qualifications budget. Could you tell us how those savings have been achieved; what will be the effect of the savings and will there be any effect on the Welsh baccalaureate, for example?

9.45 a.m.

[57] **Jeff Cuthbert:** Thank you very much for that question. We have certainly conducted a line-by-line review of the qualifications budget and a number of savings have been identified, without in any way being detrimental to our qualifications system. For example, Wales is part of a three-country qualifications system. A great deal of the work surrounding

the development and regulation of qualifications is dependent on work going ahead or not going ahead on a three-country basis. A number of qualifications have also moved from a development phase to a maintenance phase, which, in itself, has produced savings. This is the case with the credit qualifications framework for Wales, and savings have been made accordingly. I can say that it will not have an impact on the Welsh baccalaureate, the budget for which allows for further planned expansion this year. We intend to build on that success. So, they are genuine savings that do not have any detrimental effect.

[58] **Julie Morgan:** Do you think that there may be any further savings as a result of the review of qualifications?

[59] **Jeff Cuthbert:** Of course, there is nothing wrong with saving money if that is a natural consequence, however, that is certainly not what is driving the review. The review is about identifying the best types of qualifications and courses with which to equip young people for their future employment or higher education prospects. That is the focus of this work. As you know, we had a debate on the matter in Plenary yesterday. The review will be concluded about this time next year, and I look forward to its outcome.

[60] **Suzy Davies:** Good morning, Minister and Deputy Minister. I have a question about sixth forms, but, before I ask that, may I just double-check that the post-16 education budget line relates only to sixth forms, work-based learning, adult community learning and further education? Can you just clarify that for me, as a new Member?

[61] **Leighton Andrews:** Broadly, yes, that is right.

[62] **Suzy Davies:** It does not include higher education, does it?

[63] **Leighton Andrews:** No.

[64] **Suzy Davies:** Thank you. Minister, could you explain your plans for the funding of school sixth forms? Will they receive increased or decreased funding?

[65] **Leighton Andrews:** We have been able to give some forward indication to local authorities in respect of funding for the next three years. Funding is planned to increase by 2.5 per cent in 2012-13 and a further 1 per cent in 2013-14.

[66] **Suzy Davies:** Is that additional money coming from the front-line difference between 75 per cent and 85 per cent that you were talking about earlier? Is it coming from the local authority releasing money or is this an increase centrally?

[67] **Leighton Andrews:** No, this is the money that comes from us for post-16 education.

[68] **Suzy Davies:** Right, thank you. When is your current review of post-16 education likely to announce its recommendations?

[69] **Leighton Andrews:** This is something that we have to work on to get right, so I am not looking to rush this work. We will be expecting to draw our conclusions together in autumn next year.

[70] **Jenny Rathbone:** I want to look at the education standards budget, to which you have given a significant increase. Can you give us an idea of exactly what this budget is going to fund?

[71] **Leighton Andrews:** Yes. We have brought together a number of previously existing budgets, following the front-line resources review that we undertook last year, following the

work that was carried out for us by PricewaterhouseCoopers on the cost of administering the education system. We were looking at what grant streams we could bring together to minimise administrative costs and bureaucratic burdens on schools and local authorities. So, the current programme combines the following previous budgets: the better schools fund, the community-focused schools grant, the innovation, small and rural schools grant, the out-of-school-hours learning grant, the looked-after children grant and the basic skills grants. Obviously, the match funding element of the better schools fund, where local authorities provide 40 per cent of the funding, continues to apply. We have also transferred from the curriculum budget an additional £7 million to support literacy and numeracy. That funding for literacy and numeracy and for looked-after children is ring-fenced. As I said earlier, we have managed to find savings in other budgets, which will result in the increase of £7.5 million in 2012-13.

[72] **Jenny Rathbone:** I am not entirely clear how local authorities are still going to be putting 40 per cent into a better schools fund when you no longer have that fund and have put the money into the education standards budget.

[73] **Leighton Andrews:** The money will only be released to them on the basis of the money they are putting in alongside us.

[74] **Simon Thomas:** You have made it very clear over the past year or so that raising standards is a key aim of yours, and is a key aim of the Government. If you were to be remembered for anything in relation to this budget, would it be that it has enabled you to raise those standards in Welsh schools?

[75] **Leighton Andrews:** This is the second budget in which I have been involved as the relevant Minister and we have been trying to shape the budgets in that context over the last 12 months. Raising standards is one of the key elements, but it is not the only thing that should be noted. As I said earlier, we are retaining education maintenance allowances in Wales and you will understand that the overall budget for my department includes the money that we are putting in to ensure that no Welsh student will have to pay higher tuition fees wherever they study in the United Kingdom. There are a number of elements in this budget that I am very pleased with.

[76] **Jenny Rathbone:** I am still slightly unclear around things like the community-focused schools grant. You have wrapped it all up into the education standards budget, but will that work continue? It is an important part of raising attainment, closing the deprivation gap and engaging with families.

[77] **Leighton Andrews:** That would be our expectation. I want every school in Wales to be a community-focused school, because that is the approach that school leaders should have. Engaging with the family and beyond the walls of the school is important to the overall shift in improvement of standards. We have recognised that carrying several small budgets is not administratively sensible and that it causes a burden for us, for local government and for schools.

[78] **Jenny Rathbone:** I understand that, but what is going to happen to the aspirations that we share for using this money to focus on reducing the impact of deprivation?

[79] **Leighton Andrews:** We have asked people to focus on addressing three things in the school effectiveness framework: literacy, numeracy and the link between poverty and low attainment. That has been made clear. It has been spelt out in speeches over the last 18 months and I think that local authorities are clear about that work. It underpins the work of our school standards unit as it works with local authorities to improve school performance. The fact that we have embedded the focus on free school meals and value added within the

banding system for schools indicates how important these issues are to us.

[80] **Suzy Davies:** I want to come back to something that you mentioned in your answer to Simon Thomas's question. It is to do with funding of post-16 students going to university. Can I confirm that that comes from the higher education budget?

[81] **Leighton Andrews:** It comes from the student finance budget. Gwen, can you point me to it?

[82] **Christine Chapman:** I will move on and we will get the information later, Minister.

[83] **Leighton Andrews:** I answered a few questions on that last week in the other committee and I am happy to answer them again.

[84] **Christine Chapman:** We will get that information later.

[85] **Keith Davies:** Mae £2.2 miliwn wedi cael ei drosglwyddo o'r arian sydd ar gael i gynorthwyo pobl ifanc i'r gyllideb llythrennedd a rhifedd. A ydych wedi gwneud asesiad o effaith symud cymaint â hynny o un ffynhonnell i ffynhonnell arall? Hefyd, mewn termau real, mae gostyngiad o 2.2 y cant i'r gyllideb cynorthwyo pobl ifanc.

Keith Davies: A total of £2.2 million has been transferred from the funds available to assist young people to the literacy and numeracy budget. Have you made an assessment of the impact of moving that much from one source to another? Also, in real terms, there is a 2.2 per cent reduction to the budget for supporting young people.

[86] **Leighton Andrews:** The reduction is a result of a transfer from family literacy programmes previously provided through Cymorth. So, it is simply a technical adjustment as we try to bring together all the work that has been done on literacy.

[87] **Lynne Neagle:** The additional learning needs budget has been reduced by £2 million through efficiency savings. What efficiency savings have been made and what effect will that have on delivery in this area?

[88] **Leighton Andrews:** As you will remember, we conducted a review of post-16 learning in the field of additional learning needs last year and identified how we needed to give support to that in the future. Through the adjustment, we have transferred money to the post-16 inclusion and support for learning special education needs budget. That budget is used to reimburse local authorities for their expenditure on post-16 SEN in special schools and out-of-county placements. It has been made in light of local authority estimates of expenditure in the current financial year and has been carried forward into future financial years. The reason why we are talking about efficiencies is that the funding has become available because we had a number of pilot schemes running in relation to additional learning needs and they came to an end over the summer, therefore we are refocusing that money into this area.

[89] **Lynne Neagle:** Further to that, Minister, the reform of additional learning needs is one of the key actions in the programme for government. How confident are you that the funding allocated in the budget will meet the Welsh Government's objectives and have you made any financial provision for the planned structures, governance and special needs Bill?

[90] **Leighton Andrews:** I am confident about this, because we have looked at it in a lot of detail. We set up a task and finish group on post-16 additional learning needs, which reported to me, and we accepted the recommendations of the review. We have had to find additional money and we are working with local authorities on the transfer of that money to them under the legislation to be introduced next year in the Bill. We are trying to ensure, as

we review all that, that we provide the transfer at the level that local authorities would expect, and we have made a commitment to consult on the proposals in any case.

[91] **Keith Davies:** Un o'r cwynion yr wyf yn eu cael yn weddol aml yn fy etholaeth yw bod diffyg arbenigedd yn yr awdurdod o ran cymorth i blant ag anghenion arbennig. Yr ydych chi'n gobeithio y bydd yr awdurdodau yn gweithio'n agosach gyda'i gilydd. A fyddwch yn sicrhau eu bod yn gallu rhannu arbenigedd, yn enwedig ym maes anghenion addysg arbennig?

Keith Davies: One complaint that I hear quite regularly in my constituency is that there is a lack of expertise in the authority when it comes to support for children with special needs. You are hoping that local authorities will work together more closely. Will you ensure that they will be able to share expertise, particularly in the field of special educational needs?

[92] **Leighton Andrews:** Yes, indeed, and we have seen some very good work being done through the pilot schemes, which we are currently writing up, and I hope that they will become a model for best practice. We are well aware that some authorities have done this well, on a cross-disciplinary basis across a series of services. That usually depends on there being an effective co-ordinator as a lead person who is able to bring people together to work around the interests of an individual learner. As I said, there is some good practice in that area and I hope that early next year we will be in a position to publish that information.

[93] **Christine Chapman:** Jenny, did you have a question?

[94] **Jenny Rathbone:** My question was on whether we could we see the results of the pilot schemes, because that would be very interesting, but it sounds as if you are going to disseminate them in any case.

[95] **Leighton Andrews:** There was an inquiry by a committee in the previous Assembly relating to a number of these areas, where we went through the work of the pilot schemes in detail.

[96] **Aled Roberts:** Mae eich strategaeth addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg yn ei gwneud yn hollol blaen—ac yr wyf yn credu eich bod wedi dweud hyn yn rhai o'ch atebion y bore yma—fod rhaid gwella darpariaeth addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg mewn sawl lle. Fodd bynnag, mae'r gyllideb ar gyfer dysgu drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg yn y gyllideb ddrafft yn hollol wastad. A ydych yn hollol sicr y byddwch yn gallu gwneud y gwelliannau hyn i addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg wrth feddwl nad oes cynnydd yn yr arian sydd ar gael iddi?

Aled Roberts: Your Welsh-medium education strategy makes it completely clear—and I think that you said this in some of your replies this morning—that Welsh-medium education provision needs to be improved in several areas. However, the budget for Welsh-medium education has flat-lined. Are you sure that you will be able to make these improvements to Welsh-medium education, given that there is no increase in the funding that is available for it?

10.00 a.m.

[97] **Leighton Andrews:** The money that we make available has to be set alongside the money that is provided to local authorities through the revenue support grant. So far, we have protected current budget levels at £12.4 million in 2012, so we are clear about the need to protect the money. We know that we need to promote systemic change locally. Local authorities have the responsibility for planning provision. We are seeking to introduce Welsh-in-education strategic plans on a statutory basis going forward. Local authorities will present those to us by December this year. There are some responsibilities in respect of education that currently lie with the Welsh Language Board, which will be transferred to my department by next April. Therefore, our 2012 budget will include approximately £4 million extra of Welsh

Language Board grants, including just over £1 million for Mudiad Meithrin, and just under £3 million for grants to local authorities for *athrawon bro*. If we can streamline those grants with our existing provision, that will help both administration processes and accountability. We will be seeking to create a single grant, the Welsh-in-education grant, for local authorities to stimulate the way in which support services are protected for Welsh-language and Welsh-medium teaching and learning. So, there is still work to be done on this, in that we are seeking to consolidate, as a result of the Measure last year, the work of the Welsh Language Board. However, this is something to which this Government is committed and will continue to support.

[98] **Simon Thomas:** Mae'r strategaeth addysg drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg yn un clodwiw iawn. Mae'n sefydlu'r disgwyl i lywodraeth leol ar lefel rhanbarthol ymateb i'r galw am addysg Gymraeg yn yr ardal. Os bydd y galw yn tyfu, fel y mae'n debygol o wneud, ac wedi gwneud yn hanesyddol, mae'n debyg y bydd hynny'n arwain at yr angen am ysgolion Cymraeg newydd—nid yw hynny o reidrwydd yn golygu adeiladau newydd bob tro, ond aildefnyddio, ailwampio ac ailstrwythuro'r ddarpariaeth gorfforol mewn awdurdodau lleol. A ydych yn meddwl bod awdurdodau'n barod ar gyfer yr her?

Simon Thomas: The Welsh-medium education strategy is praiseworthy. It sets out an expectation for local authorities on a regional level to respond to the demand for Welsh-medium education in the area. If demand grows, as it is likely to do, and has done historically, that is likely to lead to a greater number of new Welsh-medium schools—that does not necessarily mean new buildings, but reusing older buildings and restructuring the physical provision within local authorities. Do you think that authorities are ready for the challenge?

[99] **Leighton Andrews:** Yr wyf yn awgrymu bod yr Aelod yn darllen fy araith yng nghynhadledd Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg ddydd Sadwrn.

Leighton Andrews: I suggest that the Member reads my speech to the Parents for Welsh Medium Education conference on Saturday.

[100] **Simon Thomas:** Yr wyf yn sicr o wneud hynny. Ar y bore hwnnw yr oeddwn yn gwneud rhywbeth arall yn hytrach na gwrandao ar eich araith. Yr oeddwn yn dilyn rhywbeth hyd yn oed mwy disglair.

Simon Thomas: I am sure to do that. That morning I was doing something else rather than following your speech. I was following something even more exciting.

[101] **Leighton Andrews:** Yr oedd Suzy yno.

Leighton Andrews: Suzy was there.

[102] **Simon Thomas:** Mae Suzy yn byw yn Abertawe. [*Chwerthin.*]

Simon Thomas: Suzy lives in Swansea. [*Laughter.*]

[103] Y mater sylfaenol yw mae bodloni'r galw am addysg Gymraeg yn golygu bod yn rhaid i awdurdodau lleol edrych o ddifrif ar nifer y disgyblion yn yr ysgolion presennol, onid yw?

The fundamental issue is that meeting the demand for Welsh-medium education requires that local authorities look seriously at the numbers of pupils in the existing schools, does it not?

[104] **Leighton Andrews:** Rhoddais yr araith ar ôl y rygbi. Yr oedd Suzy yn y gynhadledd. Yr wyf yn deall y pwynt, a chyfeiriais ato yn fy araith. Yn y dyfodol, yr ydym eisiau gweld awdurdodau lleol yn edrych ar y galw yn yr ardal leol. Byddwn yn

Leighton Andrews: I gave the speech after the rugby. Suzy was present at the conference. I understand the point, and I referred to it in my speech. In future, we want to see local authorities looking at the demand in the local area. We will be discussing this

trafod y mater yn y dyfodol wrth edrych ar y Ddeddf newydd. Yr wyf eisiau gweld awdurdodau lleol yn gweithio yn well i asesu'r galw'n lleol.

issue in looking at the new Act. I want to see local authorities working more effectively to assess the demand locally.

[105] **Aled Roberts:** Mae sôn yn y gyllideb y bydd niferoedd y myfyrwyr sy'n hyfforddi i fod yn athrawon yn gostwng. A ydych yn credu bod digon o athrawon yn cymhwyso er mwyn darparu addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg o safon?

Aled Roberts: There is mention in the budget that the number of student teachers is going to fall. Do you think that there are enough teachers qualifying in order to deliver quality Welsh-medium education?

[106] **Leighton Andrews:** I think that there are. We have been looking in some detail in recent months at the issue of teacher demand. The answer is that there probably are overall, but whether they are coming through in sufficient numbers in the right subject areas is the question that we really need to focus on.

[107] **Julie Morgan:** I want to ask about the provision for education research services, which has been reduced by £95,000. Are you sure that you will be able to evaluate your outcomes?

[108] **Leighton Andrews:** We put evaluation in place at the beginning of programmes, and we have got better at that over time. However, at the present time, it was important for us to demonstrate that we were looking at our budgets carefully, both in research and in communications, and seeking to move more of that money to the front line. We face difficult times with our budgets, and we will have to be cannier, perhaps, at procuring the evaluation that we need in advance. It may mean that there will be certain areas where we will not progress research that we might have undertaken previously. However, we will have to be focused, given the limited budgets that we have.

[109] **Julie Morgan:** I accept that it is very difficult, but, when cuts are made, it is often the research and evaluation budgets that are cut. It is still important that we are able to evaluate. Do you think that you have enough to do most of the evaluation that you need?

[110] **Leighton Andrews:** We have been through this in detail internally. The reality is that you can always evaluate more. We have a commitment to do with moving money to the front line, and that is the commitment I am most concerned that we honour.

[111] **Jenny Rathbone:** Given the challenging reductions that we have had in capital allocations from the UK Government, how do you think that we can achieve our twenty-first century schools programme in order to meet our other aspirations with regard to equity, so that all pupils have access to high-quality information and communication technology and decent buildings to learn in?

[112] **Leighton Andrews:** It is very challenging. Our capital budget has been cut by the UK Government by 40 per cent. That is very difficult and that is why we have gone back to local authorities with regard to the twenty-first century schools programme to ask them to look at the possibility of making a 50 per cent contribution. We are aware that local authorities have borrowing powers. They can use prudential borrowing to support their programmes in a way that we cannot. In order to be more efficient ourselves, we have sought to bring all of our capital programmes together so that we can plan more effectively across the whole department. There is often slippage in capital programmes and we sometimes need to bring forward spending and sometimes we need to push spending back. The way that we plan now will enable us to do that effectively. We are keen that new school developments should plan properly for ICT provision. Again, we are getting better at that. It is another area where

there needs to be more centralisation, because I am not convinced that local authorities in the past have necessarily planned their ICT provision for education effectively. There has been variable practice between different local authorities. Too often, some of those decisions have been in the hands of chief information officers in local authorities, rather than being planned with the needs of the user in mind.

[113] Alongside this work, we have established a task and finish group on ICT in the classroom, which will look at the use of digital materials in the classroom. It is being chaired by Janet Hayward, who was the headteacher at Barry Island Primary School and is now the headteacher at Cadoxton Primary School. She is unquestionably a leader in this area and her previous school has received awards for excellence in the use of ICT.

[114] **Simon Thomas:** On the capital programme, you mentioned that you have gone back to local authorities and changed the ground rules from a 70:30 to a 50:50 split—I understand why you have done that. What response have you had? Do you, in effect, now have a new programme, or are you still waiting for some key local authorities to get back to you?

[115] **Leighton Andrews:** We did not go back to local authorities and tell them that there would be a 50:50 split. We talked this through with them over several weeks and also discussed it formally with the Welsh Local Government Association. With regard to the initial discussions, we had a positive response. People understood that, if we were to proceed on a 50:50 basis, more programmes could be funded. Some of the subsequent political responses following my announcement in July have perhaps been less receptive than the indications given earlier, but that is politics. We are awaiting the final delivery of the outline programmes from local authorities and I hope to make a further announcement before Christmas.

[116] **Simon Thomas:** You said that you hoped that they would be available in the autumn.

[117] **Leighton Andrews:** Terms like autumn and spring are very useful in politics.

[118] **Simon Thomas:** It appears that climate change is having a strange effect on politics as well.

[119] **Jocelyn Davies:** Autumn does not last until January.

[120] **Simon Thomas:** Going back to the earlier point on Welsh-language provision, much of the twenty-first century schools programme is about trying to meet the demand. You carefully mentioned RhAG, but its representatives will tell you that there is more demand than is being met at the moment, as I am sure that you were told on Saturday.

[121] **Leighton Andrews:** The points on Welsh-medium education are well made. However, what has been evident over the past 20 years of development of Welsh-medium education has been the way in which quite flexible arrangements have been introduced locally, so that you sometimes have Welsh-medium streams starting in the broader school environment, and people have been using school buildings that have become redundant in other areas. Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, for example, has announced the development of a primary school on an existing secondary school site. People are looking creatively at how they can do that. The overall demand for Welsh-medium education is growing as a percentage. It is something that we want local authorities to respond to, and they have to do that in the context of planning their forward provision.

[122] **Simon Thomas:** On the wider capital programme, can you really maintain a twenty-first century schools programme that makes a difference and a state-of-the-art ICT programme? Does not a cut of 40 per cent—more if you factor in inflation—mean that one of

those will have to go?

[123] **Leighton Andrews:** I do not think so. In the past, not all new school buildings were effectively planned for an optimal range of issues, not only ICT, but forward sustainability as well. Since we established it, our twenty-first century schools programme has brought all of these issues together for us to look at when we scrutinise local authority programmes.

[124] **Christine Chapman:** Unless any other Members have any other questions, I am going to give a final question to Keith Davies.

[125] **Keith Davies:** I fynd yn ôl i'r pwynt am yr arian cyfalaf, byddwch yn ymwybodol bod nifer o awdurdodau nad ydynt yn barod i gyflwyno eu cynlluniau i ymateb i dwf yn y galw am addysg Gymraeg. Maent yn araf iawn yn cyflwyno'r cynlluniau. Yr wyf yn falch o glywed y byddwch yn gofyn am rywbeth statudol. A fyddwch yn gofyn am raglen gwariant cyfalaf dair blynedd? Yr wyf wedi gweld cynydd yn nifer yr ysgolion cynradd mewn ambell ardal—ysgolion cynradd Cymraeg mewn un ardal—ac nid ysgol uwchradd newydd yw'r ymateb i'r cynnydd hwnnw bob amser, ond estyniad i ysgol. Mae perygl, fel a ddigwyddodd yn y 1980au, y bydd ysgolion sy'n tyfu o ran maint yn defnyddio cabanau. Am ryw 20 neu 30 mlynedd yn unig mae cabanau yn para, ac nid ydynt yn addas ar gyfer labordai neu weithdai, dim ond ar gyfer ystafell ddosbarth. Yr ydym am weld cyrsiau galwedigaethol ac ati, ond mae'r ysgolion yn cael trafferth yn eu cynnig am nad oes ganddynt y labordai a'r gweithdai am eu bod wedi ymateb i'r twf drwy ddefnyddio cabanau.

Keith Davies: Going back to the point on capital funding, you will be aware that many authorities are not ready to present their plans for meeting the growth in demand for Welsh-medium education. They are very slow in delivering those plans. I am pleased to hear that you will now be making a statutory requirement. Will you ask for a three-year capital expenditure programme? I have seen an increase in the number of primary schools in some areas—and Welsh-medium primary schools in one area—and the response to that growth is not always a new secondary school, but a school extension. The danger, as happened in the 1980s, is that schools will use cabins to address the growth in size. Cabins last for only 20 or 30 years, and they are not suitable for use as laboratories or workshops, only for classrooms. We want to see vocational courses and so on, but the schools are having difficulty in offering them because they do not have the necessary laboratories and workshops as a result of using cabins to respond to the growth in numbers.

[126] **Leighton Andrews:** I would not want anyone to suggest that the use of cabins does not have a role at times. I visited Ysgol Gymraeg Pwll Coch, a primary school, on Monday. The new developments there have been creatively received. Your general point is a fair one, but you know the pressures that our capital budget is under. I repeat that it has been cut by 40 per cent by the UK Government for the next few years. The capital area is the most challenging for us. You can see the impact on my budgets.

10.15 a.m.

[127] We must also ensure that, through the development of our twenty-first century schools programme, local authorities are spending the appropriate amount that is allocated to them through the general capital fund on education, and that will be taken into account in the assessments that we make. However, I do not have any simple solutions.

[128] **Christine Chapman:** I thank the Minister and the Deputy Minister and their officials for attending this morning and helping us with our deliberations in what are, as the Minister said, challenging times. Thank you for attending this morning. I am sure that we will see you shortly.

[129] The committee will now adjourn until 10.35 a.m., when we will have with us the Minister for Health and Social Services and the Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services.

*Gohiriwyd y cyfarfod rhwng 10.15 a.m. a 10.38 a.m.
The meeting adjourned between 10.15 a.m. and 10.38 a.m.*

**Cynigion Cyllideb Ddrafft Llywodraeth Cymru ar gyfer 2012-13: Sesiwn Craffu
ar Waith y Gweinidog
Welsh Government Draft Budget Proposals for 2012-13: Ministerial Scrutiny
Session**

[130] **Christine Chapman:** Welcome back, everyone. The purpose of this item on the agenda is to scrutinise the Minister for Health and Social Services and the Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services on the health, social care and children's budgets and priorities for 2012-13. I welcome the Minister, the Deputy Minister and their officials: Martin Swain, head of children and young people division, Dr Heather Payne, senior medical officer, maternal and child health and Mark Osland, deputy director of finance. I welcome you all this morning. We appreciate your attendance.

[131] Thank you for the paper that you sent in advance. The Members have read the paper. The Minister and the Deputy Minister would like to say a few words before we start the questioning.

[132] **The Minister for Health and Social Services (Lesley Griffiths):** This committee recently considered children and young people's health issues in detail. So, I do not propose to repeat the points that we made in that meeting. I have recently responded to you as Chair, on some of the points and further questions that you had following that meeting.

[133] In the main, funding for children and young people's health services is contained within the overall revenue allocation that is made annually to the seven local health boards in Wales. It is primarily for those LHBs to determine how to use their funding to meet the needs of their population, which includes children and young people, across all areas of their responsibility. It would be totally inappropriate for me as the Minister to dictate to them how they should spend, not just on children and young people, but on all people. Children and adolescent mental health services have long been a priority for the Welsh Government. Health boards spend approximately £44 million per year on these services, and this funding is ring-fenced within their allocations. In this budget, we have allocated a further £1.2 million in health board allocations for CAMHS—funding that was previously held centrally.

[134] The ability to identify rare conditions at an early stage is vital so that treatment and management can start as early as possible. In this budget, £0.5 million has been allocated to introduce newborn screening for sickle cell disorders and MCAD. This programme is expected to start in the next few months, subject to a satisfactory business plan being submitted to me.

[135] I will be attending this committee again on 3 November to give evidence on oral health and Designed to Smile. I am pleased that over 99 per cent of maintained schools are now actively involved in local health school schemes. We will be spending over £2 million next year on healthy schools and pre-school programmes.

[136] In line with my predecessor's commitment, we are now implementing recurrent investment of over £2 million each year on improving access to wheelchair services for children and young people.

[137] Hospices play a significant role in the provision of high-quality palliative and end-of-life care for children. Our central funding to hospices across Wales, which includes children's hospices, is provided to meet the core specialist consultant-led palliative care services, which are provided on behalf of the NHS.

[138] Before I ask the Deputy Minister to say a few words, outcomes for children depend on health and social services working together in an integrated way. I will pass over to the Deputy Minister who will highlight the investment that we are making to support children and young people and their families.

[139] **The Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services (Gwenda Thomas):** In line with this Government's commitment to give children from disadvantaged communities the best start in life, we are expanding the Flying Start programme. We will be investing an additional £5 million in the programme next year, increasing to an additional £30 million a year by 2014-15. By that time, we will have doubled the number of children benefiting from this programme.

[140] The current economic climate makes it even more important that we retain our commitment to tackling child poverty. There is no higher priority for us than ensuring that children and young people whose lives are affected by poverty have the same chances in life as everyone else in Wales. The child poverty strategy for Wales, published earlier this year, set out what we can achieve in helping to reduce child poverty, and to improve the outcomes of low-income families. The anti-poverty action plan, which is being developed as part of the new programme for government, will provide regular updates and contain details of measurable outcomes to show progress in implementing the child poverty strategy.

[141] The published budget currently shows a reduction of 4 per cent in the baseline funding for the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service in 2012-13. We continue to consider the budget requirements for this service, and I expect that further funding will be allocated so that the efficiency requirement is limited to 2 per cent next year.

[142] In Plenary last week, we discussed the pressures on the care system and the strain faced by families, resulting in a rise of 715 children being put into care in the past two years. Through investment in preventative programmes such as Flying Start and Families First, we can tackle issues before they manifest, and support families earlier. In April next year, Families First will be rolled out across all local authorities in Wales. This innovative programme is a key part of our programme to address child poverty. Next year and the year after, we have allocated over £40 million for local authorities to address locally identified needs.

[143] Integrated family support services will complement these programmes, and work more intensely with complex families where there is a welfare concern for the child. I have made clear my expansion plans for IFSS, and from spring 2012 IFSS will be available in 10 local authority areas. The total budget for IFSS to date is £3.3 million.

[144] The Welsh Government's programme for government commitments to supporting people and the implementation of a new social services Bill will provide a coherent Welsh legal framework to transform social services to support people earlier through a range of preventive and targeted services.

10.45 a.m.

[145] **Christine Chapman:** Thank you, Deputy Minister. Members will obviously ask specific questions about the various areas in your portfolio. I would like to start. You have

spoken about your strategic priorities within the portfolio, but we are in very challenging times, so could you comment on how the resources that are available can be channelled to ensure that they have the maximum possible impact in delivering the Government's strategic objectives and how you will assess their cost-effectiveness?

[146] **Lesley Griffiths:** We generally allocate funding to support programmes that are evaluated and where there is good evidence that they will deliver against the strategic objectives of the Government. It is for this reason that, even prior to our announcement in our programme for government regarding the expansion of Flying Start, we had already set aside extra money for it. However, we are investing a further £55 million in Flying Start over the next three years. This is based on evidence that, if we increase the investment in the early years, the outcomes for children from disadvantaged families are much better: their skills improve and the outcomes improve for children living in poverty.

[147] Another good example, which I mentioned in my opening remarks, is the healthy schools scheme. We are investing an extra £2.2 million in that, because there is a lot of evidence that these schemes are beneficial with regard to improving the health of and the educational outcomes for schoolchildren.

[148] Gwenda referred to children's social services budgets in her opening remarks; these will all increase. As I have said, we will be putting much more investment into Flying Start, Families First and IFSS over the coming years.

[149] **Jocelyn Davies:** Good morning, Minister. I was going to ask you about the difficulty in identifying the resources allocated to children and young people's health and social care in terms of the way in which you presented the budget to us. However, I think that you anticipated that question in your opening remarks, and you have said that it is all down to the local health boards and that you feel that it is completely inappropriate for you to interfere in that. How are the local health boards accountable for their spending in this area, and why do you take a completely different view from that of the Minister for Education and Skills, whom we have just scrutinised, with regard to intervening in terms of outcomes for children? In his portfolio, he does not say that something is the job of the local education authority and that it would be completely inappropriate for him to intervene; he says that, if something is not acceptable, he will intervene. So, why is your style so different from his in terms of outcomes for children?

[150] **Lesley Griffiths:** There are two reasons. First, the local health boards know their population and they know the services that are required for that population. I also think that ring-fencing has advantages and disadvantages. The disadvantage is that, if I say that £1 million must be ring-fenced for a certain service, would the LHB then think that that is the maximum or the minimum that it should spend on that service? If I tell local health boards to ring-fence £1 million this year, next year, and the year after, does that mean that the spend on that service would stay at £1 million for each year? So, there are advantages and disadvantages. However, LHBs are looking at their services and service change plans will be coming forward. If necessary, I will intervene, but I do not tell LHBs initially where they should spend their money.

[151] **Jocelyn Davies:** I asked you how the LHBs are accountable for their spend, and I asked the First Minister yesterday why it appears that local accountability for LHBs has not materialised. I did not mention ring-fencing, and I was not suggesting that you should ring-fence. I do not see the difference between an LHB in terms of its delivery on outcomes for children and a local education authority.

[152] **Lesley Griffiths:** I will have to consider how we look at that as I go through my term of office. However, we will use the outcomes to assess it. For example, there will be an

annual report on the programme for government, and we will see what progress has been made. So, that will be a way of seeing that.

[153] **Jocelyn Davies:** Are the LHBs accountable locally for local decisions?

[154] **Lesley Griffiths:** They are accountable for those decisions. They have the budget. We give them a very large budget, and it is up to them to ensure that they provide the services. I have to ensure that that is done.

[155] **Lynne Neagle:** On this matter, are LHBs given any targets to drive spending for children? There used to be service and financial framework targets in the NHS, did there not? Are there any targets relating particularly to children that drive that overall expenditure?

[156] **Lesley Griffiths:** We have the annual quality framework, which contains targets by which we can measure the services.

[157] **Aled Roberts:** I have two issues. First, I would have thought that local education authorities have a greater degree of democratic accountability if they fail to deliver, whereas the point that Jocelyn was making was that, in this particular area, there is very little democratic accountability, locally. I agree that the spend is up to them, but the point that we are making is that we are concerned that if they fail to deliver in certain areas, the democratic accountability appears to be totally missing.

[158] **Lesley Griffiths:** We have the joint executive committee meetings at which the directors meet the chief executives. That is one way of monitoring it. As I said, we have the annual quality framework and the five-year plans, which will be assessed as we go through that period. So, ultimately, the buck stops with me. However, it is up to the LHBs to ensure that those services are there, meeting our outcomes and the Government's strategic priorities.

[159] **Aled Roberts:** I think that our worry is that this budget, from my own experience in local government, is very lacking in transparency. We have little or no opportunity to see local health board budgets. For example, in north Wales, I know that, although there is a Government move to encourage breastfeeding, for example, the LHB has failed to appoint breastfeeding co-ordinators in the east. It appears to come down to a budgetary decision by the LHB and yet, had it not been for one question there, those who are democratically accountable locally would not even have been aware of that decision, because the LHB budget in itself is totally lacking in transparency.

[160] **Dr Payne:** Would it be helpful if I were to add a bit about the national service framework for children and young people and maternity services? The issue of something like breastfeeding, which you have just raised, is included in the NSF reporting. It is more complicated than the education situation because children's services will be reported via the joint executive team reports, but also via the NSF into the children and young people's partnership plan system. So, they go to slightly different places. That makes it more difficult to identify the answers to the precise budgetary questions that you are asking. The point is about the outcomes and processes that produce those. Our recent analysis of the national service framework for children has shown that, of the 203 areas of key actions, the great majority were improved over the past five years, about 31 remained the same and five were not better. That is the evidence of improvement and those key actions are reported on every year. They go in via the children and young people's partnership plan.

[161] **Christine Chapman:** There is a final supplementary question from Jenny Rathbone, and then I want to move on to the next area of questioning.

[162] **Jenny Rathbone:** In his report on the very difficult financial circumstances we all

face, the auditor general talks about patient safety and quality of services needing to be paramount in the way in which we analyse what services we provide and where. Obviously, there are much higher risks in practising children's medicine, because they can go from well to very unwell very quickly. I wondered what drivers you have to ensure that health boards are running children's services that are both safe and high-quality.

[163] **Lesley Griffiths:** The Auditor General for Wales's report supported the fact that we will have to reconfigure services—obviously within those services are services for children and young people—to ensure that those services are safe, sustainable and high-quality. We will be looking at his findings in great detail going forward. The drivers are the ones that have already been mentioned, and we have Health Inspectorate Wales as well, and we need to use all the drivers to ensure that that is the case.

[164] **Julie Morgan:** I was going to ask about what proportion of the funding allocated to health boards is ringfenced specifically for the NHS provision for children and young people.

[165] **Lesley Griffiths:** I mentioned ring fencing to Jocelyn earlier. The main part of the ring-fencing is the mental health allocation to health boards, and that includes the funding for child and adolescent mental health services, although it is not specifically identified within the mental health ring fence. The total expenditure, as I think I mentioned in my opening remarks, is £44 million. There was some specific recurrent funding allocated in 2011-12 for children and young people's services, including £2 million for neonatal services and £100,000 for cochlear implants for children.

[166] **Julie Morgan:** Do we have any idea of what percentage overall is specifically dedicated to children and young people?

[167] **Mr Osland:** There is not an exact percentage that is identified. Obviously, the health boards are responsible for the whole of the population. Specifically, allocation to children and young people is not separately identified. The only ring-fencing element in the allocations is the mental health support funding. There is no separate identified amount of money that is allocated.

[168] **Julie Morgan:** This is similar to a previous question, but how can you then measure the adequacy of the provision?

[169] **Mr Osland:** Just to add to what I was saying, as the Minister has said, there is clearly ongoing monitoring and dialogue with the LHBs through various means, such as the joint executive team meetings and the annual quality framework and, within those, there are indicators. The LHBs five-year plans clearly need to demonstrate the priority that they are giving to the programme for government. So, through all of those means, there is a monitoring and control process to ensure that the deliverables are in line with the priorities of the Government.

[170] **Lesley Griffiths:** I forgot to say that the previous Minister announced an additional £2 million for wheelchair services, which I know is very important—it was raised again yesterday in the Chamber—and I expect to keep that ring fenced for the next year.

[171] **Gwenda Thomas:** On a wider basis on that question, we have adopted the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and within that, we are committed under priority 15, to try to establish what we are budgeting for children. We have started that work within this department. In June 2010, we published figures on an analysis of budgeting for children, but that was based on expenditure rather than budgeting. That will be published on a three-year basis to complement the children's wellbeing monitor, and there could be plans to publish on an annual basis. This work has started, and according to our commitment to the

UNCRC, and also the children's rights Measure, I am sure that I will be feeding the progress of that to the Minister who will be considering it seriously.

11.00 a.m.

[172] **Simon Thomas:** I want to extend the discussion a little further. You are setting a national budget for the NHS, but you also clearly set out in your narrative the achievements that you want to see with regard to issues around children in particular, and the Deputy Minister just mentioned the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and how that is integrated in all of this. The Government has stated clearly that, for example with regard to different forms of cancer in children, it is not in favour of creating a separate cancer fund. That is your stated position, which is fine. However, that does not leave any transparency for people to then see how different forms of cancer in children are being addressed in the different health board areas in an equitable way. So, what iterative steps will you take, not just on cancer in children, but in general, as the responsible Minister, to ensure that there is a direct link between the expenditure that you have put in this budget and the positive outcomes for children? That is not clear from the budget lines. You say that that is down to the LHBs, but there must be some kind of way that you can have an overview and be clear yourself, as Minister—even if we are not that clear at the moment—that the expenditure is going where it should to achieve the outcomes that you clearly set out in your narrative to the budget.

[173] **Lesley Griffiths:** That goes back to what Mark was saying. It is about having constant dialogue and discussions, held at a variety of levels, with LHBs. I meet the chairs regularly—on a once-monthly basis—and targets and outcomes are discussed, and the director-general meets with the chief executives. You also have the things that we have just discussed, such as the joint executive meetings, the five-year plans and the annual quality framework, all of which set out the targets and the monitoring that we need. That is what I have to reassure me.

[174] **Simon Thomas:** I am glad to hear that. To reiterate, what we hear in the press is that it is all about 'I don't have enough money, so give me some more' or 'We're in a terrible situation and we need to cut now'. Are you really focusing on the outcomes in these meetings, rather than just trying to manage a very tight budget?

[175] **Lesley Griffiths:** Yes, absolutely. It is not all about finance, although what we are hearing outside, to coin your phrase, is that everything is being cut because of the budget. It is not. We are looking at service reconfiguration and service changes, not just because of finance but because of services being stretched and recruitment issues. So, we have those three things that are making us realise that the status quo is not acceptable. I do not think that the status quo has been acceptable for a long time. Wanless was saying in 2003 that we need to change. So, it is not just the finance issues that are responsible, but the other two issues as well. The First Minister has made it clear that this Government is all about delivery and outcomes.

[176] **Aled Roberts:** I agree that it is not all about finance, but what we in the Children and Young People Committee are worried about is the lack of transparency with regard to seeing what is being spent on children's services. You have answered the question regarding the central budget, but I cannot see how you can properly monitor whether services are being delivered without having that transparency in LHB budgets. So, in your monitoring, do you have figures for LHBs on how much they spend on children's cancer services, for example, so that we, as elected Members, can challenge those LHBs? We often hear of postcode lotteries, where services are available in one area but not in another. It is staggering that we have a budget that has £5 billion in a line and, yet, we have no understanding of where that £5 billion is being spent.

[177] **Mr Osland:** It is fair to say that, historically, the NHS costing and information systems have not been designed and are not in a position to provide the sort of detail that you are talking about with regard to the actual costs and expenditure incurred on different age groups, for example. Having said that, that has been the historical situation, but there are developments, as we speak, in the information systems that we use to make that sort of detail available in the future. It is called patient-level costing, which you may have heard of. All LHBs are developing these systems to the extent that, in two to three years' time, the level of detail that you are seeking will be available as routine. That is the intention, but, historically, the information systems have not supported that level of detail.

[178] **Lesley Griffiths:** You might be surprised to hear that we are ahead of the game compared with the rest of the UK on that.

[179] **Aled Roberts:** At the local authority level, you have to account for every £10,000, but here you get a line with £5 billion on it.

[180] **Lesley Griffiths:** As I say, it is being looked at.

[181] **Jocelyn Davies:** Chair, I hope that we do not go down to the patient level of detail in committee—going from one extreme to the other—but I think that we would all welcome greater detail. I have a supplementary question on ring fencing, though I am heartened by the Minister's response that she remains responsible for the outcomes. Even though I did not mention ring fencing, you made a list of its downsides. However, you say that you are applying that to mental health services for young people, despite the significant downsides, and to wheelchair services. You cannot have it both ways, Minister. You said that one of the problems is that there might not be a penny more spent on something because of ring fencing—once that money is spent, that is it. Are you concerned that mental health services for young people and wheelchair services will go up to the ring-fence amount and that will be it?

[182] **Lesley Griffiths:** I said that there are disadvantages and advantages, and I named the disadvantages. It can be a valuable tool. I will look at that on an annual basis, so I am minded to ring fence the mental health budget. Am I concerned that that will be the only funding? That is a concern, but I can talk to chairs about that, and chief executives will be spoken to as well. However, I do not think that you can say that an area will be ring fenced for five years, because of the disadvantages that I mentioned. It is a valuable tool, but it has to be looked at carefully. There are good reasons for doing it.

[183] **Jocelyn Davies:** Will you keep monitoring that?

[184] **Lesley Griffiths:** I will definitely keep monitoring that, and I will not ring fence anything beyond a year.

[185] **Lynne Neagle:** On neonatal care, you referred to £2 million. It was not clear whether that was ring fenced, and I would like some clarification on that. The Government is trying to make progress on neonatal care, which has been a difficult area of service delivery. There are still serious concerns about staffing levels in south-east Wales. How confident are you that any additional resources will go towards bringing about the kind of changes that we are keen to see in neonatal provision?

[186] **Lesley Griffiths:** The £2 million is not ring fenced. There are concerns, which is one of the reasons why I said that we need reconfiguration. It is not just about money: it is about ensuring that we have the safe services that we want, with the outcomes that we want. Maternity and neonatal care is an area that has been overstretched in some parts of Wales.

That is why we need to look carefully to ensure that those services are stable.

[187] **Jenny Rathbone:** There is a slight uplift in next year's public health and prevention budget, but it is a reduction in real terms of 1.2 per cent, up from £161 million to around £162 million. What impact—both positive and negative—will that have on the six key public health areas that you identified when you saw us at the end of September? I think that there has been a reduction in immunisation, for example, but an increase in promoting healthy working and so on.

[188] **Lesley Griffiths:** We will spend over £22 million on health promotion and protection schemes for children, young people and families in 2012-13. That is 14 per cent of the total budget for public health and prevention. The budget for vaccination and immunisation, which includes the human papilloma virus vaccine, is £7.8 million. I do not think that there has been a reduction in that, but I will pass over to Mark on that point. The rest of the funding is split between the healthy start scheme, school nursing, the cooking bus, the teenage pregnancy pilot scheme, the healthy schools network and smoking prevention for young people. They are all schemes within that area.

[189] **Jenny Rathbone:** Are these steady-state budgets, as it were, to continue with the good work that you are already doing?

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

[191] **Mr Osland:** To answer the earlier question, I do not believe that there has been a reduction in the vaccination and immunisation budget, but I will double check.

[192] **Christine Chapman:** Aled Roberts has the next question. We have touched upon wheelchair services already, but perhaps you would like to expand on that further.

[193] **Aled Roberts:** Yr ydych wedi cadarnhau bod y £2.2 miliwn a gyhoeddodd Edwina Hart ym mis Chwefror yn parhau yn y gyllideb hon. Pa linell yn y gyllideb sydd yn cynnwys yr adnodd ar gyfer gwasanaethau cadeiriau olwyn? Fel y dywedoch ddoe wrth ateb cwestiwn yn y Senedd, mae cryn dipyn o boeni ynghylch cael cadeiriau olwyn i blant, yn arbennig.

Aled Roberts: You have confirmed that the £2.2 million announced by Edwina Hart in February continues in this budget. Which budget line includes the resource for wheelchair services? As you said yesterday in response to a question in the Senedd, there is considerable concern about getting wheelchairs for children, in particular.

[194] **Lesley Griffiths:** The budget provides an additional £2.2 million for wheelchair services for children. That was, as you say, announced by my predecessor and it will be provided again for 2012-13. You asked which line it is in: it is in the delivery of core NHS services action line, under the delivery of targeted NHS services. I will pass over to Mark for the actual budget line. The additional funding has already been allocated to Betsi Cadwaladr University Local Health Board, for the Wrexham area in particular, and the Cardiff and Vale University Local Health Board, in order to increase provision. The number of clinical staff for wheelchair services has been doubled to ensure that the waiting times came down, because that was a matter of great concern.

[195] **Mr Osland:** To reiterate what the Minister said, the budget is within the delivery of core NHS services action line for 2012-13. It is also there as an indicative budget for the subsequent years of 2013-14 and 2014-15.

[196] **Aled Roberts:** So, what is the total budget, taking into account the additional £2.2 million?

[197] **Mr Osland:** I am not sure of the total amount spent across all LHBs on wheelchair services, but we can get you that information.

[198] **Christine Chapman:** If you could provide a note on that, we would be grateful.

[199] **Simon Thomas:** Going back to prevention, the narrative that you have provided for the budget makes it clear that prevention is a key objective for the Government. However, it is not clear whether you are providing money for delivery of the prevention aims or continuing to fund services that have always been part of the NHS. Mr Osland said that he did not think that the immunisation budget had been cut. I do not think that there is a cut in cash terms, but, in real terms, when you factor in inflation, I think that there is a cut. Inflation is already around 5 per cent, so, once you factor that in, we are looking at a cut, because the budget has more or less flat-lined. Looking at health inequalities and prevention, are you really directing resources to that end or is it just a sticking-plaster solution? That is what it looks like to me at the moment. To give an example, with regard to obesity, should obese people eat less or should we spend more on tackling it?

[200] **Lesley Griffiths:** Probably a bit of both. Prevention is vital. I am looking at the outcomes of all of our programmes and campaigns—obviously not just for the ones relating to children and young people. When somebody new comes in, that needs to be done to ensure that we are targeting the right groups of people and that our schemes are working. In answer to Jenny Rathbone earlier I mentioned several of our schemes, but I need to be assured that we are doing all that we can in prevention and health promotion, because if I am asking people to start taking responsibility for their health, and promoting positive lifestyles, then we need to have the appropriate schemes in place.

11.15 a.m.

[201] **Simon Thomas:** The support needs to be there.

[202] **Lesley Griffiths:** Absolutely; the support needs to be there. You mentioned obesity, and we have the MEND programme. I asked for a briefing on that and it does seem to be targeting the right children and families. Again, it is about outcomes, and we need to look at all our programmes, because we have some great schemes, but it could be that we could target much more specifically than we are doing at the moment.

[203] **Gwenda Thomas:** We need to reference Flying Start in that context, of course.

[204] **Christine Chapman:** As you know, there was a healthy living event yesterday, and I know that the Minister was there. The next question is from Suzy Davies.

[205] **Suzy Davies:** My question relates to autism. I was a little concerned in the previous session to hear that the Minister for Education and Skills is moving money from additional learning needs programmes for children to additional learning needs programmes for older people. I see that there is a similar situation with autism, with £1.4 million being transferred from the children's social services action budget line to the adult and older people's action budget line. Could you explain the reasons behind that budget transfer, and the impact that that will have on the autistic spectrum disorder strategy?

[206] **Lesley Griffiths:** It is not a reduction; it is a realignment, but I will hand over to Gwenda.

[207] **Gwenda Thomas:** This is in line with our thinking and the implementation of the autism action plan, which, as you know, is now a whole-life plan. This £1.4 million transfer to

adult services is to take account of transitional services, where there has been a big gap, and, of course, the diagnostic requirements of younger adults, older adults, and even adults in later life. It is to facilitate the implementation of the action plan and I think that there has been a consensus that we need to spread that plan across the whole of people's lives.

[208] **Suzy Davies:** How does that impact on the children end of that action plan?

[209] **Gwenda Thomas:** Since 2007 we have provided £1.7 million every year to local government to implement services for children. It would be fair to say that there has been more of an emphasis on children, and this gap was revealed when we consulted on the strategic action plan and what we needed. That gap with regard to the transition from child to adult has been a serious issue, and this is an attempt to have a more coherent whole-life action plan, and to put as much funding as we can into it.

[210] **Suzy Davies:** Does that mean that you are placing more responsibility onto local education authorities to deliver the early stage of the plan?

[211] **Gwenda Thomas:** I am talking about social services.

[212] **Suzy Davies:** Yes—sorry, I meant local government, not local education authorities.

[213] **Gwenda Thomas:** The action plan is a partnership plan. We have the people in place and the strategies have been in place for two years. We have had the review, we identified the weaknesses, and I sincerely believe that this £1.4 million transfer is going to plug a gap that was revealed by the review and by the work that Hugh Morgan has done. We know that there were serious deficiencies in diagnostics, which touches on mental health—sometimes people can be categorised as having mental health problems due to a lack of a diagnosis of an autistic spectrum disorder. The crux here is looking at whole-life needs.

[214] **Christine Chapman:** Jenny Rathbone wants to come in now with some questions about Flying Start.

[215] **Jenny Rathbone:** You have indicated that there will be an additional £5 million allocated to Flying Start in the next financial year. Could you just give us the baseline figure for this year? I could just subtract £5 million from £46.6 million, but I am not sure whether that would be correct.

[216] **Gwenda Thomas:** The existing figures were £39.114 million for 2011-12, rising to £40.144 million for 2012-13. The new figure for 2012-13 is £46.6 million; it is £60.6 million for 2013-14, and £76.6 million for 2014-15. There is a slight discrepancy, because we have already put in some extra money over and above the 2011-12 allocation and, on top of that, we are going to put in an extra £5.4 million for 2012-13.

[217] **Jenny Rathbone:** The aspiration is to double the numbers of children benefiting from Flying Start. How many are you aiming to embrace in that first year, next year, with that additional £5 million?

[218] **Gwenda Thomas:** Up to 2,000. Through the life of this Assembly, we are committed to doubling the number, which would bring it up to 36,000. I am currently considering the best way of rolling out Flying Start. We are talking to local government about the best way of doing that. We are looking at whether we need to stick to the indicators of the index of multiple deprivation and free school meals, or whether there is a better and more sophisticated way of targeting children in this age group. I hope to make a statement very early in November—I am sure that I will be able to do that—regarding my thoughts on the best way of rolling it out.

[219] **Jenny Rathbone:** Very good. So, at the moment, you are hoping that there might be an additional 2,000 children benefiting from it in the next financial year, is that right?

[220] **Gwenda Thomas:** We will work with local authorities to identify the best way to target that age group. We need to be able to specifically target nought to three-year-olds. It goes without saying that we need to increase the workforce. So, we are also looking at workforce planning. If we are to allocate health workers, as we are doing now, at the ratio of 1:110 children, then we will need to employ 150 more health workers during this Assembly. We have put money in and recruited more health visitors recently, but we need to look at the workforce and we will need to be sure that the best person is doing the job that needs to be done at the time that it needs to be done, and in the best way for the child. So, there are quite a few considerations there, but getting it right before we roll things out will be a key to the success of the next phase of Flying Start.

[221] **Jenny Rathbone:** The aspiration to double the numbers with less than double the money will require you to deliver the programme in a new way, will it not? You are not simply going to double the numbers of staff, are you?

[222] **Gwenda Thomas:** We need to take a serious look at the best way of delivering this. We do not have to keep doing things because we have done them before. That is not to say that it might not be the best way forward, but we need to target expertise. This is about multiple agencies working together to achieve the best results for those children. We are negotiating and, very soon, I am sure I will be in a position to make absolutely clear to Members my thoughts regarding the best way of rolling it out.

[223] **Jenny Rathbone:** Can you give us a target figure for recruiting additional health visitors and child workers for the next financial year? You have mentioned a figure of 150 over the lifetime of the Assembly.

[224] **Gwenda Thomas:** We have recruited around 12, have we not, Martin?

[225] **Mr Swain:** Yes, we have recruited some. It depends very much on how we target it and the current workforce levels. It is easy to say 'double the numbers', but Flying Start requires significant infrastructure. We have mentioned health visitors; we have to put childcare facilities in place, or look at what childcare is available and whether it is of the required quality. We do not need only health visitors, but parenting workers and family support workers. So, we need to have very detailed discussions with local authorities about where the areas will be and we need to discuss with health boards how many health visitors are already working in those areas and the ratios that they are working to. It is quite a complex situation.

[226] **Jenny Rathbone:** Yes, and you have anticipated—

[227] **Christine Chapman:** Jenny, I would like to move on, because we have quite a lot of ground to cover.

[228] **Jenny Rathbone:** I was just moving on to the next question.

[229] **Christine Chapman:** Can we move on to Suzy Davies's question? Thank you for those questions.

[230] **Jenny Rathbone:** You do not want me to ask about the infrastructure?

[231] **Christine Chapman:** No, we will move on. We will come back to that. Suzy Davies

has the next question.

[232] **Suzy Davies:** I have a couple of questions about two intervention programmes, namely Families First and the integrated family support services. You mentioned earlier that integrated family support services will receive £3.3 million. What assurances can you give that that will be enough to secure the effective implementation of the programme over the next three years? Could you clarify for me which action budget line the resources for Families First is coming from, and what the total level of resources are for that particular programme?

[233] **Gwenda Thomas:** To deal with the IFSS question first, the £3.3 million will be updated funding. This is a programme that will be funded as it is rolled out. We are assessing the needs of the service, and we are relying on what we have learned in the four pioneer areas. We are extending that to another two areas, and we are basing the proposed expenditure on what we have learnt. We are investing £42 million in Families First, which comes from the children and young people and families budget. We have three spending programme areas within our total budget, namely children and social services, children and young people services and CAF/CASS; those are the three sub-expenditure groups, and I am not being 'budgetary correct' in saying that. [*Laughter.*]

[234] The good news is that all of these budgets are being increased. On top of that, the revenue support grant is being increased by £35 million to complement it by 2014-15. So, local authorities will have that extra as well. This is something to celebrate. It shows that we are committed to preventative services, which can ease the health budget and the budgets of other services.

[235] **Suzy Davies:** Working in partnership with other organisations should also do that in principle. However, with the current financial constraints on everyone, are you worried that the partnership bodies that you will be working with will want to concentrate on their own core services, rather than on the type of partnership working that you will need for these programmes to work?

[236] **Gwenda Thomas:** 'Sustainable Social Services for Wales: A Framework for Action' has gained a great degree of consensus, and last week I chaired the first partnership forum. It was nice to see all of the political groups together, and there is a consensus and an understanding, not only that we cannot continue to do everything 22 times, but that we need to work differently, and there is also a commitment to partnership and a realisation that the only way forward is to take the work forward together. 'Sustainable Social Services for Wales' will give us a legal framework to allow us to do that. We have started work on that, which is why we had the meeting of the forum. It is a tribute to all of the political parties involved that we are able to get to a point where we are sitting around the table, not only with political parties but also with the voluntary, independent and private sectors. The realisation is that we are dealing with serious challenges, and that we need to pull together to deliver services for the most vulnerable. We cannot continue to say it—we have to act on it.

[237] **Suzy Davies:** I was thinking mainly of the voluntary side, but you have answered my question.

[238] **Christine Chapman:** I apologise to Members, because we are limited for time; I will try to come back to other specific questions at the end, but we have quite a lot of ground to cover. Lynne Neagle has the next question, on child poverty.

[239] **Lynne Neagle:** Moving on to child poverty, the Deputy Minister has referred to a few of the initiatives that will be involved in tackling child poverty. However, can you set out in a bit more detail how the draft budget will deliver on the child poverty strategy?

[240] **Gwenda Thomas:** All of the services that I have mentioned, namely Flying Start, Families First and the integrated family support services, are ways of tackling or, as I prefer to say, alleviating the effects of child poverty, because I believe that it is within our ability to do.

11.30 a.m.

[241] In the short term, we are restricted in how we will be able to deliver, and central Government policies are an issue with regard to how we will be able to move forward. We can look at improvements in the medium and long term. In the medium term, we will see the positive effects, I am sure, of Flying Start and Families First, and in the long term, I hope that those services will support the upskilling and the confidence-building of people who are living at the moment in dire poverty, and that is not an exaggeration. These are the preventative actions that we can take with regard to dealing with child poverty.

[242] **Lesley Griffiths:** May I add that the fact that Gwenda is now responsible for children and social services will enable us to focus more carefully on the different schemes to which Gwenda has referred to ensure that the priorities are connecting and that we get much better outcomes as we attempt to take this forward?

[243] **Lynne Neagle:** As you have highlighted, the situation will get worse because of things that are outside our control. That view has been echoed by some of the organisations that have given written evidence, in particular Save the Children, which has talked about the levels rising in the years up to 2014. It feels that there could be clearer funding channels that recognise the challenges facing the Welsh Government. Is that a view that you recognise, or do you feel that you have that covered in the programmes that you have set out?

[244] **Gwenda Thomas:** There will be a challenge, and it would not be realistic to say that there will not be. I have tried to explain my thoughts on the immediate, the medium and the long term. It is important that we have set up a good working relationship with the national child poverty network, which will bring expertise. I have met with the network, and we are committed to working together on this serious agenda. We will set up a stakeholder group that will elect its own chair. In addition, Carl Sargeant, the Minister responsible for tackling wider poverty, and I will set up a national poverty board that we will chair jointly. We have to work with partners, and we know that Oxfam, the children's commissioner, Save the Children and others can contribute to our thinking and understanding of the full effects of this.

[245] **Lesley Griffiths:** Gwenda just referred to the anti-poverty action plan that is being brought together across Government, and that will assist very much with the child poverty issues.

[246] **Christine Chapman:** Good. I will move on now to Simon Thomas.

[247] **Simon Thomas:** Cwestiwn i'r Dirprwy Weinidog yw hwn. Cyhoeddasoch yn ôl ym mis Medi fod gennych gynllun plant a theuluoedd ifanc newydd ac y bydd y sector gwirfoddol yn gallu bidio i mewn i'r cynllun hwnnw a oedd yn werth tua £4 miliwn. O edrych ar draws y gwariant ym maes teuluoedd a phobl ifanc, a ydych wedi cynyddu, cadw neu ostwng maint yr arian sydd ar gael i fudiadau trydydd sector i'ch helpu yn y gwaith hwn?

Simon Thomas: This is a question for the Deputy Minister. You announced back in September that you have a new scheme for children and young families and that the voluntary sector can bid into that scheme, which was about £4 million. Looking across the expenditure in the families and young people area, have you increased, maintained or reduced the amount of money available to third sector organisations to help you in this work?

[248] **Gwenda Thomas:** Yr ydym wedi dwyn dwy ffynhonnell ynghyd. Yr oedd dwy ffynhonnell, un ag £1.3 miliwn a'r llall yn gwneud cyfanswm o £4 miliwn. Fe'u dygais ynghyd am fy mod yn credu bod hynny'n gwneud mwy o synnwyr. Yr ydym wedi gofyn i rai elusennau i fidio am y grantiau hyn, ond yr ydym wedi dweud y byddwn yn croesawu cynlluniau ar y cyd a chynlluniau a fydd yn sicrhau bod y polisiâu yr ydym wedi eu gosod allan yn gallu elwa ar y gwaith y bydd y bobl sy'n bidio am yr arian yn ei wneud, ac y bydd y gwaith hwnnw'n cynorthwyo'r hyn y mae'r Llywodraeth yn ei wneud. Felly, rhaid inni weithio gyda'n gilydd, gan ddwyn y ddau grant ynghyd i wneud mwy o synnwyr o'r peth.

[249] **Simon Thomas:** A wyf yn iawn i gasglu o hynny, felly, eich bod wedi cadw lefel yr arian sydd ar gael yn y maes hwnnw, ac nad ydyw wedi cynyddu?

[250] **Gwenda Thomas:** Nid yw wedi cynyddu, ond nid yw wedi gostwng ychwaith. Gallaf ysgrifennu atoch ag ateb pendant ar hynny. Fodd bynnag, fel y deallaf, yr hyn a wnaethom yw dwyn y ddwy ffynhonnell ynghyd.

[251] **Simon Thomas:** Iawn. Trof yn awr at agwedd arall ar y gwaith hwn, sef Confensiwn y Cenhedloedd Unedig ar Hawliau'r Plentyn, y bu ichi sôn amdano yn gynharach. Yr ydych wedi ymgorffori'r confensiwn â gwaith y Llywodraeth, ac mae hefyd yn golygu cydweithio, nid o fewn y Llywodraeth yn unig ond â chyrff allanol yn ogystal. Fodd bynnag, mae'n amhosibl gweld a oes gwariant penodol yn y gyllideb i helpu cyflawni amcanion y confensiwn. Sut, felly, ydych chi wedi sicrhau, o fewn y gyllideb, fod amcanion y confensiwn a'ch amcan chi fel Llywodraeth, fel y'i nodir yn y naratif, o sicrhau bod sylw dyladwy yn cael ei roi i'r confensiwn yn cael eu cyflawni? Sut adlewyrchir hynny yn y gyllideb, ac a yw'r gyllideb honno'n ddigonol i ddiwallu gofynion y confensiwn?

[252] **Gwenda Thomas:** Yr ydym eisoes wedi sôn am sut y bydd y gyllideb yn trafod y Mesur Hawliau Plant a Phobl Ifanc (Cymru) 2011, ond mae hefyd yn fater o bolisi, achos yr ydym wedi derbyn y

Gwenda Thomas: We have brought two funding streams together. There were two funding streams, one of £1.3 million and the other making a total of £4 million. I brought the two together because I believe that that makes more sense. We have asked some charities to bid for these grants, but we have said that we will welcome joint schemes and schemes that will ensure that the policies that we have set out can benefit from the work that the people bidding for that money, and that that work reinforces what the Government is doing. So, we must work together, bringing both grants together to make more sense of it all.

Simon Thomas: Am I right to conclude, therefore, that you have maintained the level of funding available in that area, and that it has not increased?

Gwenda Thomas: It has not increased, but it has not decreased either. I can write to you to provide a definite answer to you on that. However, as I understand it, what we have done is to bring both those funding streams together.

Simon Thomas: Okay. I now turn to another aspect of this work, which is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which you mentioned earlier. You have now incorporated that convention within the Government's work, and it also means collaboration, not just within Government but with external organisations as well. However, it is difficult to see whether there is specific expenditure in the budget to realise the objectives of the convention. Therefore, how have you ensured that, within the budget, the objectives of the convention and your objective as a Government, as noted in the narrative, of ensuring that due regard is given to the convention are realised? How is that reflected in the budget, and is that budget sufficient to meet the needs of the convention?

Gwenda Thomas: We have already addressed how the budget will deal with the Rights of Children and Young Person (Wales) Measure 2011, but it is also a matter of policy, because we have accepted the

confensiwn ac wedi ei symud ymlaen ychydig. Mae'r saith nod craidd wedi tyfu o'r ffordd yr ydym wedi datblygu gwaith y confensiwn, a chredaf y bydd y confensiwn yn tanlinellu datblygiad polisi ar draws pob portffolio. Mae'n bwysig fod pawb yn bwydo i mewn i'r broses hon ac yn wirioneddol symud yr agenda ar hawliau plant ymlaen.

convention and moved it on a little. The seven core aims have emerged from the work that we have done in developing the work of the convention, and I believe that the convention will underline policy developments across all portfolios. It is important that everyone feeds into this process and really moving the children's rights agenda forward.

[253] **Simon Thomas:** Felly, fe fyddai'n deg i ni fel pwyllgor, ac i'r cyhoedd yn gyffredinol, ddod yn ôl atoch rywbryd yn y dyfodol a gofyn, 'Dyma'r nodau craidd—a ydych chi wedi'u cyflawni?' Ni fyddwn o reidrwydd yn dilyn yr arian, oherwydd, fel y dywedwch, mae hyn yn digwydd ar draws holl waith y Llywodraeth.

Simon Thomas: So, it would be fair for us as a committee, and for the general public, to come back to you at some point in the future and ask, 'These were the core aims—have you achieved them?' We will not be following the money necessarily, because, as you say, this happens across all of the Government's work.

[254] **Gwenda Thomas:** Ydyw, ac fe fyddai'n ddigon teg i chi ddod yn ôl i fesur y llwyddiant.

Gwenda Thomas: Yes, and it would be fair enough for you to come back to measure the success.

[255] **Christine Chapman:** We have probably covered the child and adolescent mental health services issues. Do any other Members want to specifically add to that?

[256] **Aled Roberts:** I think that you said in your introduction that £1.2 million was going into CAMHS from central budgets—that is what I noted down, anyway. I am not doing this on purpose, but, to quote the previous Minister's announcements in the spring, Mrs Hart announced £1.678 million as additional funding, of which, £1.42 million was recurrent funding to 2013-14. Does that mean that, in effect, we now have additional funding of £2.62 million?

[257] **Lesley Griffiths:** Do you want to answer that one, Mark?

[258] **Mr Osland:** The figures that you quoted from the announcement are included within the £2.1 million that is quoted with regard to the transfer from the social services area into the core NHS allocation.

[259] **Aled Roberts:** So, it is additional funding then.

[260] **Mr Osland:** No, that is as per the previous announcement.

[261] **Lesley Griffiths:** It is a specific allocation.

[262] **Christine Chapman:** Keith Davies wants to ask some questions.

[263] **Keith Davies:** A allwch esbonio'n gliriach lefel yr adnoddau a ddyrennir i weithredu Mesur Iechyd Meddwl (Cymru) 2010 yn 2012-13 ac o dan ba bennawd cyllideb y bydd yn ymddangos?

Keith Davies: Can you clarify the level of resources being allocated for the implementation of the Mental Health (Wales) Measure 2010 in 2012-13 and under which budget headings it appears?

[264] **Lesley Griffiths:** In the financial year 2012-13, the Mental Health (Wales) Measure 2010 will be supported by £5.5 million of Welsh Government funding—£3.5 million to

support the implementation of the running costs for local primary mental health support services, under Part 1 of the Measure, and £2 million to support the expanded independent mental health advocacy service under Part 4 of the Measure, which I spoke about yesterday in the Chamber.

[265] **Keith Davies:** A yw hynny'n **Keith Davies:** Is that sufficient, especially ddigonol, yn enwedig ar gyfer plant sydd ag for children with mental health needs? anghenion iechyd meddwl?

[266] **Lesley Griffiths:** Yes, I believe that it is.

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

[268] **Jocelyn Davies:** I think that the Minister has already covered what I was going to ask.

[269] **Christine Chapman:** I will move on, because I know that Members are keen to discuss the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service, just in case we run out of time otherwise.

[270] **Julie Morgan:** I did want to ask about adoption.

[271] **Christine Chapman:** I will come back to that, if that is okay.

[272] **Angela Burns:** Deputy Minister, in your paper, you mention the funding of CAFCASS. Can you explain why there is a level of uncertainty over the funding?

[273] **Gwenda Thomas:** We needed to negotiate with CAFCASS Cymru to realise what the service will face. This will be critical. Some of the uncertainty arises because we have not had the report of the final review of the family justice system. That is about to be published. You will know that it was commissioned jointly by the Welsh Government and the Westminster Government. I met Mr Norgrove, the chairman of that panel, last week. You will know that the Children's Commissioner for Wales is representing us on it, as is Julie Rogers, the head of the Children's Social Services Directorate. We need to be able to consider how we implement any recommendations of that review panel in Wales and, of course, much of that work will have to be done by CAFCASS. So, that is one uncertainty that arises from something outside of our control.

[274] I have also given figures as to the increase in the numbers of children coming into care—more than 700 more over the last two years. That is an issue for the courts system. There are more private law cases as well as public law cases. There is also the issue of contact centres. Your predecessor committee was clear about the need to have improved contact centre services. The annual report of CAFCASS Cymru will be published on 1 November with the forward work programme and, when you see that, it will be well worth your considering it. The service has been restructured, we have put money in to help that process—£280,000, I think—and we will put in another £600,000 to facilitate that process. At the end of the day, I would like to achieve a net saving of just 2 per cent for CAFCASS, because the welfare of children in the most dire conditions depends on the effectiveness of that service.

[275] **Angela Burns:** If you find, during the course of the year, that you need to put more money into CAFCASS, where will you find it from?

[276] **Gwenda Thomas:** We will find it from the central budget. This is a preventive service, which we have to deliver. The courts system is not devolved, but continuity of protection for children throughout that journey is important. I am impressed with the work

that has gone on. The CAF/CASS advisory board is also well informed on this. You will know that we have children and young people on that board as well. So, it is a whole process. There has been a lot of structural change and I think that a more positive way forward has been achieved in a very short time.

[277] **Lesley Griffiths:** Officials monitor budgets all the time, but this is one area that I have asked officials to monitor specifically. There is bound to be slippage and I am sure that we can address that.

[278] **Julie Morgan:** I know that the idea of a national adoption agency has been welcomed. What resources have you included in the budget in order to make that work?

11.45 a.m.

[279] **Gwenda Thomas:** We have started this work, and we will be consulting on everything contained in 'Sustainable Social Services for Wales: A Framework for Action' at the beginning of the year. We know that we cannot continue to do things 22 times, as we are doing. We have 23 adoption agencies, and we have to move to a much more slimmed-down service, not for the sake of saving money, but in the best interests of the children involved in the adoption process.

[280] 'Sustainable Social Services' has been well explained. We will make a saving. It is about that and about doing things in different ways so that we can reinvest that money into services; it is not saving for saving's sake. That is explained fully in the policy paper. We are moving that forward; a lot of work has been done. We will go out to consultation early in the new year. Local authorities have to respond by the end of December. We have had interim responses. I am looking at a combined response from local authorities as to how they will move towards the aims in 'Sustainable Social Services'. Local authorities remain responsible for achieving permanency for those children; that is the issue. I believe that moving towards having one adoption agency is the right way forward. We will consult in the new year and, hopefully, we can move that agenda forward as quickly as possible.

[281] **Julie Morgan:** Will the money that is currently used in local authorities for adoption be used for the new adoption agency?

[282] **Gwenda Thomas:** I do not think that it can be put as simply as that. It is not a process that will happen overnight. 'Sustainable Social Services' is a five-year plan. We cannot continue to do things in the way that we currently do; it is not sustainable. The pressures are increasing, and moving to one adoption agency is part of that process. There will be savings in other policy areas, and all of that will be reinvested into the services. Comparatively, it is a very small amount, really, and it is there to facilitate the work that is currently being done on 'Sustainable Social Services'.

[283] **Christine Chapman:** We have less than 10 minutes left, and we have important areas that other Members would like to cover. Jenny, did you have a supplementary question on this?

[284] **Jenny Rathbone:** I have a separate question that I would like to ask.

[285] **Christine Chapman:** Okay. We have a few other Members to ask questions and, as I said, we have less than 10 minutes left. Keith Davies, do you want to ask your question?

[286] **Keith Davies:** Hoffwn. Sonioch **Keith Davies:** Yes. You talked yesterday ddoe am y bwrdd diogelu cenedlaethol ar about the national safeguarding board for gyfer oedolion a phlant. A oes gennyich adults and children. Do you have a budget to

gyllideb er mwyn ei sefydlu?

establish it?

[287] **Lesley Griffiths:** This falls within Gwenda's portfolio; I think that it was Gwenda who mentioned it. Gwenda, do you want to say something about it?

[288] **Gwenda Thomas:** Yr ydym wedi ymrwymo i sefydlu'r bwrdd cenedlaethol hwn, ac mae'r gwaith wedi dechrau. Yr wyf yn siŵr eich bod wedi gweld y datganiad a gyhoeddais ddoe ynglŷn â diogelu. Credaf fod yr holl esboniad sydd ei angen arnoch yn y datganiad hwnnw. Bydd bwrdd cysgodol. Mae'n bwysig ein bod yn dwyn diogelu plant ac oedolion ynghyd a chael un bwrdd cenedlaethol sy'n hollol annibynnol ar y Llywodraeth. Dyna'r ffordd ymlaen yn fy nhyb i. Byddwn yn ariannu hwnnw yn ôl yr angen wrth i ni agosáu at ei sefydlu. Mae'r datganiad yn nodi sut yr ydym yn bwriadu gwneud hynny.

Gwenda Thomas: We are committed to establishing this new national board, and the work has begun. I am sure that you will have seen the statement that I issued yesterday regarding safeguarding. I think that all the information that you need is contained in that statement. There will be a shadow board. It is important that we bring safeguarding of children and adults together and have a single national board that is entirely independent of Government. That is the way forward in my opinion. We will be funding that as necessary as we move towards its establishment. The statement notes how we intend to do that.

[289] **Christine Chapman:** I have three other Members who want to ask questions. Perhaps they could ask their questions together and then you could answer them in one go. Lynne Neagle will go first, then Angela Burns and then Jenny Rathbone.

[290] **Lynne Neagle:** I want to ask about the Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure 2010. Are there any resources in the draft budget for implementing the Measure? If so, what have you included in it for the needs of young carers?

[291] **Gwenda Thomas:** Specifically—

[292] **Christine Chapman:** We will have all the questions together and then perhaps we could have a fuller answer.

[293] **Angela Burns:** I want to talk about children's budgeting, because I note in your paper that you have made a commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child specific protocol on children's budgeting. However, I am also very concerned about the fact that there is a real lack of visibility here. You understand the spend on children, but, according to your paper, you are finding it difficult to correlate that to the budget that has been put forward for children. So, first, how can you possibly see whether the Government policy of spending x or y or wanting to do something for children is being delivered on the ground if you are unable to compare those two sets of figures? Secondly, why is children's budgeting not in a position where you can assess it, given that our predecessor committee produced a very strong report on children's budgeting and how it should be incorporated by the Welsh Government in the last Assembly?

[294] **Christine Chapman:** Finally, we will have a question from Jenny Rathbone, and then we will take your answers.

[295] **Jenny Rathbone:** My question is on the huge cuts in the capital budgets we are getting from the UK Government and, in light of that, how you will be hoping to deliver the nursery education for two-year-olds that is an essential part of the Flying Start programme? Are you looking at surplus places in schools, for example, something that Leighton Andrews often speaks about?

[296] **Christine Chapman:** So, those were questions on carers, children's budgeting and the nursery education of two-year-olds.

[297] **Gwenda Thomas:** I will start with the Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure 2010. On the specific identification of funding, there is £80,000 in the first year, 2012-13, for young children, increasing to £200,000 in the year 2014-15. On children's budgeting and the UNCRC, I sought to answer this earlier. Perhaps it was before you came in.

[298] **Angela Burns:** My apologies for that then, Deputy Minister.

[299] **Gwenda Thomas:** It is not a problem. It is a pleasure to repeat it. We have adopted the charter in its entirety, but, within that, priority 15 of the UNCRC deals with the need to be able to identify budgeting for children, and we are committed to that. We are doing work on that now, Angela. In June 2010, we published an analysis of the budgeting for children. However, that analysis was based on expenditure and not on budgeting, so I think that we need to do some work on shifting that focus. We will publish that every three years to coincide with the children and wellbeing monitor. There is also an opportunity to publish that annually within the Minister's portfolio. I do not think that we are clear enough about how we do that. We need to do this work so that we are more able to clearly identify the budgeting. We have moved towards being able to identify expenditure. We now need to change the focus to the actual budgeting.

[300] **Angela Burns:** Thank you for that answer. You depend upon others to deliver on your behalf, and, therefore, there is trust involved. However, you need to be able to see what they have spent and whether it ties in with the budget you want—whether there are overspends or underspends, because an overspend also shows that there is an issue. It has to be a significant management tool, so I am delighted to hear that. Thank you.

[301] **Lesley Griffiths:** To pick up on the question about capital that Jenny asked, as you say, we have this huge reduction of 40 per cent in our capital budget this year. However, in order to deliver on Flying Start, we need an element of capital funding for the buildings. So, at the moment, our officials are talking to local authorities to see whether we can use some existing buildings. However, obviously, we are going to have to find some capital funding in order to fulfil that manifesto commitment, so we will do that.

[302] **Christine Chapman:** I apologise to Members and our witnesses for rushing through things a little bit, but there is a great deal of ground to cover. I thank you for your full responses this morning and for helping us in our deliberations on the draft budget. I thank you and your officials for attending this morning.

[303] Before I close the meeting, I remind Members that the next meeting will take place on Thursday 3 November, when we will be discussing the findings of our inquiry into children's oral health with the Minister for Health and Social Services. I close the meeting.

*Daeth y cyfarfod i ben am 11.55 a.m.
The meeting ended at 11.55 a.m.*