



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

## **Y Pwyllgor Amgylchedd a Chynaliadwyedd** **The Environment and Sustainability Committee**

**Dydd Mercher, 6 Gorffennaf 2011**  
**Wednesday, 6 July 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. Mae hon yn fersiwn ddrafft o'r cofnod. Cyhoeddir fersiwn derfynol ymhen pum diwrnod gwaith.

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. This is a draft version of the record. The final version will be published within five working days

**Aelodau'r pwyllgor yn bresennol**  
**Committee members in attendance**

Mick Antoniw	Llafur Labour
Yr Arglwydd/Lord Elis-Thomas	Plaid Cymru (Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor) The Party of Wales (Committee Chair)
Rebecca Evans	Llafur Labour
Vaughan Gething	Llafur Labour
Russell George	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Llyr Huws Gruffydd	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales
Julie James	Llafur Labour
William Powell	Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru Welsh Liberal Democrats
David Rees	Llafur Labour
Antoinette Sandbach	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives

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

Dr Virginia Hawkins	Clerc Clerk
Catherine Hunt	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk
Nia Seaton	Y Gwasanaeth Ymchwil Research Service
Graham Winter	Y Gwasanaeth Ymchwil Research Service

*Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 9.00 a.m.*  
*The meeting began at 9.00 a.m.*

**Ymddiheuriadau a Chyflwyniadau**  
**Apologies and Introductions**

[1] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Bore da. I shall be, surprisingly, speaking in Welsh. You are all welcome to do that if you wish. It is a matter of choice in this place. Normally, my practice is to respond to any questions or points made to me in the language in which they are made—provided I can speak it, or provided it is an official language of Wales, I should say.

[2] Felly, croeso mawr. Mae hwn yn brofiad newydd i mi gan nad ydw i erioed wedi cadeirio pwyllgor polisi a deddfu yn y Cynulliad Cenedlaethol—nac yn unman arall, a dweud y gwir. Croeso hefyd i Aelodau newydd—wel, nid ydych yn Aelodau newydd, bellach, ond mae wedi bod yn Therefore, a warm welcome. This is a new experience for me, as I have never before chaired a policy and legislation committee in the National Assembly—or anywhere else, for that matter. A welcome also to new Members—well, you are not new Members any more, but this has been an exciting

gyfnod cyffrous, a bydd yn gyffrous eto heddiw, mae'n siŵr. Mae hwn yn gyfarfod dwyieithog ac mae clustffonau ar gael. Gadewch i ni wybod os yw'r clustffonau'n anghyffyrddus ar unrhyw adeg neu os oes problem ynghylch y gwasanaeth. Wrth gwrs, nid oes byth broblem gyda'r cyfieithu. Nid oes rhaid i chi gyffwrdd y meicroffonau; mae'r cyfan yn cael ei wneud yn awtomatig. Trowch eich ffonau symudol a'ch offer electronig i ffwrdd. Os bydd y larwm tân yn canu, cawn gyfarwyddiadau gan y tywyswyr.

period, and will be exciting again today, I am sure. This is a bilingual meeting and headsets available. Please let us know if the headsets are uncomfortable at any time or if there is a problem with the service. Of course, there is never any problem with the interpretation. There is no need to touch the microphones; it is all done automatically. Please turn off your mobile phones and any other electronic equipment. If the fire alarm sounds, we will be given instructions by the ushers.

[3] Er nad wyf yn hoff iawn o'r hyn a elwir yn '*ice-breakers*', credaf y byddai'n syniad da pe baem yn ein cyflwyno ein hunain a'n diddordebau ar y dechrau. Mae gen i ddiddordeb wedi bod yn y maes amgylcheddol erioed, bron, oherwydd lle ces i fy magu. Yr wyf wedi bod yn noddwr—credaf mai dyna'r gair cywir am '*patron*'—i Ganolfan y Dechnoleg Amgen ym Machynlleth ers i honno gychwyn. Yr wyf yn cadw fy niddordeb yn hynny. Mae gennyf nifer o dyrbinau gwynt yn fy etholaeth yn Nwyfor Meirionnydd, ac mae atomfa niwclear hefyd yn fy etholaeth, sydd wrthi'n cael ei dad-gomisiynu. Bu bron i mi anghofio am ynni trydan dŵr. Sut allwn ni anghofio am Ddinorwig—sydd ond ychydig tu allan i ffin fy etholaeth—a Thanygrisiau ger Blaenau Ffestiniog? Maent yn ddwy argae trydan dŵr â storfa bwmp mawr. Felly, mae materion ynni wedi bod o ddiddordeb i mi. Am gyfnod o rai blynyddoedd bwm yn ymgynghorydd amgylcheddol, er erioed yn gyfoethog yn y gwaith hwinnw nac yn llwyddiannus iawn. Awn i'r chwith ar y bwrdd, atoch chi, Mick.

Although I am not that keen on so-called '*ice-breakers*', I think that it would be a good idea if we introduced ourselves and our interests at the beginning. I have had an interest in the environmental field for ever, nearly, because of where I was brought up. I have been a patron of the Centre for Alternative Technology at Machynlleth since it started. I retain my interest in it. I have a number of wind turbines in my constituency of Dwyfor Meirionnydd, as well as a nuclear power station, which is in the process of being decommissioned. I nearly forgot hydroelectric energy. How could we forget about Dinorwig—which is just outside the boundary of my constituency—and Tanygrisiau, near Blaenau Ffestiniog? They are two hydroelectric dams with a large storage pump. Therefore, energy matters have been of interest to me. For a few years, I was an environmental consultant, although never rich in that job, nor very successful. We will go left around the table, to you, Mick.

[4] **Mick Antoniw:** I am Mick Antoniw, and I am on a sharp learning curve on this committee, as I think that many of us are. We have an interesting committee in the sense that we have so many new people on it. My particular area of interest is sustainable energy, which is what I am reading up on at the moment and learning about.

[5] **Rebecca Evans:** First, congratulations on your appointment as Chair.

[6] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** It was a political fix, but there you go. [*Laughter.*]

[7] **Vaughan Gething:** It is good of you to acknowledge it. [*Laughter.*]

[8] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Is this a public meeting? [*Laughter.*]

[9] **Rebecca Evans:** I am particularly pleased to be on this committee, because the issues that we will be looking at affect Mid and West Wales particularly. I am thinking of marine

energy off the coast of Pembrokeshire or the windfarm proposals in Montgomeryshire, but agriculture, sustainable rural development also all come under this portfolio. Like everyone, I think, I have a particular interest in climate change. I hope that, during the course of this Assembly, we might have a chance to look at that, as well.

[10] **Vaughan Gething:** My name is Vaughan Gething, and I, too, am a new Member. I think that this committee, like all five subject and scrutiny committees, will affect each constituency in the country. There is a wide range of issues. I will take an interest in planning, when we do the planning work, at some point—and energy, particularly with my obvious constituency interest in marine sources of energy. I am interested in the whole piece, and we will see where we go.

[11] **Julie James:** I have been an environmental lawyer for most of my career, so I have a large interest in most of this. I have a particular interest in sustainability in the built environment, in obtaining energy from waste and in any kind of green energy. Swansea University is in my constituency, and it is about to build one of the biggest energy-based research parks in Europe probably, and possibly the world, depending on how it gets on with the funding. So, I am interested in all of that. I believe that green energy is Wales's future, which is why I am very pleased to be on this committee.

[12] **David Rees:** My name is David Rees. My constituency contains the location where the university is going to build the research park.

[13] **Julie James:** Yes, indeed; well, partly.

[14] **David Rees:** It is all coming to us. [*Laughter.*]

[15] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Please do not fall out over constituency matters here.

[16] **David Rees:** I am interested in the whole energy picture. Energy is not just about renewables; the picture is wider than that. I also have an interest in marine and fisheries issues. There are energy and other aspects to that; we need to look at conservation of those areas. Our waste strategy is another major issue that we will have to look at; I am very concerned about that.

[17] **William Powell:** I have a background in farming, which is a natural link with this committee. I am also very interested in green energy issues. For the last seven years, I have been a member of one of Wales's national park authorities, from which I resigned on 4 April. [*Laughter.*]

[18] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Thank you very much for doing that.

[19] **William Powell:** At one stage, I was a member of three planning authorities: the Breconshire planning authority, the county planning authority and the national parks authority. I have also developed a keen interest in that area. The marine environment is more of a development area for me, because I have been rather land-locked for some of my life. I look forward to contributing to the committee.

[20] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** I take it that you are well aware that we have 27 planning authorities in Wales—or is it 28 now?

[21] **Llyr Huws Gruffydd:** Llyr Huws Gruffydd ydw i. Yr wyf yn Aelod rhanbarthol dros Ogledd Cymru. Yn amlwg, fel llefarydd Plaid Cymru ar faterion gwledig, mae'r maes **Llyr Huws Gruffydd:** I am Llyr Huws Gruffydd. I am a regional Member for North Wales. Evidently, as Plaid Cymru's spokesperson on rural affairs, agriculture is

amaeth yn un o'm prif feysydd o ddiddordeb. Mae amaeth yn y cyd-destun ehangach, sef cynaliadwyedd cymunedau gwledig, yn bwnc sy'n agos iawn at fy nghalon. Fel Aelod rhanbarthol dros Ogledd Cymru, gwelaf fod llawer o bethau'n digwydd o ran ynni adnewyddol, ac mae gennyf ddiddordeb mawr yn hynny—nid dim ond y pethau amlwg, fel tyrbinau gwynt ar y tir ac ar y môr, ond datblygiadau trydan dŵr yn Eryri a datblygiadau arloesol. Er enghraifft, mae ymchwil yn cael ei wneud gan Brifysgol Bangor ar hyn o bryd ar bympiau gwres o'r môr. Felly, mae llawer o bethau'n digwydd yno, ac mae gennyf ddiddordeb yn y pynciau hyn.

one of my main areas of interest. Agriculture in the wider context, namely the sustainability of rural communities, is a subject very close to my heart. As a North Wales regional Member, I see that many things are happening in renewable energy, and I have a major interest in that—not just the obvious things, such as onshore and offshore wind turbines, but hydroelectricity developments in Snowdonia and innovative developments. For example, research is being carried out at Bangor University at the moment on marine source heat pumps. Therefore, there is a lot going on there, and I have an interest in these subjects.

[22] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I am also a North Wales regional Member. I have a background in farming and forestry. I also studied environmental law and have a master's degree in that subject. That was some time ago, I must admit. As Llyr mentioned, there are a number of energy projects across north Wales. At this point, I should declare an interest in a windfarm company in north Wales. Clearly, sustainable energy will be an issue for the Assembly to look at. I am also particularly interested in the sustainability of rural communities, particularly with regard to access to services. That will be a key question for this committee.

[23] **Russell George:** Twelve months ago, I did not know an awful lot about renewable energy or windfarms. I am increasingly becoming an expert in the field, and I have learned a lot more about it over the last six months. The Chair mentioned that there are many windfarms in his constituency. I probably have more in mine. My constituency may be the one with the most windfarms. Obviously, this is a very relevant committee for me in respect of my portfolio as the environment and sustainability spokesperson for my group, but it is also relevant in respect of issues within my own constituency.

[24] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** It strikes me that we are a very learned committee, with all of these environmental lawyers with master's degrees and all the rest of it. That is a plus in my book, because it is very important for us to have discussion of quality on such important issues. We also have quite a learned team of people supporting us. Could you introduce them please, Virginia?

[25] **Dr Hawkins:** I am Virginia Hawkins, the clerk to the committee. I was also the clerk of the Sustainability Committee in the third Assembly. Therefore, I have a background in the issues that we will discuss in the committee. Bethan Davies will also clerk the committee; we will be sharing the clerking duties. Cath Hunt and Mike Lewis make up the rest of the clerking team. Our researchers are Graham Winter, Nia Seaton and Lisa McDonald. They are from the research service, and I am sure that most of you have come across it and used it already. They are here to support the committee, and have a great deal of experience in the full range of subjects that the committee covers. Our legal expert is Lisa Salkeld, who will offer legal help and advice to the committee.

[26] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Are there any general questions before I say something about possible ways of working? I see that there are none.

[27] On a technical matter, Members are free to use laptops in the committee at any time; we just need advance notice to make sure that everyone is plugged in. The ICT department

has to take care of that. If something does go amiss during a meeting of the committee, that support will be needed. Whatever your preferred way of working, that is available.

### **Y Pwyllgor Amgylchedd a Chynaliadwyedd—Ffyrdd o Weithio Environment and Sustainability Committee—Ways of Working**

[28] **Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas:** Dywedaf un neu ddau beth am ein dull o weithio cyn gofyn i Virginia gyflwyno eitem 2. Yna, yn eitem 3, bydd Nia a Graham yn siarad am faterion allweddol. Mae'r pwyllgor hwn, ynghyd â'r pedwar pwyllgor arall a sefydlwyd, yn newydd yn yr ystyr eu bod yn cyfuno trafod a chraffu ar ddeddfwriaeth a dwyn Gweinidogion i gyfrif drwy graffu ar bolisi arfaethedig a chanlyniadau polisi. Yn y Cynulliad diwethaf, sefydlodd y Pwyllgor Cynaliadwyedd is-bwyllgorau ar ddau neu dri achlysur, ac mae'r dull hwnnw o weithio ar agor i ni. Carwn ichi ystyried a oes dulliau eraill o weithio a fyddai'n apelio atoch. Gan fod cymaint o arbenigedd yn y pwyllgor, a chymaint o ddiddordeb go iawn mewn gwahanol feysydd, fel yr ydym newydd ei ddangos, tybiaf y gallai fod yn syniad da pe bai Aelodau—mwy nag un; dau efallai, gydag un yn rapporteur yn adrodd yn ôl i'r pwyllgor—yn edrych ar bynciau arbennig, gyda chaniatâd y pwyllgor. Yna, ar achlysuron eraill, pan fo materion arbennig neu ddigwyddiadau—ac mae un wedi codi y byddwn yn ei drafod mewn munud, sef y cyfarfod arfaethedig gyda'r Gweinidog yn y sioe amaethyddol—ni fyddaf yn disgwyl i'r pwyllgor cyfan fod yn bresennol. Yn amlwg, pe bai materion yn codi yr hoffem gymryd tystiolaeth bellach yn eu cylch, neu pe hoffem wneud adroddiad yn dilyn sesiwn o'r natur hwnnw, mae'n bwysig bod cytuniad llawn y pwyllgor i hynny.

[29] Y syniad sydd gennyf yw y gallem i gyd fod yn gweithio fel Aelodau ac adrodd yn ôl i'r pwyllgor. Pan ydym yn deddfu—dylwn fod wedi dweud hyn ar y dechrau—yn amlwg mae'n rhaid inni weithredu fel pwyllgor llawn. Pan fydd Bil yn dod ger ein bron, bydd yn rhaid i ni neu ddirprwyon fod yma, oherwydd yr ydym yn cynrychioli cydbwysedd gwleidyddol yn y Cynulliad Cenedlaethol. Ni allwch ddeddfu mewn pwyllgor heb gydbwysedd gwleidyddol, yn fy marn i. Credaf fod yr un peth yn wir am gytuno adroddiad.

**Lord Elis-Thomas:** I will say one or two things about our way of working before asking Virginia to present item 2. Nia and Graham will then talk about key issues under item 3. This committee and the four other committees that have been established are new in the sense that they combine discussion and scrutiny of legislation with holding Ministers to account by scrutinising draft policy and policy outcomes. In the last Assembly, the Sustainability Committee established sub-committees on two or three occasions, and that way of working is also open to us. I would like you to consider whether there are other ways of working that would appeal to you. As there is so much expertise in the committee, and real interest in various fields, as we have just demonstrated, I imagine that it could be a good idea if Members—more than one; perhaps two, with one acting as a rapporteur to report back to the committee—could look at particular subjects, with the committee's permission. On other occasions, when there are particular issues or events—and one has arisen, which we will be discussing in a moment, namely the proposed meeting with the Minister at the agricultural show—I will not expect the full committee to be present. Clearly, if issues arise in relation to which we would like to take further evidence, or if we wanted to write a report following such a session, it is important that that has the full agreement of the committee.

The idea that I have is for us all to work as Members and to report back to the committee. When we legislate—and I should have said this at the outset—clearly we have to operate as a full committee. When a Bill comes before us, we or substitutes will have to be here, because we represent the political balance in the National Assembly. You cannot legislate in a committee without political balance, in my view. I believe that the same is true with regard to agreeing a report.

9.15 a.m.

[30] O'm profiad i, yma ac mewn llefydd eraill, nid oes dim byd gwaeth na phan fo pwyllgor yn rhanedig ar adroddiad, a phan fo adroddiadau lleiafrifol. Gwn y gall hynny ddigwydd weithiau, ac nid oes modd ei osgoi, ond yn gyffredinol, mae'n bwysig ceisio llunio adroddiad. Yn amlwg, bydd adroddiad yn mynd i bleidlais, ac efallai y bydd gwrthwynebiad a gwelliannau ac ati, ond mae'n bwysig i unrhyw adroddiad a ddaw o'r pwyllgor fod mor gryf ac awdurdodol ag y bydd y pwyllgor hwn—gobeithio—fel y bydd yn dod allan drwy gytuniad y pwyllgor wedi'i dadlau o ddifrif yma, o bosibl mewn sesiynau nad ydynt yn gyhoeddus os bydd materion dadleuol iawn. Ond yn amlwg, mae'n rhaid i bwyllgor fel hwn gyfarfod a thrafod yn gyhoeddus yn y rhan fwyaf o achosion, gan fod hynny'n briodol i'r cyhoedd sy'n dilyn ein trafodion.

From my experience, here and in other places, there is nothing worse than when a committee is split on a report, and when there are minority reports. I know that that can occur sometimes, and that is unavoidable, but generally, it is important to seek to draft a report. Clearly, reports will have to go through on a vote, and there may be resistance and amendment and so on, but it is important that any report that emerges from the committee is as strong and authoritative as the committee itself—hopefully—so that it passes with the agreement of the committee, having been properly debated here, possibly in private session if issues are highly controversial. However, it is clear that committees such as this must meet and discuss in public in most cases, as that is only proper for those of the public who follow our proceedings.

[31] A oes sylwadau ar hynny? Yr wyf wedi ei dweud braidd yn flêr ac yn gyffredinol.

Are there any comments on that? I have outlined it rather messily and generally.

[32] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I would be very keen to see a rural development sub-committee with cross-party representation on it, just as we had in the last Assembly. This is particularly important in this Assembly, because there is no Minister for rural affairs, and given the number of matters that cross Government portfolios, as it were, it is important that this committee has a rural development sub-committee. In the last Assembly, a number of reports were produced, and I would hope that this committee could look at, and build on, those. Because the membership would be cross-party, I hope that the committee feels it to be an appropriate way of taking things forward. With such issues as rural proofing and other matters, I feel that that is an important way of working.

[33] It is not clear to me quite how you would like the rapporteur to work. Are you suggesting that a single Assembly Member would gather evidence? That would impose quite a burden on that Assembly Member in terms of the views that they would reach or how they would present the information that they had found. I do not know what people feel about that.

[34] I support your idea to consider legislation in full committee. With regard to cross-party sub-committees, none of us yet knows what the committee's workload will be, because we are all new members to this committee, but just from looking at the range of topics under item 3, and the fact that there will be specialities in particular areas, one can see that it might be useful to have some sub-committees.

[35] **Vaughan Gething:** I am instinctively not in favour of standing sub-committees. There is a difference between a standing sub-committee for a particular area or aspect of a portfolio and task and finish groups that examine particular issues in a sub-committee. The difficulty is that, once you have set up a standing sub-committee for a particular aspect or area, the drive will then be to have others, and instead of having one committee with specific task-led sub-groups, we could effectively end up with three or four committees. There is also

the backbenchers' workload to consider, in that many of us are on two full committees already, and there will undoubtedly be sub-groups for each of those committees to consider specific issues. If we have standing sub-committees as well, we are going to tie ourselves down in meetings all the time, and I worry about the quality of the work. I think that we should look to focus on a smaller number of important areas to which we can devote more time.

[36] I agree with the view that, when scrutinising legislation, we should meet in full committee. I also agree that on any sub-committee, task and finish group or whatever you want to call it, there must be political balance. If we are going to split into groups to look at issues, I say that they should look at them for a defined period and then present a report to the committee, rather than having a sub-committee that looks at one, two or three particular areas. By following the latter course, we would be setting ourselves up for problems, and I can see that being an issue for all of us, regardless of party or any interest in a particular issue.

[37] **Julie James:** I support Vaughan in this. I can see the point about having a rural sub-committee, but I think that there is an issue with standing sub-committees. I can see that a rural task and finish sub-committee might meet very frequently because a large number of those issues would come up, but I would like to add my voice to Vaughan's in saying that we should not set up standing sub-committees. In my previous life, I became aware that committees tend to find a reason to exist, so once you have set them up, they tend to look for work, as opposed to having work allocated to them from the main committee. However, I think that Antoinette is right in that we clearly need to have many task and finish groups regarding rural development and rural affairs, so they could straddle the two areas a little.

[38] **Llyr Huws Gruffydd:** Yr wyf yn tueddu i gytuno ag Antoinette, oherwydd mae'r sefyllfa fel y mae o ran bod Dirprwy Weinidog penodol yn edrych ar faterion amaeth yn awgrymu bod rôl barhaol er mwyn cadw llygad ar ddatblygiadau yn y maes hwnnw, a byddwn yn cefnogi'r angen i gael is-bwyllgor i'r pwyllgor hwn sy'n ffocysu yn benodol ar y maes hwnnw.

**Llyr Huws Gruffydd:** I tend to agree with Antoinette, because the current situation, namely that a specific Deputy Minister looks at agriculture issues, suggests that there is a permanent role with regard to looking at developments in that area, and I would support the need to have a sub-committee to this committee that focuses specifically on that area.

[39] **Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas:** Dylwn fod wedi dweud ar y dechrau fod tri Gweinidog, hyd y gallaf weld, o fewn cylch gwaith y pwyllgor hwn, gan gynnwys y Prif Weinidog o ran ei gyfrifoldebau strategol dros ynni. Efallai bod hwnnw'n fater inni ei ystyried pan yr ydym yn galw Gweinidogion i gyfrif, sef bod gennym o leiaf dri.

**Lord Elis-Thomas:** I should have said at the outset that there are three Ministers, as far as I can see, who fall within the purview of this committee, including the First Minister in terms of his strategic responsibilities for energy. That could be a matter for us to consider when we call Ministers to account, namely that we have at least three Ministers.

[40] There are not any more as far as you are aware within our portfolio, are there? Is it three Ministers?

[41] **Dr Hawkins:** Yes, it is three.

[42] **Vaughan Gething:** There are potentially more, because it depends on what subject we want to look at. If we are going to look at issues relating to rural sustainability, it will encompass a range of issues. I do not think that we could do that properly without looking at transport, and transport is within Carl Sargeant's portfolio. So, the subjects that we choose to examine will determine what input we will want to have to each ministerial portfolio. The obvious ones number at least three. If we are taking the view that, because there is no Cabinet



Member for rural affairs, there should be a standing sub-committee, I do not think that that is the right way to look at prioritising work and the way in which we should work as a committee. The reality is that there will be scrutiny of all those Ministers as we choose to try to effect that scrutiny on their conduct as Ministers, but I rather think that the work that we do as a committee and in sub-groups is about looking at task-led issues, saying that we want to examine a certain issue rather than saying, for example, that we will have a standing sub-committee on energy. That committee could meet every week on a particular energy issue and keep rolling forward, but an energy committee has not been established by the Assembly. I think that it would be a mistake, and we would increase the burden of work without increasing the quality that we would add to the debate of this committee and the Assembly if we were to say ‘We will have a range of standing sub-committees’.

[43] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I have been grappling, as I am sure Llyr has, with issues such as common agricultural policy reform and Glastir, which are highly complex areas. I do not know how many farms or farmers you are likely to have in your area—

[44] **Vaughan Gething:** I understand a fair bit about farming, having grown up in the countryside, so let us not say—

[45] **Antoinette Sandbach:** What I am saying is that there are some issues on which people have built up an expertise or knowledge, and that that should be used and built on. Perhaps a compromise to move forward is to set up a committee or sub-committee for a period of time, such as a year, to see the volume of work and the issues that are being dealt with, and then review it in a year’s time. It is clear from the forward work programme that at least three areas touch on what would effectively have been covered by the former Rural Development Sub-committee, including the common agricultural policy, Glastir and the food supply chain. You could add the marine environment, fisheries and water quality to that in terms of those plans. That is quite a substantial area of work, which needs to be looked at and planned for. Because we are all new Members, we will need to build up a body of expertise, and requiring a whole committee to meet will not necessarily be an effective way of dealing with it. I suggest that a way forward is to establish a sub-committee for a period of time and then review it.

[46] **David Rees:** I understand the need for the agricultural industry to be treated fairly and equally, but my concern is that you talked about setting up a sub-committee for that. There are so many aspects of the portfolio that involve the rural community, so to create a sub-committee to look at rural affairs, or rural development—I think that that was the phrase you used—would involve a sustainability aspect. You talked about marine issues, and there are so many other issues, like water quality, that go beyond rural development, that I think that a task and finish group should be far more focused on a particular issue that it has to deal with, and then it reports back to the committee. However, if you are looking at rural development, there may be issues about water quality, or other marine issues, that crop up, and which I want to know about and get involved in, and they would be diverted away to this sub-committee. A task and finish group would be far more focused—it is something that would report back on a specific issue so that we get a better picture of what is happening. I am more geared towards that.

[47] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Before I call William, I will comment on that. I have a concern, looking at the performance of previous committees here and elsewhere, that committees may occasionally get involved in long inquiries and fail to do effective short-term work that influences public debate and the decisions of Ministers. That is another balance that we need to strike.

[48] **William Powell:** I think that, generally, the task and finish group approach is the right way to go, but in the area of rural development, I cannot see there being a ‘finish’

because of the thematic links across the work of the committee. Looking back at the work of the third Assembly, there were some notable studies under the chairmanship of Alun Davies—for example, the inquiries into rural schools and rural tourism, which cut across other ministerial portfolios. I would favour a standing sub-committee for such issues, but I understand the issues around workload, and obviously I share them.

[49] **Julie James:** I think that all the things that you mentioned are important, and we all agree on that, but that line of reasoning leads me to the opposite conclusion—you should not have a standing sub-committee because I do not see how you would frame its terms of reference sufficiently narrowly to avoid encompassing the entire portfolio of this committee. Every single issue in this committee's remit has a rural affairs aspect, in the same way as nearly everything listed in the paper—and we can get on to whether this is a complete set of what we want to look at, anyway—affects city constituencies as well. For example, the food supply chain is important for urban environments. I have a lot of sympathy with wanting to have a group of people who look at rural affairs and perhaps develop some expertise in some of the more arcane elements of the common agricultural policy, for example, or Glastir; I take that point entirely, but I still do not see why that could not be done by a task and finish group, even though it would perhaps be a more long-term task and finish group than if we were looking at smaller issues. As you say, we have to strike a balance. However, I worry that, if you have a standing sub-committee, by the time that you have had the conversation about the terms of reference, you will have widened it out into everything that we are looking at. I am not quite sure how we should deal with that. I am afraid that I still come down on the side of a task and finish group, although rural affairs may be a very long-term task.

[50] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** A task that never finishes. [*Laughter.*]

[51] **Julie James:** I was going to say that it could have milestone 'finishes', so that there would be reasons for it to report back, otherwise, that could become one of the issues. We would need to have some finishes along the way that the group could actually report back on. Otherwise, it could turn into its own little entity, working away separately from the committee, and that is a danger. I know that that is not what you are suggesting, but there is a big danger in that.

9.30 a.m.

[52] **Antoinette Sandbach:** There are methods of communication; I am not suggesting that it should work in isolation from this committee. However, I have a real concern, particularly bearing in mind the other workloads that we are likely to have, and the legislative burden that is likely to arise, that in effect it cannot be dealt with by the committee as a whole, and it is important to build up some knowledge and expertise. You have expertise in one particular area, and I think that it is about working to this committee's strengths and taking those strengths and, as it were, splitting the work in a way that makes practical sense. Therefore, I would hope that, if it is called a task and finish group, it effectively does not finish, as others have said. Perhaps this is just a difference in wording. I would hope that we would seriously consider setting up a rural development sub-committee.

[53] It is clear from some of the matters that have already come before this Assembly that there are issues—I am thinking particularly of the Communities First consultation that was brought forward yesterday—where there has not been any consideration of rural proofing, or however you would like to put it. I know that the research service could not find the rural policy unit; it is not clear where it has gone, and whether or not matters are being referred to it. I feel that, in terms of accountability—which is central to our role as Assembly Members—a sub-committee would be best placed to provide the right level of scrutiny and accountability.

[54] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** I am happy to report that the rural Communities Firsts were alive and well yesterday on the Llŷn, including people from your part of the world.

[55] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Good.

[56] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** I think that we have had a very useful discussion. I am not a Chair who wants to move things to a vote on an issue of this kind. I think that it is better that we take it away and discuss it further, to see whether, as you suggested, it might be a matter of naming. Ways of working have to be flexible—that is what I woke up with this morning, thinking about the issues that we should discuss. So, we can park it there, saying that we have a number of decisions to make. We will be receiving the Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Food, Fisheries and European Programmes later this month. If you are happy to approach it that way, I will ensure that we have further consideration by our support team, and informally between Members, on how we move on this.

[57] I will make one further point on legislation. You are absolutely right—we cannot say ‘no’ to a request to deal with a Bill. That is obvious; otherwise, the committee system collapses. So that is a priority for us, and will have to cut across anything else that we are doing—unless we have a task and finish group, or a group that is willing to spend time, continuing with that kind of scrutiny work while we are formally scrutinising the legislation.

[58] Shall we look at paper 1, Virginia?

[59] **Dr Hawkins:** I do not intend to say much about this, as you are probably all aware that this is a new way of working for the Assembly. There are a few ideas in here and a few things that Members might like to think about, for making decisions at the beginning of next term. The committee now has the dual role of scrutinising both legislation and policy, so it is really a case of thinking about building in the flexibility to be able to do that. The timetable gives us a Wednesday morning and all day Thursday in a fortnightly cycle, so the committee has more flexibility on Thursdays to cover a little more ground, and possibly work in different groups or scrutinise differently in the morning or afternoon, depending on what you decide to do.

[60] Paragraph 9 includes a list of suggestions for different types of work that the committee could undertake. I would draw your attention especially to thinking about things like the scrutiny of European Union legislation and decisions, papers, the scrutiny of UK legislation insofar as it relates to and affects Wales, how you would like to think about doing that, and promoting Welsh views within the European Commission. The remit of the committee is very heavily influenced by what happens in the EU, so that might be something that you would like to think about. You might also want to conduct some post-legislative scrutiny, which has not been done to any great extent before by Assembly committees.

[61] The committee might also like to think about taking a strategic view of its forward work programme, looking in the long term at the issues that you would like to cover, considering where you would like to be by the end of the Assembly, bearing in mind the flexibility and the ability to react to issues as they arise and, obviously, to legislation as it comes through. We are not sure when the first piece of legislation will come through for the committee, so that is something that we will have to look at when it arrives.

[62] That is more or less all that I would like to say on that—it was your starter for 10 on some of the issues that you might like to consider when thinking about ways in which you want to work.

[63] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Are there any further comments on that?

[64] **Vaughan Gething:** Having looked at the issues, and considered the earlier discussion, I think that one of the issues that we should be looking at is energy poverty, particularly the split in responsibility between us and Westminster. It is an ongoing subject in which everyone has an interest. It would be helpful, from our point of view, to look at what the current split is and what we think it should be. There is an obvious issue about the devolution of further powers, in terms of consent for energy projects—not only on land, but also offshore. I have an interest in it but I will not profess to have complete knowledge in it; however, I would certainly find that useful not just for the work of this committee but for the whole Assembly. We know, in thinking about climate change, moving forward, that we need to think about how we generate energy, where it comes from and what we are directly responsible for ourselves.

[65] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Is that a proposal?

[66] **Vaughan Gething:** It is something that I would like to look at.

[67] **Julie James:** I would add my voice to that. I would also very much like to look at that. I also agree with the European point. Very nearly everything in this committee's remit is covered by Europe. I have not been able to find anything that is not, although I stand to be corrected. That informs, empowers and constrains the things that we can do in Wales. We need to have an understanding of that. There is no point in coming up with some glorious energy policy that falls foul of six European directives. We very much need to do it in that context.

[68] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** I suggest, therefore, that we invite the great Gregg Jones to come to a meeting of this committee, as soon as is convenient for him in his busy schedule. I am sure that that would be appropriate, would it not?

9.38 a.m.

**Y Pwyllgor Amgylchedd a Chynaliadwyedd—Trafod Materion o fewn y  
Portffolio a Chynigion ar gyfer Blaenraglen Waith y Pwyllgor  
Environment and Sustainability Committee—Discussion of Issues within the  
Portfolio and Proposals for the Forward Work Programme**

[69] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** We will now move on to consider paper 2.

[70] **Dr Hawkins:** Yes. Nia and Graham will introduce it.

[71] **Mr Winter:** I will just say a few words to introduce the research service. Basically, we are here to provide you with whatever you want in terms of research and briefing support. We have people who have expertise in particular areas of the policy portfolio that you are dealing with. As an example, my particular background is planning. Nia and my colleague Lisa MacDonald have expertise in other aspects of the portfolio. Nia will just say a few more words about the key issues paper. I suppose that the only thing to emphasise is that it was not intended to be an exhaustive list. It was just something to kick off your discussions.

[72] **Ms Seaton:** I will briefly introduce the paper, which outlines some of the issues that fall within the remit of this committee. The issues identified are based on those identified in the legacy papers of the Rural Development Sub-committee and the Sustainability Committee of the last Assembly, and, in addition, some policy issues that have arisen during the period following the end of those committees. As Graham said, this is not an exhaustive list, by any means. It merely includes some issues that you may wish to consider. We are happy to provide additional briefings on any issues not identified in the paper that you may wish, as members of the committee, to take forward. As has already been mentioned, many of these

issues are set within the wider context of development at an EU level, and our colleague Gregg Jones in the Brussels office will be feeding in to this committee and supporting its work on European issues. I am happy to answer questions on anything in the paper or to provide you with additional information on anything that is not covered in it.

[73] **Julie James:** One thing that has already been mentioned is that you can put the word ‘sustainable’ in front of nearly anything and get it within the remit of the committee, which is quite nice, in a way. So, it seems to me that it all depends how wide we want to go. However, one issue that I would like to consider at some point—not in the first 10 minutes by any means—is sustainable transport, which is a big issue for a large number of us.

[74] I have a particular interest in sustainability and the built environment, in conjunction with planning issues. We have the local development plan process going on and sustainability is a big issue in that process, so I would like to have that somewhere in our thinking. Given that it was said that few committees have done post-legislative scrutiny, that might be something for us to consider. There has been quite a lot of legislation in this area over the past few years; some of it has worked well and some of it has worked poorly, so we might want to bear that in mind.

[75] I am not suggesting that we deal with those issues over the next two or three months; I just want to put them out there in the ether, so that we can think about them.

[76] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** With regard to the programme of work, that could well fit with what we may be called upon to do with legislation. I had an informal discussion with the Minister last week, but I do not know exactly when we are expecting what I call the ‘saving Peter Davies Bill’, although I know that it will be a bit more than that. The fact that we are continuing the Sustainable Development Commission activity in Wales, whereas the UK/England is abandoning it, is an interesting issue for us. If we are to do that effectively, we need to really think about what we mean when we legislate on sustainable development. It is not just about laying duties on other bodies, which is what has been the cop-out—I am not criticising Government lawyers anywhere, but it is a bit of a cop-out to lay a duty on someone else to do something, rather than to legislate formally.

[77] **Llyr Huws Gruffydd:** Yr wyf yn awyddus i gytuno â'r pynciau y soniodd Julie amdanynt. Mae trafndiaeth gynaliadwy yn sicr yn bwnc o ddiddordeb mawr i mi, yn enwedig yn y cyd-destun gwledig, lle mae tlodi trafndiaeth yn dod yn bwnc tipyn pwysicach. Cyhoeddwyd adroddiad ychydig wythnosau yn ôl gan Ymgyrch Diogelu Cymru Wledig, Ymgyrch y Parciau Cenedlaethol a Sustrans, sy'n edrych ar yr union bwnc ac yn codi nifer o gwestiynau y byddem yn gallu edrych arnynt yn y cyd-destun hwnnw, felly credaf y byddai'r adroddiad hwnnw'n bwynt cychwyn da. Gallem hefyd edrych ar allyriadau carbon a'r ffaith bod trafndiaeth yn cyfrannu'n helaeth, ac yn gynyddol, at hynny. Mae hwn yn faes y gallem efallai edrych arno ar y cyd â chynrychiolaeth o bwyllgorau eraill, er mwyn taflu'r rhwyd yn ehangach—nid wyf yn siŵr beth yw'r protocol o safbwynt gwneud hynny.

**Llyr Huws Gruffydd:** I am eager to agree with what Julie said. Sustainable transport is certainly a subject of great interest to me, particularly in the rural context, where transport poverty is becoming a much more important subject. A report was published a few weeks ago by the Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales, the Campaign for National Parks and Sustrans, which looks at the exact subject and raises many questions that we could consider in that context, so that report would be a good starting point. We could also look at carbon emissions and the fact that transport contributes substantially, and increasingly, to that. We could perhaps look at this area jointly with representation from other committees, in order to cast the net wider—I am not sure what the protocol would be in that respect.

[78] Mae cynllunio yn bwnc pwysig ac amserol hefyd. Yr wyf wedi bod yn llafar iawn ynglŷn â chynlluniau datblygu lleol, a'u heffaith ar gynaliadwyedd mewn cymunedau sy'n cael eu trawsnewid o ganlyniad i'r hyn a gynigir. Felly, mae cwestiynau mawr i'w gofyn ar hynny.

[79] Hoffwn ychwanegu un pwnc, sef y polisi amaethyddol cyffredin, fel y disgwyliech. Mae goblygiadau pellgyrhaeddol i'r diwydiant yng Nghymru ac i'r amgylchedd yn ehangach yn sgîl diwygio'r PAC. Mae sôn y bydd cynigion yn dod gerbron yn yr hydref, er ei bod yn bosibl na fyddant yn cael eu cyflwyno tan y flwyddyn newydd. Felly credaf fod darn mawr o waith i'w wneud ar hynny gan y pwyllgor hwn yn y misoedd nesaf.

[80] **Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas:** Ar y pwynt hwnnw, yr wyf yn ffan mawr o'r hyn a oedd yn arfer digwydd yn Nenmarc—yr wyf yn siŵr ei fod yn digwydd hyd yn oed yn fwy erbyn hyn—yn sicr yn fy nghyfnod i ar bwyllgor amgylcheddol mewn lle arall. Yr oedd y Gweinidog perthnasol o Lywodraeth Denmarc yn gorfod mynd i weld y pwyllgor cyn cael caniatâd i fynd i'r Undeb Ewropeaidd i drafod ar ddydd Gwener. Ar ôl iddo ddod yn ôl yr wythnos wedyn, yr oedd yn gorfod adrodd yn ôl ar yr hyn a oedd wedi mynd ymlaen. Nid wyf yn siŵr y gallwn fynd mor bell â hynny, ond mae'n fy nharo y byddai'n bwysig ceisio canfod beth yw dimensiynau Cymru, yr Alban, Cumbria a Gogledd Iwerddon ar y PAC. Gallem chwarae rhan eithaf allweddol a dylanwadol yn y fan honno.

9.45 a.m.

[81] **Mick Antoniw:** Sustainability will clearly be one of the legislative areas that are likely to come before us sooner rather than later. Planning is an enormous task and I suspect that it will come up slightly later on in the year. I am keen for our work also to be preparatory work leading up to the legislative process. The two should be in sync rather than having to step in. At some stage, perhaps when we have had more announcements from the Government, it would be useful to look at the legislative process and how that will operate. As I understand it, the process is likely to operate within quite a narrow framework. We get only a certain number of stabs at getting it right. So, it is important that, at some stage, when we are clear about what the legislative process is, we have another discussion about how we will handle legislation. It is probably premature at this stage, but some of the policy work should be preparatory, leading up to what we anticipate by way of forthcoming legislation.

Planning is also an important and timely subject. I have been very vocal about local development plans, and the impact that they have on sustainability in communities that are being transformed as a result of what is being proposed. So, there are big questions to be asked on that.

I wish to add one subject, namely the common agricultural policy, as you would expect. There are far-reaching implications for the industry in Wales and to the environment more broadly as a result of the CAP reform. It has been said that proposals will come forward in the autumn, although it is possible that they might run into the new year. Therefore, I believe that there is a major piece of work for this committee to undertake in that respect over the coming months.

**Lord Elis-Thomas:** On that point, I am a big fan of what used to happen—I am sure that it happens even more now, in Denmark—certainly during my time on an environmental committee in another place. The relevant Minister from the Danish Government had to visit the committee to ask permission to go to the European Union for discussions on a Friday. After returning the following week, he had to report back about what had gone on. I am not sure that we can go as far as that, but it strikes me that it is important to try to ascertain the Welsh, Scottish, Cumbrian and Northern Ireland dimensions of the CAP. We could play quite a vital and influential role in that regard.

[82] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Thank you very much for that and for raising that whole area. We are new as a legislative committee, and the legislation committees that we had in the third Assembly were very much trying to prove that we could be a legislature, whereas, now, we have to do it for real.

[83] **Russell George:** To move on slightly, a national debate is going on about the effectiveness of different types of renewable energies and it would be very useful for our committee to look at that. I am not quite sure how that could be worded, perhaps 'environmental energy effectiveness and renewable energy policy', but we should look at the different types of renewable energies and either their effectiveness or their ineffectiveness.

[84] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I wanted to follow up on the point that Mick made about the legislative process. I see from this paper that there is a possibility that we might have to scrutinise legislation within six to 12 weeks. My concern is whether that six-to-12 week timetable allows enough time. We need to look at whether that gives this committee enough time to undertake the scrutiny process. Bearing in mind the incredibly broad areas that this committee will cover, will we have time to call witnesses, take evidence on impacts and look at those kinds of issues? I do not know whether you agree, Chair, that it might be helpful for us to look at whether that is a realistic timetable. I appreciate that that was what happened in the last Assembly, but we are a different Assembly now. It is important to remember that we are a legislative body that has no second Chamber to review legislation in the way that Westminster has the House of Lords. Therefore, the burden on these committees is effectively much more serious and much greater. So, I echo the point made by Mick that we should look at the process and how long we will have for scrutiny, because that will also have an impact on our timetable planning.

[85] To pick up on Llyr's point also, he is right to say that there will be an announcement in the autumn on the CAP. I know that it is a highly complex area and that European-level consideration is being given, for example, to the dairy package and the quality package. It is important that we have a timetable that permits us to look at the CAP, and perhaps, following on from that, Glastir, as it will implement it. There are a minimum of 24 statutory management requirements—although I think that there might be 27 or 28—that relate to cross-compliance directly linked in with the implementation of the CAP on holdings. All of those are effectively dealt with legislatively. It will be important for us to look at that. I effectively support the idea that we need to timetable CAP and Glastir considerations into the committee's work.

[86] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** We will also have the budget around that time—just to remind you of another area of scrutiny in which we have to indulge, which will happen at the end of October.

[87] **William Powell:** I strongly agree that it would be timely for us to look at the issues around CAP sooner rather than later, to tie in with forthcoming announcements. I am very supportive of the list that Julie worked up a few minutes ago in terms of the other areas of priority. One that I would add, which falls within that list, is the role of the national parks in Wales. Rebecca and I have a region that covers two and a half of them. They are enormously important. Issues around their functions and the way in which they relate to the mainstream local authorities around planning and development are areas that would probably be appropriate for us to build into our work. I suggest that that should happen in the first half of this Assembly.

[88] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** You can obviously see me smiling, as a long-term resident of Snowdonia, also representing an area of outstanding natural beauty. There is the whole question, of course, although I am not proposing it as I would, obviously, not propose things from the chair—or not this morning anyway—that this committee is capable of promoting

legislation. We might want to consider widening it a bit more to the question of designations. Many of them are European in terms of their statutory basis, but the way that they are administered is very much part of the accidents of history in the various organisations that have operated in this area in the past. I do not know whether it might be worth considering national parks, areas of outstanding natural beauty and sites of special scientific interest more broadly, and whether the question of designations and how effective they are might be worth looking at. We could present a recommendation at the end for some very serious legislation, to which a draft Bill might be appended. That might be fun. I did not propose that; I was just commenting on William's contribution.

[89] **Mick Antoniw:** The seed has been sown.

[90] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Do we have any other things for the pot?

[91] **Vaughan Gething:** I refer to something that David mentioned earlier. I know that I have already spoken about energy, but you could have it as wide or as narrow as you wanted it to be. I know that Russell George has said that he would like to look at an aspect of energy policy, but we could also look at waste and recycling in that context. Therefore, you can cross over. Julie was talking earlier about waste to energy—

[92] **Julie James:** No; energy from waste. It is a wholly different thing, Vaughan.

[93] **Vaughan Gething:** Many people think that that is just about incinerators, but it is not necessarily just that. Perhaps we could consider how we look at that and the effectiveness of what is already being done. A Measure was passed last year. Again, it will be a subject that will not go away until we know where we are and how close we are to meeting the targets that have been set in the Government strategy, and until we know the varying levels of performance that we have and why that may or may not be. There is an awful lot that we will need to consider. Again, there are certain European aspects to that.

[94] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** The value of this general discussion is that we now have six or seven potential items for a programme of work. I will ask our colleagues to come back for next week's meeting with a more detailed scoping of what seems to be the first subject that is forming, which is the issue of the devolution, or not, of energy consents over 50 MW. That seems to be an issue that we would all like to address, along with the efficiency and effectiveness of various forms of renewable energy—an issue that seems to follow on from that. Would Members be happy to look at that before constructing a further programme of work on other subjects?

[95] **David Rees:** On the question of the efficiency of renewables, our approach cannot be so narrow. We have to look at what other mechanisms of energy innovation would replace anything that we found to be inefficient. There is a wider picture to consider and there is a carbon issue related to those other energy sources. We cannot have such a narrow focus.

[96] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Therefore, you are saying that the argument about the devolution of certain planning considerations relating to energy policy is only part of the question.

[97] **David Rees:** Yes.

[98] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** We therefore need to think about how we might frame that, so that we can start with that, as it is a current topic of debate, before perhaps taking it further, depending on whom we call upon to give evidence.

[99] **Julie James:** I would like to mention something related to what I said about energy issues. We are really talking about the exploitation of natural resources to produce energy. In



the Senedd the other day, I brought up the issue of shale gas. That is going to be a big issue for Wales. We need our approach to be wide enough to encompass that stuff, as well as marine energy issues, hydroelectric power, barrages on rivers and so on. I do not think that we should narrow it down to the point where we are—

[100] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Do you specifically want to include the shale issue, because I am a part-time resident of the Vale of Glamorgan?

[101] **Julie James:** I do.

[102] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** I know that the leader of the Vale of Glamorgan Council has written to the First Minister about this issue. It has been reported in the local media.

[103] **Russell George:** Another issue that we have not touched upon is planning, or changes to the planning system. As a county councillor, I used to be inundated with people who were frustrated with the planning system, especially those from the business community. I therefore think that it would be useful to look at that and at ways of being more responsive to business in terms of changing the planning system.

[104] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Are we not due to have a planning Bill?

[105] **Mick Antoniw:** As I understand it, we are. The big problem with it is the question of when we will have it. Planning is an enormous area and I am sure that many of us have a variety of views on the matter. My own view is that I am very concerned about the appeals process. As has been said, there is clearly a business aspect in terms of how long things take—complications due to the way things work, and so on. Equally, I have concerns about how the planning process works at the appeals stage. I am referring to the fact that things are almost decided within technical parameters. I have real concerns about how that operates. The problem is that, unless we have an idea where the planning Bill is going to be in the legislative timetable over the next five years, we could spend an awfully long time looking at something that may not come up for a couple of years. It is important to get some idea from the Minister as to how he sees the legislative timetable working. Sustainability, I suspect, is the most immediate issue. However, if the planning Bill is not going to hit us for a couple of years, we could waste a lot of time on it now when we have so many other pressing matters.

[106] **Rebecca Evans:** I would like to look at the issue of micro-production, which I suppose relates to planning and carbon reduction. I would like to look at how the Assembly can better enable people to produce energy, such as solar energy, in their own houses or through smaller local community projects. There is certainly an appetite for that in the area that I represent.

[107] **Julie James:** I was hoping that the overall energy agenda that we were looking at would encompass that. It is a big issue for Wales, and it relates to the issue of feed-in tariffs, how they work and what Wales gets out of the system and so on. That is why I said that we should not narrow the energy focus, as it has to encompass all of this. Micro-generation, domestic production and feed-in tariffs are also part of the whole renewables argument, and that crosses over into rural affairs in a big way, of course.

[108] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Yes, I agree with that. Alongside energy issues, I hope that we will be looking at the CAP, bearing in mind that we know that the European announcement is coming in October or November. That deadline is already there. It is important that, when we return in September—bearing in mind that we are not back until 19 September—we get up to speed on the issue straight away, because it is going to hit very quickly, and there will not be much time.

10.00 a.m.

[109] **Rebecca Evans:** Do you feel a task and finish group coming on? [*Laughter.*]

[110] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** I will ask our support staff to prepare a timeline for some of the issues that have been raised in terms of inquiries.

[111] Ceisiaf grynhoi rhai o'r pethau a ddywedwyd. Ceisiaf hefyd weld a allwn gytuno ar rai penderfyniadau. Mae gennym restr o ryw chwech neu saith o feysydd o ddiddordeb. Gofynnaf am amserlen am hynny. I will try to summarise some of what has been said. I will also see if we can reach agreement on some of the decisions. We have a list of some six or seven fields of interest. I will ask for a timetable for that.

[112] Mae gennyf ymddiheuriad i'w wneud i'r pwyllgor. Yn fy mrwdfrydedd mawr i fanteisio ar gynnig hael fy nghyfaill y Dirprwy Weinidog Amaethyddiaeth, Bwyd, Pysgodfeydd a Rhaglenni Ewropeaidd i ymddangos ger ein bron yn y sioe fawr, gofynnais i'r swyddogion wneud trefniadau i graffu ar y Dirprwy Weinidog a'i weledigaeth heb ofyn caniatâd y pwyllgor. Ymddiheuraf am hynny. Fe'ch sicrhaf na fydd hynny'n digwydd yn aml. [*Chwerthin.*] Y broblem oedd yr amser a'r lleoliad yn y sioe, ond hyderaf y cytunwch fel pwyllgor ein bod yn croesawu'r Dirprwy Weinidog. Mae rhyw fath o draddodiad bod y pwyllgor materion gwledig neu amaeth yn cwrdd â'r Gweinidog yn y sioe fawr. Y Dirprwy Weinidog, sy'n rhannu corridor gyda'r brawd Vaughan Gething a minnau, a gynigiodd hyn o wirfodd galon. I have an apology to make to the committee. In my great enthusiasm to take advantage of the generous offer made by my friend the Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Food, Fisheries, and European Programmes to appear before us at the Royal Welsh Show, I asked the officials to make arrangements to scrutinise the Deputy Minister and his vision without seeking the committee's permission. I apologise for that. I assure you that that will not happen often. [*Laughter.*] The problem was the timing and location at the show, but I am confident that you will agree as a committee that we should welcome the Deputy Minister. It is something of a tradition for the agriculture or rural affairs committee to meet the Minister at the Royal Welsh Show. The Deputy Minister, who shares a corridor with my friend Vaughan Gething and me, made this offer voluntarily.

[113] Felly, mae cwestiwn yn codi o bryd y byddwn am gael y ddau Weinidog arall i mewn. Os ydym yn trafod yn y cyfarfod nesaf fanylion ymchwiliad i bolisi ynni a'r agweddau datganoli a materion polisi ynni eraill y cyfeiriwyd atynt, mae'n amlwg y byddai'n syniad eithaf da i gael y ddau Weinidog i mewn yn weddol gynnar ym mis Medi, ar ddechrau'r ymchwiliad, fel y cawn weld lle maent yn sefyll. A ydych yn cytuno? Gwelaf eich bod. So, a question arises as to when we want the other two Ministers in. If we are discussing in the next meeting details of an inquiry into energy policy and the devolution aspects and other energy policy matters that we have referred to, clearly it would be quite a good idea to have the two Ministers in fairly early in September, at the start of the inquiry, so that we can see where they stand. Do you agree? I see that you do.

[114] Nid wyf yn hollol glir beth yn union yw cyfrifoldebau'r Prif Weinidog ym maes ynni, ond deallaf mai rhai strategol ydynt. Felly, cawn ddatganiad cliriach. Mater i'r Llywodraeth, yn amlwg, yw pa Weinidog y mae'n ei anfon i ba bwyllgor pryd, ond credaf y byddai'n addas inni ofyn i'r Prif Weinidog, yn ogystal â'r Gweinidog I am not entirely clear as to the First Minister's responsibilities with regard to energy, but I understand that they are strategic ones. So, we will get a clearer statement. It is a matter for the Government, clearly, as to which Minister it sends to which committee when, but I believe that it would be appropriate for us to ask the First

amgylchedd, ddod atom.

Minister, as well as the Minister for environment, to come before us.

[115] Awgrymwyd y byddai'n dda inni gael digwyddiadau a fyddai'n cynnwys y rhanddeiliaid, mudiadau ac ati y mae'r pwyllgor hwn yn ymwneud â hwy. O holl bwyllgorau'r trydydd Cynulliad, yr oedd rhagflaenydd y pwyllgor hwn yn ymwneud yn gyson â phob math o fudiadau—yr ydych wedi cyfeirio at rai ohonynt heddiw.

It has been suggested that it would be good to have events that would include the stakeholders, organisations and so on that the committee deals with. Of all the committees in the third Assembly, this committee's predecessor dealt regularly with all kinds of organisations—you have mentioned some of them today.

[116] Mae awgrym wedi'i wneud, gan y byddwn yn y sioe fawr i gwrdd â'r Dirprwy Weinidog, a nad yw'r sesiwn hwnnw'n debygol o bara mwy nag awr, y bydd modd inni gael nid cyfarfod i gasglu tystiolaeth, ond cyfarfod mwy anffurfiol, gyda'r rhanddeiliaid yn y sioe. A oes teimpladau ynglŷn â hynny?

It has been suggested, given that we will be at the Royal Welsh Show to meet the Deputy Minister, and that session is not likely to last more than an hour, that there will be an opportunity to have not an evidence-gathering session, but a more informal meeting, with stakeholders at the show. Does anybody have any feelings about that?

[117] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I would support that. Certainly, the three main farming unions—the NFU, the FUW and the CLA—will be there. I would certainly invite them. I would perhaps also invite ConFor—the Confederation of Forest Industries (UK) Ltd—as there are particular concerns about Glastir with regard to the forestry side of matters, particularly bearing in mind the proposed merger of the Countryside Council for Wales and the Forestry Commission. They may well have views about task and finish groups and sub-committees.

[118] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** How would you like that to be done? It will not be a formal evidence session, although there will be a full record of what the Minister says, so that we can tie him down to it in the future.

[119] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Maybe we could ask them to provide written submissions in advance, and question them on that. I do not know whether all the committee members will be present on the Tuesday.

[120] **David Rees:** I am not happy about making decisions to question people in a recess period, when people have already made arrangements. I will be able to attend, but I have an existing arrangement for which I have to be back in my constituency that evening. Meeting the Minister is one thing, but I have concerns about extending that to talk about further investigations.

[121] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** That is why I mentioned that it should be informal, and more of a seminar than anything else, if you are happy with that. It could be a round-table discussion. That means that I can be King Arthur. [*Laughter.*]

[122] **Julie James:** I just want to ask about the timing, if I may. I will only be at the Royal Welsh Show that day, and my diary is such that I will be running from one thing to the other. The sooner we could know the exact timing, the better.

[123] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** We can agree that. It would be immediately after meeting the Minister.

[124] **Julie James:** I think my staff will kill me.

[125] **Vaughan Gething:** I cannot be there.

[126] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** I have apologised to you publicly twice. [*Laughter.*]

[127] **Vaughan Gething:** As you know, I cannot be there. So, the next meeting will be held at the Royal Welsh Show; there will not be a meeting next week.

[128] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** No, we will have a meeting next week, because we want to agree further progress on the programme of work and the energy inquiry. I shall be attending next week's meeting virtually, via a video-conference link, if it works, because it is graduation week at the universities and at Coleg Llandrillo Cymru, and so I have asked for permission to be absent. I will be able to participate during the early part of the morning next Thursday, from 9 a.m. onwards, if we can do that. That will be to hear further views from our support team on the programme of work and timings and have a first stab at scoping the energy study, with regard to devolution and other aspects. Are there any other matters that Members wish to raise?

[129] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I may have to attend virtually as well. I have raised that with the committee staff, because I have a problem with regard to attending next Thursday morning.

[130] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Would we be virtually in the same place?

[131] **Antoinette Sandbach:** We would be virtually in different places.

[132] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** That raises interesting issues about interpretation and the Record and so on, but I am sure that we can do that. We must use this technology, because we are a green committee, and we have to behave green, although I did fly back from Anglesey. It was a lovely flight. [*Laughter.*] I counted every windfarm in Russell's patch.

[133] Unless there is any other business, that concludes our first meeting. Diolch yn fawr.

*Daeth y cyfarfod i ben am 10.09 a.m.  
The meeting ended at 10.09 a.m.*