

# Cofnod y Trafodion The Record of Proceedings

[Y Pwyllgor Amgylchedd a Chynaliadwyedd](#)

[The Environment and Sustainability Committee](#)

21/01/2016

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Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru

National  
Assembly for  
Wales

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Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to Resolve to Exclude the Public  
from the Remainder of the Meeting and the Meetings on 27 January  
and 10 February

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

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

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

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Mick Antoniw     | Llafur<br>Labour   |
| Russell George   | Ceidwadwyr Cymreig<br>Welsh Conservatives  |
| Llyr Gruffydd    | Plaid Cymru<br>The Party of Wales  |
| Janet Haworth    | Ceidwadwyr Cymreig<br>Welsh Conservatives  |
| Alun Ffred Jones | Plaid Cymru (Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor)<br>The Party of Wales (Committee Chair)         |
| Sandy Mewies     | Llafur (yn dirprwyo ar ran Jeff Cuthbert)<br>Labour (substitute for Jeff Cuthbert) |
| Julie Morgan     | Llafur<br>Labour   |
| William Powell   | Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru<br>Welsh Liberal Democrats                          |
| Jenny Rathbone   | Llafur<br>Labour   |
| Joyce Watson     | Llafur<br>Labour   |

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

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Tony Clark                | Pennaeth Cyllid, Grŵp yr Economi, Sgiliau a<br>Chyfoeth Naturiol<br>Head of Finance, Economy, Skills and Natural<br>Resources Group     |
| Rebecca Evans             | Aelod Cynulliad, Llafur (Y Dirprwy Weinidog Ffermio<br>a Bwyd)<br>Assembly Member, Labour (The Deputy Minister for<br>Farming and Food) |
| Dr Christianne<br>Glossop | Prif Swyddog Milfeddygol<br>Chief Veterinary Officer  |
| Neil Hemington            | Y Prif Gynllunydd, Dirprwy Gyfarwyddwr<br>Chief Planner, Deputy Director  |

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Matthew Quinn | Cyfarwyddwr, Amgylchedd a Datblygu Cynaliadwy<br>Director, Environment and Sustainable Development                           |
| Carl Sargeant | Aelod Cynulliad, Llafur (Y Gweinidog Cyfoeth<br>Naturiol)<br>Assembly Member, Labour (The Minister for Natural<br>Resources) |
| Andrew Slade  | Cyfarwyddwr, Amaeth, Bwyd a'r Môr<br>Director, Agriculture, Food and Marine  |

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

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Alun Davidson   | Clerc<br>Clerk                           |
| Elfyn Henderson | Y Gwasanaeth Ymchwil<br>Research Service |
| Adam Vaughan    | Dirprwy Clerc<br>Deputy Clerk            |

*Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 09:30.*  
*The meeting began at 09:30.*

**Cyflwyniadau, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon**  
**Introduction, Apologies and Substitutions**

[1] **Alun Ffred Jones:** **Alun Ffred Jones:** [*Inaudible.*]—with  
[*Anghlywadwy.*]—gyda'r Gweinidog the Minister and the Deputy Minister.  
a'r Dirprwy Weinidog. Croeso i chi fel I welcome you all as Members. If  
Aelodau. Os bydd yna larwm tân yna there is a fire alarm please follow the  
dilynwch y tywyswyr allan. Rydym yn ushers out. We operate bilingually  
gweithredu'n ddwyieithog ac mae and you're welcome to contribute in  
croeso i unrhyw un gyfrannu felly yn Welsh or English. If there are any  
Gymraeg neu'n Saesneg. Os oes declarations of interest please do so  
angen datgan buddiant gallwch now and Jeff Cuthbert sends his  
wneud hynny rŵan ac mae Jeff apologies and Sandy Mewies is here  
Cuthbert yn anfon ei ymddiheuriadau as a substitute. Thank you very  
ac mae Sandy Mewies yma fel much. Welcome, Sandy.  
dirprwy. Diolch yn fawr iawn. Croeso,  
Sandy.

09:31

## Craffu ar y Gyllideb Ddrafft Draft Budget Scrutiny

[2] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Croeso hefyd i'r Gweinidog. Bore da. Croeso i'r Gweinidog a'i dîm atom ni. A ydy'r Gweinidog am gyflwyno'r tîm i ni cyn ein bod yn dechrau ar y sesiwn?

**Alun Ffred Jones:** I also welcome the Minister. Good morning. I welcome the Minister and his team. Does the Minister want to introduce his team to us before we start the session?

[3] **The Minister for Natural Resources (Carl Sargeant):** Sorry, Chair, it doesn't—

[4] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Would you like to introduce your team before we start?

[5] **Carl Sargeant:** Yes, thank you. Good morning, Chair. I'm Carl Sargeant, Minister for Natural Resources. Matthew, do you want to kick off?

[6] **Mr Quinn:** Matthew Quinn, director, environment and sustainable development, natural resources group at Welsh Government.

[7] **Mr Slade:** Good morning. Andrew Slade, director of agriculture, food and marine at Welsh Government.

[8] **Mr Clark:** Tony Clark, head of finance, Welsh Government.

[9] **Mr Hemington:** Neil Hemington, chief planner.

[10] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Diolch yn fawr a rwy'n ddiolchgar iawn i chi am ddod gerbron i ni gael craffu ar y gyllideb fel mae'n effeithio ar eich adran chi. Buaswn jest yn dymuno gwneud un pwynt cyffredinol sydd wedi cael ei wneud yn y Pwyllgor Cyllid ddoe sef bod rhai ohonom yn teimlo bod newidiadau i'r ffordd mae'r ffigurau'n cael eu cyflwyno wedi bod yn ddryslyd braidd

**Alun Ffred Jones:** Thank you very much and I'm very grateful to you for appearing before us for us to be able to scrutinise the budget and how it affects your department. I would just like to make one general point that was made in the Finance Committee yesterday that some of us feel that the changes in the way the figures are presented have been confusing because we are discussing the last

oherwydd ein bod ni'n trafod ffigurau'r gyllideb ddrafft diwethaf ac wedyn ffigurau'r gyllideb atodol ac wedyn eu cymharu nhw â'r gyllideb ddrafft eleni. Er bod y ffigurau yna i gyd yn ddefnyddiol, mae yna newid wedi bod yn y ffordd mae'r cymariaethau'n cael eu gwneud. Nid eich cyfrifoldeb chi ydy hynny, Weinidog, ond rwy'n ei wneud o fel pwynt cyffredinol. Buaswn i'n dymuno cael cysondeb ar draws y ffordd mae'r gyllideb yn cael ei chyflwyno o flwyddyn i flwyddyn ond mi wnawn adael y mater hynny lle mae o a symud ymlaen, felly, at rai o'r cwestiynau sydd gennym.

draft budget figures and the supplementary budget figures and then comparing those with this year's draft budget. Even though all of those figures are very useful, there has been a change in the way the comparisons are made. It's not your responsibility, Minister, but I'm making that as a general point. I would like to have some consistency in terms of how the budget is presented from year to year, but we'll leave that issue where it is now and move on, therefore, to some of the questions that we have.

[11] Mae yna ostyngiad eithaf sylweddol eto wedi bod yn eich cyllideb gyffredinol chi. Yn y gyllideb refeniw mae yna fwy o ostyngiad na'r llynedd. A allech chi ddweud wrthym ni yn gyffredinol sut ydych chi'n meddwl y bydd eich adran chi yn gallu ymdopi â'r gostyngiad hwnnw o gofio'r cyfrifoldebau ychwanegol sydd yn dod ar y cyrff sy'n gweithredu ar eich rhan chi?

There has been quite a significant reduction in your general budget. In the revenue budget there has been more of a reduction than last year. Could you tell us generally how you think your department will be able to cope with that reduction given the additional responsibilities that fall upon the bodies that operate on your behalf?

[12] **Carl Sargeant:** Thank you, Chair. With regard to your first point, and I know that you didn't ask me to respond, but I think it's an important principle that we, as Ministers, do understand what is required by committees. We've tried to be as transparent as possible in our approach to delivering the budgets that we've laid before you and we believe we were acting in the principle of what the Finance Committee were requesting. But if there's something different you'd like we'd be more than happy to support that also.

[13] On your main question regarding budgets and budget line pressures, of course, this is another difficult budget. We've received significant

reductions from the UK Government and are having to, therefore, alter the work profile of my department and many others across Government. The First Minister and the Government's decision to protect spending around health and education is something I support and, therefore, the consequences across other budget lines are that we have to make adjustments. With regard to the point you raised around additional workload, I think what I'd perhaps like to explore or explain to you is that we don't see these as additional burdens; we see these as a restructuring of operations. NRW is a great example—they are altering their business model to accommodate the new legislation that's coming online. So, we don't see this as additional. We see these as budget lines that are under pressure, but we've got to change the way we do business in accordance with the finance that's given to us.

[14] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Iawn. Diolch yn fawr. Dyma lle mae'r anhawster yn dod i mewn: os ydych chi'n cymharu'r gyllideb gyfalaf, er enghraifft, â'r gyllideb ddrafft y llynedd, yna fe allwch chi ddadlau bod yna gynnydd wedi bod. Ond wrth gwrs, os ydych chi'n cymharu'r gyllideb gyfalaf â'r gyllideb atodol 2015–16, yna mae yna ostyngiad.

**Alun Ffred Jones:** Okay. Thank you very much. This is where the difficulty arises. If you compare the capital budget, for example, with last year's draft budget, then you could argue that there's been an increase. But of course if you compare the capital budget with the supplementary budget for 2015–16, then there has been a reduction.

[15] Mi fydd yna gwestiynau penodol yn codi fel rydym yn mynd ymlaen trwy'r sesiwn yma ynglŷn ag ariannu. A gaf i jest ofyn—? Wrth edrych ar y gyllideb gyfalaf sydd wedi cael ei nodi gennych chi fel '*additional capital allocations*' yn y rhestr yna, a gaf i jest ofyn am un cynllun ynglŷn â llifogydd ac atal llifogydd? Cawsom ni drafodaeth ynglŷn â chynllun atal llifogydd pentref Tal-y-bont a'r A55 yn y Senedd yr wythnos diwethaf. Nid yw'r arian hynny yn ymddangos yn y rhestr yma. A allwch chi esbonio o ble mae'r arian hynny'n mynd i ddod?

There will be specific questions that will arise as we move through this session in terms of funding. Could I just ask—? In looking at the capital budget that has been noted by you as 'additional capital allocations' in that list, could I just ask about one scheme in terms of flood prevention? We had a discussion about the flood prevention scheme in the village of Talybont and the A55 in the Senedd last week. That money doesn't appear in this list. Could you explain where that money's going to come from?

[16] **Carl Sargeant:** Thank you, Chair. We have flood risk management programmes moving forward—it's just where we profile that. The additional money the First Minister announced, of £3.3 million, last week is now under consideration for allocation of funding. We believe the specific scheme you talk about, which I referred to in my contribution about the finances ready to go there—once we understand that, we'll manage that in house.

[17] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Felly, mae'r **Alun Ffred Jones:** So, that money arian hwnnw yn dod o gyllideb eleni. comes from this year's budget. Am I A ydwyf yn iawn? Neu gyllideb y right? Or is it next year's budget? flwyddyn nesaf?

[18] **Carl Sargeant:** We are committed to fully funding that scheme, subject to understanding what the cost is, depending when that comes in. If it comes in this year then we'll have to find the funding to deal with that. It's about the profile of the flood budgets. They're demand led, and they vary in their profile. So, sometimes when we allocate funding, it's not drawn down, but we can flex between the years.

[19] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Reit. Ocê. **Alun Ffred Jones:** Right. Okay.

[20] **Carl Sargeant:** To give you confidence, Chair, we are committed to that scheme, subject to that coming forward.

[21] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Iawn. Diolch **Alun Ffred Jones:** Right. Thanks very yn fawr. Mick Antoniw. much. Mick Antoniw.

[22] **Mick Antoniw:** Minister, thank you for that answer. I think I sort of understood the position with regard to the capital budget, but with regard to the Welsh Government's reserves as a whole, there's been something like almost a 300 per cent increase. It's around about almost £300 million—I think £297 million is the exact figure. Are there any areas there where you've had discussions with the finance Minister over potential calls on that? Is there any way of explaining why the reserves have increased so substantially? What is in the pipeline, and to what extent does it impact on your budget?

[23] **Carl Sargeant:** Of course, the first part of your question is a matter for the finance Minister, with regard to managing the reserves and the profile of the Government spend. Of course, I meet and discuss with the finance Minister on a regular basis about budget pressures. The finance Minister is



very helpful when it comes to the issues around flooding, particularly. We have the Wales infrastructure investment plan schemes. We've been very successful at attracting additional finance into flooding. Also, where there are emergency pressures, as we saw through December and the start of this month, finding additional funding to make communities more resilient is something that the finance Minister has helped us with. So, there is some flexibility alongside the reserves scheme, but of course all our budgets are under pressure—£1.8 billion less into the Welsh economy has a big impact, and we have to manage our finances with prudence.

[24] **Mick Antoniw:** Of course, there are limits to what the reserves can actually be used for, but it is fair to say that, for any specific demands, there are proactive discussions in terms of what the future calls and needs might be of the department. I suppose it would be unfair to ask you to be any more specific than that.

[25] **Carl Sargeant:** Well, we currently have papers into the finance Minister seeking additional finance now. We're never short of ideas.

[26] **Mick Antoniw:** All right. Okay.

[27] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Gan ein bod **Alun Ffred Jones:** As we have begun  
ni wedi dechrau gyda'r drafodaeth ar with the discussion on the floods, I'll  
y llifogydd, fe wnaif i symud i drafod therefore move to discuss the floods,  
llifogydd, y refeniw a chyfalaf pellach. the revenue and further capital.

[28] Sandy Mewies, did you want to come in on flooding?

[29] **Sandy Mewies:** It may be that—. I wanted to ask a sort of ancillary question to the main flooding issues—

[30] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Yes, yes.

[31] **Sandy Mewies:** —and it may be that other people have got more direct questions before that.

[32] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Okay. William.

[33] **William Powell:** Diolch, Gadeirydd. Good morning, Minister, and your team. I just had a very specific, focused question to ask, really, and that is: the Minister will be aware that, in certain situations, flood schemes can

encounter specific difficulties or opposition of one kind or another. What resource is set aside to deal with such disputes or objections in a timely manner so as not to lose other funding opportunities and to afford communities the protection that they deserve, and what are the implications of this upcoming budget allocation for that particular important matter?

[34] **Carl Sargeant:** We look at a macro level in terms of dealing with flooding issues. We have the shoreline management plans and then the risk profiles from Natural Resources Wales about where flooding may or may not occur, and then we have to balance our budgets against risk. We could spend twice, three times or four times as much money in the flood budgets for protecting communities right across Wales. I know that Members within this committee have risk areas. There is a little bit of luck in this as well, where it is only by chance that there are areas that aren't flooded in December and January. While I have control of many things, including the budget, the weather is not really in my control, and we just have to go with that. That's of little comfort to communities that are affected by that, though, and what we are trying to do is clever investments and, as I said, measure that risk. The Dolgellau scheme is a great example of where we know the scheme that was finished just before Christmas did save 300 properties from being flooded. So, that was a clever investment, but we just picked the right one, I think. Again, across many constituencies you represent, we have again additional spend, which we want to make in communities. Your question is quite an interesting one, because it isn't uncommon for some communities who are potentially affected by flood defences to be opposed to them because of, sometimes, the way they look or where they're placed. I visited Beaumaris, actually. It's a beautiful place, but there are areas in Beaumaris where the community doesn't want the flood defences in that particular area because it spoils their view. But for some of the residents there, it protects their property, and that's the conundrum we face. So, we have to try and find out how, and work our way through. NRW, the local community and town councils and local authorities are very good, generally, in trying to bring people together to create a scheme.

[35] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Let's keep this to the budget as far as we can.

[36] **William Powell:** Sure.

[37] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Sandy.

[38] **Sandy Mewies:** Yes. Thank you for your courtesy. The Minister himself

has touched on the question I was going to ask. You've talked about different areas that just escape flooding. I think you're well aware that, in the north, from probably Talacre, Mostyn and up to Flint, flooding was only avoided because the wind changed. Now—

[39] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Also beyond the Minister's control.

[40] **Sandy Mewies:** Well, maybe. No, quite without your control, and I understand that, but the fact is that we can't rely on the wind changing in the future.

[41] **Carl Sargeant:** Of course.

[42] **Sandy Mewies:** And the cuts in the budget—. I know that you have said—I've asked you before if you'll keep this in mind when you're constantly re-examining, as I know you do, what is happening. How has that been affected, then, by these budget cuts? Because it is still very important that people don't lie awake all night listening to the wind, which is what happens, and fearing that properties and land are going to be flooded should there be a change. So, how are schemes like that, which are not as major, perhaps, as others—how will you deal with that?

09:45

[43] **Carl Sargeant:** I think it would be remiss of me not to say that we've made significant investments in flood defences across Wales. Across this term of Government, excluding the European Regional Development Fund, flood investment increased by 18 per cent in Wales, and that has had benefits to many communities. I was trying to be shrewd before I came into committee, thinking about what flood schemes had been delivered in each of your constituencies, just in case you asked me questions about that. But I am aware of the difficulties in your particular patch in Mostyn, and in Ffynnongroyw, particularly, about the risk-based approach there. We've got some really good intelligence about weather patterns and how flooding occurs and where they are at risk of flooding. NRW has a great statistical base to deliver on that.

[44] What we are seeing now is that climate change is producing a very different effect, and we're seeing built-up areas—. In fact, I was in Gwynedd in one particular area where there is a development being brought online that is having a major effect on the neighbouring community because of run-

off. We need to start thinking about that in broader planning terms as well—effect, and causes. I know Joyce Watson brings to the table regularly the issue of hard standings, and I think we've got to be very careful about what we're planning for in the future.

[45] **Alun Ffred Jones:** I've got a flood of questions. So, can we have the questions short and to the point?

[46] **Joyce Watson:** Yes, I can do that. You talk about an 18 per cent increase in flood defences, Minister, and indeed that is right, and the flood defences that were put in place did hold, and that's fantastic. Aberystwyth isn't being revisited again this year. My question is whether, Minister, you will consider within your budget line for next year evaluating the alternatives to the hard engineering solutions—the softer but nonetheless engineering solutions that are available—and working with people like the Institution of Civil Engineering? So, when the weather patterns are changing—and nobody knows when it's going to flood; nobody knows how hard it's going to rain or how long for—. I mean, who'd heard of Eglwysrwr before this year?

[47] **Alun Ffred Jones:** You've asked the question, Joyce.

[48] **Joyce Watson:** So, will you please give some sort of guarantee to committing to a percentage of your budget for alternative environmental solutions that prevent the water in the very first place from cascading down from wherever that might be, or being pushed up through the drains because they can't take any more?

[49] **Carl Sargeant:** I have two very quick responses. We are already making investments in that type of programme on the green flood defences. It's not about piling concrete. I mention the peat bogs on a regular basis; that's a great example of where we're closing ditches to protect the uplands and to protect from flooding in the lowlands with controlled water discharge. In terms of a percentage, I'm not going to commit to a specific percentage of the budget, but what I am doing—. I've asked the team already to start work for me looking at opportunities with a green flood solution. I don't know what that will look like, but I hope that I can bring something back to committee in the near future.

[50] **Joyce Watson:** Thank you.

[51] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Julie Morgan.

[52] **Julie Morgan:** I know, Minister, that you said you'd been looking at our constituencies to see what had been done there, and thank you for what's been done on the Whitchurch brook through the constituency. I don't know whether you're aware of a very much smaller scheme in Caedelyn park, where there have been major problems this week, actually. I don't know whether you make any assessment of the money that has been put in—I think it has been put in jointly with Cardiff Council—in a general sense, or whether with schemes generally you make an assessment afterwards about how they work. This is not a threat to life or limb; it's not a threat to houses, but the park is covered with water, although efforts have been put in and money has been put in by the Government—

[53] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Would that be NRW or the council?

[54] **Carl Sargeant:** I don't know specifically, Chair, whether—

[55] **Julie Morgan:** Could you look into that—

[56] **Carl Sargeant:** I certainly can get a note for the Member if that would be helpful.

[57] **Julie Morgan:** If you would, that would be great.

[58] **Carl Sargeant:** That explains the difficulties of the risk profile because, while the flooding in the park is particularly bad, and bad for the residents, my priority would be about person and property.

[59] **Julie Morgan:** Absolutely. I understand that.

[60] **Carl Sargeant:** But, of course, it's a local issue. I can certainly get a note on whether it's NRW or the local authority.

[61] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Mick.

[62] **Mick Antoniw:** I have a short question, Minister, on funding for research. You attended the Ilan Rhydyfelin flood defences—an area that would probably have flooded three times in the last few years in the heaviest rainfall it has ever had—that have clearly worked. To what extent is the funding for actual research? Some of these are extremely successful projects—the holding pits and so on. I wonder whether we are supporting the

actual innovation and some research that is taking place in this whole area.

[63] **Carl Sargeant:** Yes, we are, and that's a great example. Another one is in Swansea, where we're reclaiming land. We've moved back the flood defences in order for particular areas to flood. We do the flood modelling. We just look at the water surge—the tide surge—to see where a collection point would be required. That's about clever solutions. You can't keep building concrete walls because it either comes underneath or over the top. You have got to sometimes reprofile the area that you live in to deal with this. We've got to work with nature. Llyr uses a great example of working with nature as opposed to against it, and that's what we've got to continue to do.

[64] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Let's keep to the budget. Janet Haworth.

[65] **Janet Haworth:** I fully accept, Minister, that you have no control over the wind or the rain, but I think that you could have more control over what happens in planning. We had an example only recently in Ceredigion of houses being given permission in a known flood-risk area—

[66] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Budget. I have to try and bring you back to the budget.

[67] **Janet Haworth:** Yes, well, I will bring it back to the budget. But also, there's an example in Llanrwst, where the same thing happened with a small development. Then, what happens is that people locally start to talk about what the impact of that is, then, on the flood defences and whether it is counter-productive.

[68] And the other area, I think, to look at—because it does impact on budgets, doesn't it; everything comes down to money in the end—is the sort of preventative maintenance that our engineers should be involved in. I should not be able to go and visit an area and find that a report was written in 2007 about the drainage problems in a particular area in Llanrwst, and find that nothing has been done, and that the guys out there dealing with the emergency couldn't even get hold of copies of charts and—

[69] **Alun Ffred Jones:** I have to insist that this is a budget—

[70] **Janet Haworth:** Charts cost money, Chairman. They all have to be drawn and drafted and made available.

[71] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Ask a question to the Minister.

[72] **Janet Haworth:** I would like to know about the powers we have to stop these faulty planning decisions, which are not helping.

[73] **Carl Sargeant:** Well, I wouldn't call planning decisions made anywhere in Wales 'faulty'. We have a very robust planning system. Technical advice note 15 supports the issue around flood defences. It is a matter of democratic choice in processes to agree to permissions for development or not, and there are procedures in place, whether they get called in to the Planning Inspectorate or, indeed, to myself.

[74] With regard to the charts that cost money, I think that what we also have to be realistic about—. Tragically, we had around 150 properties in Wales affected by flooding directly. That's bad. But, when I look at the policy agenda that we have in place, the protective services that we have, they work very effectively. There were people affected in Llanrwst and other areas were affected very specifically, but generally our emergency provisions worked well and were enacted appropriately. There are some snags, and I accept that there are. We have to have lessons learnt from those issues.

[75] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Llyr Gruffydd.

[76] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Before we leave flooding, I would just like to ask about the £150 million coastal risk management programme that is due to commence in 2018. I see that there is £3 million allocated for preparatory work. Maybe you could tell us a bit about what that would entail. Also, you know, when we get to 2018, how do you expect a programme of that scale to be funded?

[77] **Carl Sargeant:** The £3 million is about bringing schemes' early plans online. It's very similar to road schemes. There is a lot of work involved in bringing them to the table; 2018 is only around the corner. So, the additional £3 million will help start to develop the schemes in place. The £150 million will be a part-funded programme between local government and Welsh Government—again on their local borrowing powers. Again, this is very similar to the pothole repair schemes that we had with local authorities as well. So, we are planning ahead for this. We're looking at the investment we have already made, and how we can increase with significant effect the £150 million on the table, which will be welcomed by local authorities. But, the £3 million is in the planning system.

[78] **Alun Ffred Jones:** William, very briefly.

[79] **William Powell:** Just one brief question: in relation to the budget for this year and upcoming years, could you give an assessment as to the level of funding support that comes from European Union sources? Given the momentum building towards a referendum, potentially within the next six months, could you give an indication as to any plans that exist as to how we would replace European funding if it no longer remained available, if the wider member state chose to leave the union?

[80] **Carl Sargeant:** I don't have the numbers for you today, Chair, but I will provide the numbers for European investment that has been used in our flood defence schemes. We do find that a very appropriate method of using finances. But, we'll have to provide that as a separate note.

[81] **William Powell:** That'll be very helpful, thank you.

[82] **Alun Ffred Jones:** The money available for controlling the dangers of flooding and water is actually going down by £2.4 million. What will that impact on?

[83] **Carl Sargeant:** It will mean NRW and ourselves and other authorities looking at the operations and how they work. It does increase risk for communities on the basis that there's less money to go into the system. But, we believe we can still have a robust programme. But, it will mean some changes. I've met NRW—

[84] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Doesn't that increase the danger of flooding?

[85] **Carl Sargeant:** The risk is based upon the weather profile, generally. And, as you say, we can't control the weather. But, it does mean that NRW staff and systems will come under more pressure and there'll be more risk into the system—of course there will, because there's less money to deliver on that. In addition to the budget lines, we do see NRW as a priority for ourselves. When we do have end-year flexibility, we do try to support NRW with a programme.

[86] **Alun Ffred Jones:** The announcement was made that £1 million would be available in a statement made on 29 December. Then, another £2.5 million was announced. Is that from your current budget or is it from next



year's budget?

[87] **Carl Sargeant:** Current.

[88] **Alun Ffred Jones:** From the current budget. Okay.

[89] Symudwn ni'n ôl— We'll move back—

[90] We'll move to other areas. Julie, on general matters around legislation.

[91] **Julie Morgan:** Thank you very much, Chair. Minister, I wanted to ask you about the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, which, of course, we're very pleased is now an Act and will be going forward. How will the funding for implementing that Act, which obviously will go across all the departments in the Government, be co-ordinated and how will you identify what money is going on that Act?

[92] **Carl Sargeant:** A really important question, and I've got two parts to respond to. The current position of Government and the finance Minister, Jane Hutt, is that this has to be developed from the centre and we have to understand what our policy objectives are. We are coming to the end of this Government and the legislation isn't actually enacted yet. It doesn't start until April. So, we're doing a little bit of reverse engineering on the programme for government profile to look about how we can develop and invest clever investments now, in relation to the wellbeing of future generations. So, it's not fully embedded into our profile yet. But, we are using the principles of a long-term approach—the principle of the seven goals and the five principles developed in the Act.

[93] The next budget profile will be the first budget of the Government and that will be under the new legislation. So, that will have to be able to demonstrate what we've done. What I know Jane Hutt and my department and others have been working on is the principle that the Act is in place, but we're trying to do a little bit of reverse engineering to get that into the right space. So, our clever investments around flood defences; looking at the long term; protecting communities; looking about how to be globally responsible, so reducing our carbon emissions, our carbon budgets and the environment Bill, all play into what the wellbeing of future generations principles are. But, it doesn't start until April.

[94] **Julie Morgan:** So, who will be responsible for seeing that this is being

implemented and that the money is there in each department? Will it be you, as the Minister for Natural Resources, if you are that at that time? Or, are there any plans about how that will be co-ordinated?

[95] **Carl Sargeant:** Yes, there are and that's in place. I was very clear—. The First Minister was very clear and also I hope that I gave you some clarity about implementation. I met with the Permanent Secretary because, regardless of who's in Government at the time, there will be a piece of legislation in place that we have to comply with.

10:00

[96] The deputy Permanent Secretary, Owen Evans, is now being allocated as the officer in charge of the delivery of the wellbeing of future generations Act, and it is rolling down through all of our departments across Government. Ultimately, the Minister will have to drive this agenda forward, but underneath that, operationally wise, the delivery of the service will be run by the internal structures and Owen is heading that up.

[97] **Julie Morgan:** You said at the beginning of the session that you support the emphasis on education and health as the priorities, which are obviously very much linked to the future generations Act. How are we going to see in some of the other departments that the investment doesn't shrink?

[98] **Carl Sargeant:** We have a general overarching principle of what this Government stands for. The First Minister has been very clear about the social justice agenda, and health and education stand very strongly in that focus. From that, then we have to take out what our objectives are and what we need to deliver on, and within this department it's around tackling climate change and delivering on resilient services for communities. We have to then balance the books versus the principles and goals of the future generations Act. We have to be able to demonstrate that the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales and the Auditor General for Wales, as in the Act, will be testing Government and public bodies on how we're doing that.

[99] It is encouraging, actually, because we're starting to take it a step further now, because the duty that the 44 public bodies will have placed on them will take effect from April, but we are starting to see the private sector and also non-governmental organisations coming to the table now—people operating in Wales saying, 'We're going to apply the WFG Act in the principles

as laid down by Government, because this makes sense'. So, we've got more people engaged in this beyond what the Act was ever formulated for.

[100] **Julie Morgan:** Did you want me to go on to climate change now, or does anybody want to follow up on—?

[101] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Yes, carry on.

[102] **Julie Morgan:** Yes, okay. Obviously, climate change is absolutely vital, and I think you went to Paris, didn't you, and we have an agreement of a kind to move forward? It's very important for the Welsh Government to have the advice of the UK Committee on Climate Change. Where in the budget will the money come from the Welsh Government to support that committee?

[103] **Carl Sargeant:** I'm not sure which budget line; I need to take some advice. We do fund the climate change commission.

[104] **Mr Clark:** Yes, it's in BEL 2816 for climate change action.

[105] **Carl Sargeant:** There you go: a very technical answer.

[106] **Julie Morgan:** Thank you very much, and that money will be available after April next year to support the advice we get.

[107] **Carl Sargeant:** I would hope so, yes.

[108] **Julie Morgan:** Thank you.

[109] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Jenny Rathbone.

[110] **Jenny Rathbone:** So, it's too soon yet to be able to identify specific ways in which the budget has been influenced by the future generations Act, simply because it hasn't yet been implemented.

[111] **Carl Sargeant:** I can give you specifics, but what I—. I don't believe it's a true reflection of the Act yet, and I think it would be wrong of me to try and—. That's why I said about the reverse engineering bit. We can look at the principles and how they're applied and what the outcomes are, but I think we have to start from the baseline of what Government policy is. I can give you assurance, and I know you're involved in this process, that the manifesto that we bring forward in the elections—and I'm sure other parties will be looking

at this carefully as well—will be based upon opportunities around the WFG Act, because we know that it's part of the legislation and it make sense. So, the programme for government wasn't developed in that principle, so we're sort of a halfway house.

[112] **Jenny Rathbone:** Okay, I've got that. Just looking specifically at the budget for developing and implementing climate change policy, energy efficiency and green growth, is it possible to identify a specific sum that's targeting raising awareness amongst local authorities—specifically planners, as well as the councillors who take decisions—about how they approach new developments in line with the flooding that we've just spoken about? You know, the exhibition upstairs demonstrates that you can actually mitigate flood risk if you plan properly, but unless local authorities are asking the right questions of developers, it's much more expensive to mitigate than it is to prevent.

[113] **Carl Sargeant:** I think I said earlier on—our planning policy is very robust, and we have training sessions for planners across Wales. We have—I forget the name of the organisation; there's a training organisation we're pushing through across planning authorities in order to give staff the most up-to-date understanding of how the planning system works in terms of delivering against climate change. So, we have that. We also have the Design Commission for Wales, which looks at clever systems to look at new opportunities for the future, the best planning systems and the best design systems that will help developments. We also have the green growth agenda, which we are making significant investments in with local authorities, which, in addition to the planning system—. Opportunities for green growth and green development are being funded through that provision.

[114] I believe, certainly, this Government is in transition, moving towards a low-carbon style of delivery of services and that's why the green growth agenda is really important to us. With about £3 trillion-worth of business in green growth across the globe, Government see that we should have a share in that and be part of the opportunities that it presents for the future. So, we've got lots of programmes, Jenny, that help planning, but also a process around that for green opportunities in Wales.

[115] **Jenny Rathbone:** Obviously, there's been quite a significant reduction in the budget for energy efficiency. I just wondered if you could tell us how we're going to be able to get local authorities to pay more attention to the opportunities around renewable energy as a source of income, as well as

climate change mitigation.

[116] **Carl Sargeant:** We don't hold all the levers on energy. As you're aware from the committee's inquiry into that, that's been quite difficult in terms of increasing our renewables, based on the feed-in tariffs changing, and the support mechanisms for that. So, that's been quite challenging for us. What we are able to do—that's why I said we've got a green growth event in early March, I think it is, where we're getting global leaders to come to Wales to talk about the opportunities that this presents—. We're making a significant investment in the green growth programme for pipeline projects for local authorities to start delivering, and some of them are renewable schemes, some of them are energy schemes—they're energy development schemes. So, we're creating the catalyst for change. As I said, we don't hold all the levers, but it's going to be incredibly difficult to start shaping the pace of change that we would hope to have happened when the UK Government's procedures, which they've implemented recently, have had a major effect on the renewable and green sectors across the UK.

[117] **Jenny Rathbone:** I suppose I'm a bit disappointed that the Minister for finance hasn't allocated a specific carrot for local authorities in terms of giving them some targets for generating renewable energy. A small sum of money might focus people's minds.

[118] **Carl Sargeant:** Well, I wouldn't say that she hasn't, technically. The green growth fund does present that opportunity for local authorities, and we have had—I'll have to give you a note on it, I can't remember the exact number—a significant amount of bids into that process already. We've got—I think it's more than 50 pipeline projects that are looking, through the green growth programme, for opportunities, and they do include renewables.

[119] **Jenny Rathbone:** Okay. And what about the role of the European Investment Bank, because if you can invest money that you can then pay back—

[120] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Can I come back to the budget? I mean—

[121] **Jenny Rathbone:** —as co-funding for your reduced budget.

[122] **Carl Sargeant:** It is a pertinent question. I met with the European Investment Bank while I was in Paris, and I know that the finance Minister has also. The green growth programme will be based upon a loan/grant scheme,

where I hope that the European Investment Bank will be able to support us. We think the potential is around £350 million of opportunity there, for a small amount of investment from ourselves. So, it's about the start of change. So, your questions are valid and, I believe, we are delivering on them, but we're just in that early stage as yet, and I think it's quite an exciting time for Wales, particularly around green growth, and that's why we're holding an international summit here in March.

[123] **Jenny Rathbone:** Okay.

[124] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Llyr.

[125] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Yes. I'd like to ask a question about Natural Resources Wales. You can probably guess what I'm going to ask, Minister, because I've asked it before. It does seem that, when there's an additional duty or there's a cut to funding, I ask you whether you're confident that they have, therefore, the resources to be able to continue to deliver, or at least to implement the new duties. Given that they are now facing, with this budget, quite a substantial drop in funding from Government, and it does coincide with additional duties coming forward through the environment Bill, through the future generations Act and the planning Act, which, effectively, is a double whammy, can you reassure us that you are confident that they have sufficient funding to implement the additional duties?

[126] **Carl Sargeant:** Yes.

[127] **Llyr Gruffydd:** At what point, then, Minister, do we have to look at greater changes in Natural Resources Wales? It is a diminishing budget and it has been for recent years and it's projected, I would imagine, to be in coming years. These additional duties are coming on line and the environment Bill is expected to add up to £4.5 million over 10 years to their costs. Are you not concerned that this current projection isn't sustainable?

[128] **Carl Sargeant:** I think there will come a time when NRW are pressured and they are unable to continue with some of the duties that they currently do. I don't believe it's now. I have had recent discussions—. I meet with NRW on a regular basis and, of course, as all organisations I meet, they ask me to increase their budget. I discuss that with them, and my team are in regular contact with the operations element of NRW, and they are under pressure, but we all are, and I expect the delivery of the environment Bill to be a new tool to the system. I don't see this as additional burden. It's like when Marks

& Spencer buys new tills; it's not additional work, it's a change in profiles, a change in what they do. I see the environment Bill for NRW as a new till; a new opportunity for them. That's why they'll have to change the way they model their business. But I'm confident they can. It's an excellent organisation run by a team at the top who are working very well, and I'm confident that they can deliver on this.

[129] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Russell, did you want to come in on this?

[130] **Russell George:** Yes, if I can. In terms of NRW's reduced funding, you've mentioned in your paper, Minister, that this has been agreed with NRW and it talks about their original business case and it talks about restructuring the workforce et cetera. What I want to understand is, in one sense—I'm sure it's not a contradiction but you just said that every organisation wants more money. So, on one hand, NRW are saying, 'Well, we want more money from you', and on the other hand, it sounds like you've agreed that negotiation with them. So, can you just explain how that works?

[131] **Carl Sargeant:** Okay. When NRW was set up, it was based upon bringing the three organisations together in order to create the one organisation with a different toolkit to modify the way that they do business. We've brought the organisations together, which has been challenging, and you've seen that the whole bringing of the three organisations together has had its ups and downs. I'm confident that the organisation is in a robust state in order to move forward now with the toolkit, which is the environment Bill, hopefully to be passed shortly, with your support.

[132] As I said, organisations continue—. There are pressures beyond the control of Ministers and organisations, such as fuel costs et cetera and wage bills and so on, that come into all organisations as a pressure, and the chief exec of the organisation continues to ask me for more finance. The business model for NRW was very clear in the reduction, year on year, as they change their business, and we've been working with them to deliver on that. However, I said earlier on as a contribution to one of the questions that were posed by a Member, I see NRW as a fundamental part of the delivery of services to the public sector and the protection of our environment and space. We continue and have continued, where we have flexibility in my budget at year end, to work with NRW to invest in services that may enhance communities. That's very welcome. So, I see NRW's future as positive. They are under pressure, they will require clever ways of doing business change, but they are well on their way to deliver that.

10:15

[133] **Alun Ffred Jones:** What do you mean by clever, smarter ways? What does it mean in terms of NRW, for example?

[134] **Carl Sargeant:** Well, we can look at the way NRW—. This is a matter for NRW. One of the suggestions I may consider with them is about how they use their land base better. So, there are examples around Glastir, and using the land to grow more trees, with a better, larger income for the organisation. What do we do with returns from renewable energy services that are on NRW/Welsh Government land? We have to have a negotiation on what makes NRW a more sustainable model for NRW. The reality is that, while we've got this Government in the UK, our budgets are reducing, and that will probably continue while they're still in power. So, we have to do something different.

[135] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Russell.

[136] **Russell George:** You said, Minister, that the chief exec has asked you for more resource. They're always asking for more resources. So, if they're asking for more resources, is, therefore, the chief exec saying, 'Look, I need this extra resource. If I don't get it, then I can't deliver x, y and z'?

[137] **Carl Sargeant:** I've never met a chief exec in my position as Minister who hasn't asked me for more money.

[138] **Russell George:** So, in that conversation, is the chief exec saying to you, 'If we aren't able to get this funding, this is what, potentially, we aren't able to deliver'?

[139] **Carl Sargeant:** The conversation that I had most recently was a challenging one with the chief exec from NRW, where he was saying, 'We're going to have to start thinking about the operational capability.' I accept that process on the basis that the budgets are reducing. I still believe NRW—and I believe they believe—can still continue with the main function of NRW's operation. That will continue, but there will be changes to services, as there are for all public services across Wales, including NRW.

[140] **Alun Ffred Jones:** There is a contradiction here—because I've heard it in Finance Committee as well—where Ministers are saying, you know, 'It's a very challenging budget, and very difficult', but when it comes to services



they say, 'But we'll be able to cope.' It seems that there is no problem in coping, so perhaps you should welcome the cuts. It's a very strange one where you're saying, 'We'd like more money because it's damaging', but in fact, when you ask for the effect on services, you would claim, 'No, we can carry on as before. We'll just change the way we work.' That's the impression we get anyway.

[141] **Carl Sargeant:** Well, I'm sorry if I gave you that impression, Chair, because that's not what I mean. When I say there is a reduction in funding and a change in the way that we do business, it has an effect on public services. I can't sit here and say, 'A reduction in budgets won't have an effect on public services'—

[142] **Alun Ffred Jones:** That's what we'd like to find out: what those changes are.

[143] **Carl Sargeant:** I can't give you detail, and I don't think that Ministers can give you detail on that, particularly on NRW. But, you know, NRW—one of their actions would be to maintain and develop flood defences. They will still do that in the future, but it will be a different profile. I can't give you the exact detail of what that may mean, but it will be a change to business. I'm saying, in addition to that, what NRW need to start thinking about is how they can increase their internal business model to create an income for themselves as well, and I've tried to work with them to do that. So, a reduction in budgets doesn't mean nothing changes. It does for all organisations, I fear. Particularly, we are coming to a squeeze point now where there may be, for some public bodies, the point where they have to stop doing things and not reduce doing things. I believe NRW has to stay in a place where we can continue to do the main, core business of what NRW was set up to do.

[144] **Alun Ffred Jones:** I'd like to go on to marine and Joyce's questions. Joyce, do you want to start?

[145] **Joyce Watson:** Thank you. Minister, we know that there is progress moving forward in the marine transition programme and the strategy framework directive. My question is quite simple: can you give an update on progress in developing the final version of the Wales national marine plan, and are you're able at this stage to clarify the total amount of funding available from within your portfolio so that you can implement that plan?

[146] **Carl Sargeant:** Okay. Funding is the easiest one. That's £1.43 million. That's for the transition programme and the strategy framework directive. In terms of progress, in November 2015 I made available the initial draft of the national marine plan to stakeholders to start formal consultation around that proposal. My officials have held several drop-in sessions during November/December to share views and continue to meet with stakeholders on the development of that. The work to date on the marine plan has been funded entirely from the marine and fisheries core budget of £1.43 million, which also funds all our marine and fisheries commitments. So, that's the total budget and we manage all our actions from within that portfolio.

[147] **Joyce Watson:** We know, Minister, that there's a possibility that there might be further marine conservation zones being designated in Wales. Have you any idea how those might be funded and then, obviously, how the ongoing cost of delivering that policy in Wales would be monitored to ensure that sufficient funds are available?

[148] **Carl Sargeant:** I wouldn't want to speculate on additionality and we'll have to, probably, greet that with trepidation if that's the case. Unless I go and speak to Jane Hutt around flexibility of budgets then I would be expected to find the additional finance, subject to having to, out of the £1.43 million. At the moment I'm not under any pressure. I don't believe that I'm under any pressure to find any additional funding at this point, but what's around the corner? I don't know the answer to that question.

[149] **Alun Ffred Jones:** But if there are designated zones and they need to be protected, I presume they will need protection and, therefore, there will be other costs, will there? Or am I wrong?

[150] **Carl Sargeant:** There is a potential cost and it will not be optional.

[151] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Okay. Sorry, Sandy.

[152] **Sandy Mewies:** Thank you. This directly impacts on the amount of funding we have now and that we're going to have in the future. But you will know that off the coast of my constituency I have what I still think is the only European site of special scientific interest at sea and one of the issues that is affecting it right along the coast, I would say, is matters of enforcement. When you put in new rules and regulations, which European directives obviously do, they have to be monitored and they have to be enacted upon if they are breached, which will require even more enforcement. Do you foresee

difficulties—? I'm not against new things being added—I think the seas should be protected—but do you foresee difficulties in the budgets that are coming in future?

[153] **Carl Sargeant:** Enforcement is a really challenging one. I've got teams out across Wales who are subject to some horrendous action by individuals in their day-to-day duties and I just place on record my thanks to them. They do an incredible job.

[154] **Sandy Mewies:** And so would I.

[155] **Carl Sargeant:** They meet some interesting characters, believe me. I've been out with the enforcement team in north Wales and they are robust but the actions that are taken against them, sometimes, are beyond belief. Enforcement is a challenging one because there has to be an action and a consequence. We're also bound by European directives as well to protect our marine environment too. So, we see this as financially challenging but also operationally challenging. I've asked my team currently to look at investment into the enforcement team to give them more support in the actions that they take forward. It is an important feature to maintain and protect our wildlife and our environment. We have to take that very seriously.

[156] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Who does the enforcing?

[157] **Carl Sargeant:** I'm sorry?

[158] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Who does the enforcing?

[159] **Carl Sargeant:** We have an enforcement team.

[160] **Alun Ffred Jones:** From?

[161] **Carl Sargeant:** It's a Welsh Government enforcement team.

[162] **Mr Slade:** Yes, working in partnership with Natural Resources Wales.

[163] **Alun Ffred Jones:** But directed by the Government.

[164] **Carl Sargeant:** Yes. So, we are looking to make some further investments into our capital programme for helping the teams do their job.

[165] **Sandy Mewies:** Thank you.

[166] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Okay. Waste, Minister: there is a cut, a decrease, of £3.7 million in the spending on waste recycling. Could you explain who will take that cut, and then—? Well, take that as a question.

[167] **Carl Sargeant:** Predominantly, it will be local authorities that will have a reduction in their budgets. The waste programme was always a transition programme. So, when it was established as a grant, there was a programme for moving from the traditional methods of waste collection to a recycling programme. Some authorities are better than others, although we have a very good record on our recycling rates and waste collection. I believe that the reduction in their budgets will start to focus minds where authorities aren't dealing with their waste in probably the most effective way that they could to start thinking carefully about how they would move into a different place. As the Member will be aware, we've had some modelling done around the blueprint, as we call it, in terms of waste management. Some authorities have adopted that. We see that a full adoption of the blueprint has the potential for around a 20 per cent saving across the budget line. I would encourage local authorities to consider their business plans carefully.

[168] **Alun Ffred Jones:** At the same time, you are investing £5.4 million of revenue in a scheme for four local authorities. Are these because they are not able to meet their targets?

[169] **Carl Sargeant:** This is about some of the programmes around the residual waste programme. So, we have regional schemes in which we bring authorities together to help them manage their waste better. It's not unusual for us to do this. This is not a unique profile for us to make investments into local authorities to do that.

[170] **Alun Ffred Jones:** But this is revenue. It isn't a capital programme, therefore. It's not a new centre.

[171] **Carl Sargeant:** No, it's not a new centre, but it's a—

[172] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Why are these being singled out for special help while you're reducing assistance for others?

[173] **Carl Sargeant:** To start some of these programmes off, in terms of how we get them to develop operations to get to the next level. They have to

become sustainable in the longer term.

[174] **Alun Ffred Jones:** But they have been receiving the same amount of grant support as all the other local authorities. So, why are these being singled out for special treatment?

[175] **Carl Sargeant:** My official, with more detail on this, tells me that it's the revenue profile that supports the capital programme that we've invested in. So, there will be some staff elements attached to this as well.

[176] **Alun Ffred Jones:** I'm trying to find out why, since every local authority receives the grant support in order to increase the levels of recycling, there's a decrease in grant to most authorities but increase for four. Is it because they've been unable to get to their targets?

[177] **Carl Sargeant:** No, it's not. We bring programmes together to work—. We see a better regional operation. One of the examples of the Valleys residual project is an example of that. Matthew, perhaps, can give you some more detail if it's helpful, Chair.

[178] **Mr Quinn:** Yes, by all means. This is the big procurement programme around the residual treatment. The support that we're giving is a revenue support. We have a small capital support as well, but it's a revenue support to the cost of operating those plans. So, there is a private—

[179] **Alun Ffred Jones:** So, this is permanent.

[180] **Mr Quinn:** These are private sector plants, and this is a contribution towards the cost of the gate fees that the local authority will pay. So, it's a revenue contribution towards that capital cost.

[181] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Is it permanent?

[182] **Mr Quinn:** These will be running sums—

[183] **Carl Sargeant:** It's a contract programme for 20 years, 25 years.

[184] **Alun Ffred Jones:** What I'm trying to find out is why they are being singled for added support while everybody else's are dropping.

[185] **Mr Quinn:** They're going to individual authorities because there's a

lead authority that is managing the contract. So, it's not to a specific authority in that sense. It is to support the regional capital project. But we can give more detail if that's helpful.

[186] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Yes. I'm trying to find out: has everybody else been receiving special grants in order to achieve the same?

[187] **Mr Quinn:** The programme runs across Wales and local authorities, as you will recall, work in consortia, using our *Official Journal of the European Union* framework, to put together these projects. So, these are commercially-provided projects that we're helping to support the costs of the gate fees to—

[188] **Carl Sargeant:** There's one just being developed in north Wales currently that will have the same effect. There'll be revenue investment to support the gate fee for all these local authorities to collaborate to have a better service for their constituents—

10:30

[189] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Could you give us a note on how this works and how it works across Wales?

[190] **Carl Sargeant:** Happy to do so, Chair.

[191] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Thank you. Sorry, Russell.

[192] **Russell George:** In terms of the energy consenting in regard to proposals in the draft Wales Bill, has your department done any scenario planning about following what may come forward?

[193] **Carl Sargeant:** Yes, we have, but it's very high level, because we don't quite know what's going to happen with the Wales Bill or whether the energy consenting will change, but we've done some initial modelling, particularly around the planning department.

[194] **Russell George:** How does that affect the overall budget?

[195] **Carl Sargeant:** It will clearly be more work for us, but we think we'll have to look at what the effects are and what the final decisions are and whether there are consequential in relation to that.

[196] **Mr Hemington:** If I can just add to that, the consenting arrangements will be on a cost recovery basis. So, when the applications come forward, the application fee will reflect the cost of dealing with those applications.

[197] **Russell George:** Okay.

[198] **Alun Ffred Jones:** William Powell.

[199] **William Powell:** Diolch, Gadeirydd. Moving to the recently produced report on designated landscapes, Minister, you relatively recently asked Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas to take forward this piece of work to implementation phase in the future landscapes working group. I wonder if you could clarify what revenue funding will be available to support him and any team or advisory group that he might have in delivering that. What work has been re-prioritised in order to free up that funding?

[200] **Carl Sargeant:** I don't envisage any significant amount of revenue funding being needed to develop this report. There'll be some short meetings in various places across Wales, but it will be managed within my internal department budget. There will be nothing of significance.

[201] **William Powell:** And the timescale for the delivery of that?

[202] **Carl Sargeant:** I've asked him to do some work into the new term of the new Government, whoever that may be. I think it will be a valid piece of information following on from the initial report that came forward. Dafydd Elis-Thomas is, again, doing a tremendous job in bringing stakeholders together of many differing views, which will, I hope, aid the process where we can see areas of outstanding natural beauty and designated landscapes coming together to offer more for the opportunity of the people of Wales and beyond.

[203] **William Powell:** Excellent. Thank you very much.

[204] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Janet Haworth.

[205] **Janet Haworth:** Yes, I have a quick one on this. I think it would be interesting to have a note saying who the members are of these different working groups and what their backgrounds are, what they're bringing to the table, just in the interest of transparency. So, if that could be done—.

[206] **Carl Sargeant:** I'd be delighted.

[207] **Janet Haworth:** Right. And I'd just like to take you back to NRW for a moment. I accept what you're saying about economics being the driver of change—sometimes good, sometimes bad, but sometimes bringing forth innovation that wouldn't have happened otherwise. So, I accept what you're saying about NRW needing to maximise the estate, but you did mention a link there with forestry, and you will be aware that there is a controversy developing between what is appearing to be a myth of putting conifers on our uplands, which require quite significant drainage because of their low root behaviour, and the drainage systems that forestry is putting in being part of the problem in terms of cascading the water down to the valley—

[208] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Is this to do with the budget?

[209] **Janet Haworth:** It is to do with the budget because, if NRW have an ambition to plant more trees and these are commercial, fast-growing conifers that will generate income, then that must be done in a way that doesn't bring cascades of water down the hillsides, always bearing in mind that these trees are dormant through the winter. They are not taking up water through the winter. No trees are taking up water through the winter, apart from a holly tree perhaps. So, I think we need to look very carefully at that because it's not only an issue here in Wales; it's been an issue in England as well. This needs to come out of the review of flooding.

[210] **Carl Sargeant:** Okay, I'm not aware of the controversy around the planting of conifers on hillsides in Wales—

[211] **Janet Haworth:** Well you are now, Minister.

[212] **Carl Sargeant:** NRW are a competent body. If there are specifics that the Member would like to raise with me or with them, I'm more than happy to take them up.

[213] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Okay. Thank you. Jenny Rathbone, we'll just finish on this question.

[214] **Jenny Rathbone:** Going back to the budget and the impact of the DEFRA cuts on Wales, particularly around the food safety agency, which is a particular concern, given that the horse burger scam is still alive in people's



minds—

[215] **Carl Sargeant:** Yes.

[216] **Jenny Rathbone:** I wonder if you could say what analysis you have done of the implications for Wales and whether that will then transfer into responsibilities on your officials.

[217] **Carl Sargeant:** Yes. We have done some assessment. I know that the Deputy Minister will be joining us very shortly, who manages the food element within my department. It would, perhaps, be a more appropriate question for Rebecca to respond to, if I may, Chair.

[218] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Right, we'll do that. Diolch yn fawr. Thank you, Minister, and your officials for that. Are some of you leaving?

[219] **Mr Slade:** I'll be back [*Laughter.*]

[220] **Alun Ffred Jones:** You don't have to leave at all. Right, so we'll conclude that session. Thank you very much, Minister. And, then, we move on to the second session, with the Deputy Minister for Farming and Food. We'll take a minute to change over.

[221] Croeso nôl i'r ail sesiwn yma a chroeso i'r Dirprwy Weinidog Ffermio a Bwyd, Rebecca Evans. A gaf i ofyn i chi, Ddirprwy Weinidog, i gyflwyno'ch hun a'ch swyddogion? Wedyn, awn yn syth i'r cwestiynau.

Welcome back to this second session and I welcome the Deputy Minister for Farming and Food, Rebecca Evans. May I ask you, Deputy Minister, to introduce yourself and your officials? Then we'll go straight into questions.

[222] **The Deputy Minister for Farming and Food (Rebecca Evans):** Yes, thank you. Rebecca Evans, Deputy Minister for Farming and Food. Andrew Slade has been with you this morning. We also have Tony Clark, head of finance, economy, skills in the natural resources group; and Christianne Glossop, chief veterinary officer.

[223] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Diolch yn fawr. Thank you. We'll go straight into questions. Llyr Gruffydd.

[224] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Thank you, Chair. I'd like to start with a few questions

around the rural development programme. I note the re-profiling of the RDP budget, and I was just interested in hearing your rationale for that re-profiling, particularly the reallocation of £1.8 million.

[225] **Rebecca Evans:** Yes. The RDP, as you know, is a multi-year programme, so this is a re-profiling of that programme for this year. We need to manage the spend of the whole programme flexibly over the seven-to-10-year period, and the reason for that is so that we can make sure that we draw down our full EU allocation through the domestic co-financing, and also to spread the funding across the period of the programme, so that we're able to offer windows of opportunity for grants and so on to people who might not be ready at this point in the programme to access the funding. So, it's simply a reallocation within the RDP action, and, in due course, it could be brought back into play. So, this is just something that reflects the nature of the RDP in terms of being demand led but also a multi-year programme.

[226] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Given that some people have been concerned at the slow progress of the RDP, does the fact that you suggest that things haven't happened as quickly as you were expecting in your previous budget suggest that they're actually quite right?

[227] **Rebecca Evans:** No. That's not what I'm suggesting at all. I would take issue, actually, with the suggestion that there has been slow progress on the RDP, because, as you know, it was only officially adopted by the European Commission at the end of May last year. So, that only gives us seven months of operational time for this RDP. During that time, we've already made £213 million of investment available for the benefit of communities, farmers, foresters and food businesses in Wales. The majority of that was for farmers and foresters, with £110 million of grants being made available—that includes Glastir—and knowledge transfer and advisory services worth £37 million. So, I'd suggest there hasn't been any slowness, really, in terms of getting the RDP up and running. Since July of this year, we've actually opened windows, and some still remain open, for Farming Connect, Glastir advanced, Glastir commons, Glastir organic, Glastir woodland restoration, Glastir woodland creation, the sustainable production grant, food business investment grant, rural community and development fund, the co-operation and supply chain development fund and LEADER, as well. So, you can see there's lots going on within the RDP at the moment. So, I take issue, really, with the suggestion that we have been slow off the mark with it.

[228] **Llyr Gruffydd:** So, could you tell us, then, about the measures that

you've put in place to monitor the implementation and to ensure that there are sufficient funds in place to honour commitments going forward?

[229] **Rebecca Evans:** Because this is a European programme, we have to submit a monitoring and evaluation plan to the European Commission, and they have accepted that plan. So, those official mechanisms are already in place. The main domestic way in which we monitor the programme is through the programme monitoring committee, chaired by Mick Antoniw. I know that they meet quarterly, I believe, and that group has representation on it from the farming unions, environmental groups, community groups and so on to make sure that there is good oversight and challenge on that through the PMC.

[230] I'm considering also how we can monitor and evaluate the rural development programme using our stakeholders, with specific regard to the RDP and as opposed to the European programmes more generally. I think that a way forward for that might be to look at the new partnership group that we've established as a result of our strategic approach to agriculture. That might certainly have a strong role there in terms of advising and supporting the PMC, so not duplicating or replicating the work that it does, but in a support capacity.

[231] Internally, we also have a group of officials monitoring the day-to-day administration of the RDP, and part of their role, then, is to liaise with central finance to ensure that we have capacity to draw down the full allocation of European funding and so on.

[232] **Llyr Gruffydd:** So, you would assert quite clearly, then, that you feel that you're very much on track in terms of implementation time frames and in terms of expenditure.

[233] **Rebecca Evans:** Yes, we are, because, as I say, we've already opened a large number of windows, lots of schemes are up and running, and people are benefiting from it already. The monitoring, evaluation and governance are all there and, also, I should add that, in February, we'll be hosting an RDP event, where I'll be making some further announcements about windows that will be open this side of the election, but then anything beyond May is obviously a matter for the next administration.

[234] **Alun Ffred Jones:** When will we know what the take-up is in these various schemes?

[235] **Rebecca Evans:** We could give you take-up numbers for any of them if you have—. We can write to you if that's easier—

[236] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Very useful.

[237] **Rebecca Evans:** —with specific schemes.

[238] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Diolch yn fawr. William, did you want to come in, and then Sandy?

[239] **William Powell:** Diolch, Gadeirydd. Minister, I share some of the concerns that have been raised by Llyr Gruffydd about the pace of progress with one or two of the RDP programmes. I know that the sustainable production grant has had some criticism in terms of the way it's been implemented, but I'd be happy to pursue those on another occasion with you. What I am really concerned about is that, in May or September of this year, we may face a referendum that could lead to a messy two-year divorce between the UK and the European Union. While it might have been a fantasist who'd start preoccupying themselves with this, but now it's a real danger, what scenario planning are we doing in terms of looking at a future that might mean that we won't have access to the £400 million over the upcoming years? I think that's something that we need to do, and, maybe, the Welsh Government needs to communicate this in terms of the way in which it brings forward the choices that people will have to face in the upcoming period.

[240] **Rebecca Evans:** I do want to just very briefly respond your comments on the sustainable production grant before I move on to the European referendum. We do have to, under European regulations, have a competitive tendering process in place, which is a two-stage process and so I appreciate that that might be frustrating for some people. But these are large amounts of taxpayers' money that we're responsible for here, so we have to make sure that the appropriate auditing and scrutiny of proposals are in place.

10:45

[241] Also, I know there's been some criticism of the level of funding that we're putting in, and the kind of projects that we're asking people to come forward with. However, the demand for the programme has suggested there is an appetite for this size of grant, and the purpose of these grants, really, is

to achieve that transformational change in those farm businesses and food businesses to try and drive them forward to a place where they're modern, professional and resilient, and so on, but also creating local wealth through job opportunities and growth in their communities. So, there is logic behind our approach there, even though it's not universally popular. I understand that.

[242] With regard to the European referendum, it's not only the rural development programme, of course, that we would be concerned about the future funding for, but the basic payment scheme as well. In the first instance, really, future support for farming and for rural communities—it is a matter for the UK Government and DEFRA to tell us what kind of funding they would make available to Welsh Government in order to support our farming communities as well. I did laugh when I saw an article from Owen Paterson suggesting that, in future, the basic payment subsidies could be funded to the same level, or even greater, through the UK Government. I find that hard to believe given all the other pressures on Government—health, education, and so on—and the fact that taxpayers might find it difficult to understand why the UK Government would be allocating large amounts of subsidies to farm businesses when there are other small business people and employers who don't attract the same level of subsidy. So, in the first instance, it would be for the UK Government to explain what level of funding they would give us—

[243] **Alun Ffred Jones:** I'd like to bring this back to the budget now.

[244] **William Powell:** Thank you very much, Minister.

[245] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Sorry—Sandy Mewies.

[246] **Sandy Mewies:** The rural development plan by its very name seems to indicate that funding is available to rural areas only. I understand, and some people might be surprised to know, that that's not the case. Can you tell me what the geographical spread is and how your budget is spent throughout Wales? How many local authority areas are represented, for instance, and how are the Welsh Government making people aware, in urban areas perhaps, that there are examples of schemes to which they can apply for a grant?

[247] **Rebecca Evans:** Yes, you're absolutely right. In the eyes of the European Commission, all of Wales is a rural area, so all of Wales is able to

access funding, with the exception of some wards in central urban areas in Cardiff and Swansea, for example. It's been frustrating, actually, and this was one of the reasons why we couldn't find some specific funding within this budget for the community farm in Swansea, for example—because that just happens to be within the very small area of Wales that isn't considered 'rural' under the European Commission rules. But every local authority is covered by a LEADER project, and LEADER projects are very exciting in the sense that they look for grass-roots solutions to local community problems, involving the community in addressing what they see as their priorities. So, that's available across Wales. Things like the food business investment scheme—that's equally available to rural and urban communities, as are other projects as well. But that might particularly be of interest to food businesses and enterprises seeking to expand, and so on, within more urban areas. But the programme is an all-Wales programme.

[248] **Sandy Mewies:** Thank you.

[249] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Jenny.

[250] **Jenny Rathbone:** Just going back to the RDP, and specifically priority 3, to promote food chain organisation, I wonder if you can just tell us a little bit more about how that budget is being used to take advantage of the national public procurement policy for food across all public bodies that need to serve food, and the opportunities that could pose for growers.

[251] **Rebecca Evans:** Throughout all the work I undertake, right across the portfolio, I always try and take an entire supply-chain approach to that. This is why we bring together producers, processors and retailers. We did this for beef, for example, and had a really good seminar, so that the whole supply chain could understand things from the other people's perspective. So, farmers, for example, could understand from the retailers' perspective the pressure that they have from consumers, and they could feed that back to the farmers so that they're growing to the specification that the retailers want.

[252] **Jenny Rathbone:** We're not short of beef; we are short of fruit and veg. I just wondered if you can say a bit about how the budget is being applied to encourage more growers of fruit and veg so that we have fresh fruit and vegetables locally.

[253] **Rebecca Evans:** For example, under one of our schemes—the co-

operation and supply chain development scheme—we have the opportunity for people to come together in what we’re calling ‘strategic initiatives’. So, these are exactly the kinds of projects you’re talking about when groups of people come together to collaborate. And in this case, some of the projects which have been invited to come forward actually come under that horticulture umbrella, so this could be an exciting new way forward in terms of bringing people together in order to produce more fruit and veg in Wales. I can provide the committee with more information about the projects that have been accepted under the schemes, as well as the uptake, and so on.

[254] **Jenny Rathbone:** Thank you; that would be very welcome. Sticking with food, I just wondered if you can comment on the impact of the severe reductions in the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs budget, particularly around the food safety agency, and what impact that might have on demands on your staff.

[255] **Rebecca Evans:** The Food Standards Agency is responsible to the Welsh Government through the Deputy Minister for health, so he is the key contact for those discussions. However, I do meet with them regularly, because there are issues of common interest such as monitoring of welfare and safety, and so on, in slaughterhouses. We’ve got a common interest in smokies, for example. So, there are lots of things that we have discussions on, but their formal mechanism to report to the Assembly is through the Deputy Minister for health.

[256] **Jenny Rathbone:** Okay, but there are significant implications for businesses in Wales if there’s adulteration of food going on elsewhere in the food chain, and the Food Standards Agency has to be the agency that’s supposed to be monitoring that.

[257] **Rebecca Evans:** The Food Standards Agency plays a critical role, and we do involve them in the work that we do. It has an absolutely critical role in assuring the safety of the food that people eat.

[258] I do have some concerns with the cuts to DEFRA as well in terms of what that might mean for the support that we’re able to get from them in terms of the protected food name statuses, because our protected geographical indication status for Welsh lamb and beef, for example, is invaluable, really, in helping us open up markets overseas; they’re well-known, well-regarded marks of quality. So, we’re hoping to bring more products in. We have a long list of products waiting now and hoping to be

evaluated for protected food name status, but we do require support from DEFRA to do that. So, I'm concerned that any cuts to DEFRA do not impact on our ability to continue to allow our food producers to get that mark of excellence, which is so important in terms of the profitability and opportunities for those food businesses.

[259] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Diolch yn fawr. A gaf i ofyn cwestiwn? Yn wyneb eich ateb chi i Sandy Mewies, a gaf i gadarnhau mai'r hyn roeddech chi'n ei ddweud oedd bod yr RDP yn weithredol ym mhob ardal yng Nghymru, a bod elfennau ohono fo yn weithredol mewn ardaloedd trefol? Dyna oedd yr ateb, ie? Ydw i'n iawn?

**Alun Ffred Jones:** Thank you. May I ask a question? In light of your response to Sandy Mewies, may I confirm that what you said was that the RDP was operational in every area of Wales, and that elements of it were operational in urban areas? Was that your answer? Am I right?

[260] **Rebecca Evans:** Yes, that's right. The LEADER project, for example, is operational in all local authorities across Wales.

[261] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Y rheswm rwy'n gofyn yw achos, yn eich llythyr, neu yn y nodiadau sydd wedi cael eu danfon gan yr adran, mae'n dweud bod y cynllun datblygu gwledig yn dod â buddion anghymesur—'*disproportionate benefits*' ydy'r geiriau—i siaradwyr Cymraeg achos ei fod yn fwy buddiol i ardaloedd gwledig. Felly, a yw'r ddau osodiad yna yn gywir? Os ydy'r cynllun gwledig yn weithredol ar hyd a lled Cymru, ac mewn ardaloedd trefol hefyd, sut mae'r buddiant anghymesur—. Rhaid i mi ddweud fy mod i'n ffeindio'r term yn un anffodus iawn—'*disproportionate benefits*'—achos ydy cynllun sy'n gweithredu mewn ardal drefol, felly, yn *disproportionate benefit* i siaradwyr Saesneg? Jest gofyn y cwestiwn ydw i.

**Alun Ffred Jones:** The reason I'm asking this is because, in the letter or the notes that have been submitted by the department, it says that the rural development plan has disproportionate benefits for Welsh speakers, because it is more beneficial to rural areas. Therefore, are those two statements correct? If the RDP is operational across Wales, and in urban areas as well, how are these disproportionate benefits—. I must say that I find this term quite unfortunate—'*disproportionate benefits*'—because is a plan that is operational in an urban area therefore a disproportionate benefit to English speakers? I just want to ask that question.



[262] **Rebecca Evans:** The disproportionate benefit to Welsh speakers isn't an aim of the RDP, and, actually, it couldn't be an aim of the RDP because under the rural development programme, we're not able to use the funding to support native languages. However, it is an outcome of the RDP, because more than 70 per cent of the rural development programme is available only to farmers, foresters and landowners. We know that 38 per cent of Welsh-born people involved in the farming industry at a skilled level are Welsh speakers. So, inevitably, the funding does disproportionately, as an outcome, support or benefit people who are Welsh speaking. It's an outcome; it's not an aim of the programme.

[263] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Thirty eight per cent of what?

[264] **Rebecca Evans:** Thirty eight per cent of Welsh-born farmers at a skilled level in Wales are Welsh speaking. That was from the census in 2011.

[265] **Alun Ffred Jones:** What does Welsh born have to do with anything?

[266] **Rebecca Evans:** Because lots of people who work in the Welsh agriculture industry are perhaps European, and so on. So, I think that was—

[267] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Are they not counted?

[268] **Rebecca Evans:** It was a question asked in the census. I wanted to give you the exact wording of it.

[269] **Alun Ffred Jones:** I still find the term 'disproportionately' very unfortunate. But, there we go.

[270] Reit, symud ymlaen—Janet Right, moving on—Janet Haworth.  
Haworth.

[271] **Janet Haworth:** Before we leave this topic, I was interested in these examples of where urban areas have been able to access these funding opportunities. I wonder if a note from yourself would be helpful—just some quick summaries of what these projects are, because that could be very helpful to future bidders, to have a look at that list and think, 'I could fit in with that', and they could perhaps apply for something.

[272] **Rebecca Evans:** I'd be more than happy to provide that, because the

RDP does provide opportunities for things like sustainable community transport, for example, broadband initiatives, things like that. Actually, these initiatives are quite important because they might allow us to access funding from elsewhere within the Welsh Government to draw down that European money as well. So, there are opportunities for things that perhaps you wouldn't first imagine might be available under the rural development plan.

[273] **Janet Haworth:** Are there some guidance notes that can be given to people who would like—

[274] **Mr Slade:** Lots.

[275] **Rebecca Evans:** The Welsh Government website has all of the guidance for the schemes—the schemes which are open at the moment. When I make my further announcement in February, there'll be details of the next windows which will be open for schemes as well.

[276] **Janet Haworth:** Yes, right. Thank you very much.

[277] **Carl Sargeant:** Can I just add, Chair—? I think it's a really important point that the Deputy Minister makes in terms of the RDP and the profile of spend across all of Wales. I think what has been traditionally seen is that the RDP means only rural—it was alluded to by one of the Members earlier in their contribution. What we're trying to develop—around the wellbeing of future generations Act—are opportunities beyond what would be considered just a rural payment. So, we see opportunities around access to better healthcare for rural communities, and rural-urban communities, and tackling climate change all as aspects of what the new RDP looks like. So, the Deputy Minister has been working particularly hard on that process to communicate new opportunities when we're opening the windows as we move forward.

[278] **Alun Ffred Jones:** We'll move on to TB. William Powell.

[279] **William Powell:** Diolch, Gadeirydd. Before Christmas, you made your statement regarding the suspension of the vaccination programme due to the supply problems with the BCG vaccine. What are the budgetary implications of that decision and has the funding—that now can't be committed to the product that we can't currently obtain—been reprioritised within the wider TB eradication programme?

[280] **Rebecca Evans:** Thank you. This is the first opportunity, really, that I've

had to update Members since my statement. So, I'll just let you know that we have commissioned that report which I talked about during my statement. It was the Animal and Plant Health Agency who were commissioned to undertake that. We wanted to know, in the modelling, whether we've realised a benefit from the work already undertaken and what the impact would be if we missed out next year and returned, for example, and went back and vaccinated in 2017.

[281] The modelling that was undertaken applied some very specific intensive action area parameters. So, it replicated the geography of the area and the history of vaccination which had already taken place over the last four years, including farm locations, information that we have about the size and location of the badger sets and social groups, and herd size, as well, of the farms in the area. That was run 100 times to give us the most statistically likely outcome from all of the questions that we asked the model.

11:00

[282] I'm meeting with the author of that report on 1 February, and I'm really keen that opposition spokespeople have the opportunity to meet with the author as well to ask questions. Inevitably, this is going to be a very complicated and detailed piece of work. I'm happy to open that invitation up to members of the committee as well because I know there's a huge amount of interest in this. It is my intention, then, to publish the report. So, returning to the question you asked about funding being reprioritised, there is, as you say, £1.2 million of funding in the budget line for this. I believe that there will still be some cost attached to not vaccinating this year: for example, storage of equipment and vehicles and so on, and staffing issues that will have arisen from this, as well as the biosecurity visits. We were going to undertake them anyway, so we would still want to undertake those visits. So, once I have a better understanding of all of those costs, I will be able to know what we can pay from this year's budget, and then, what will have to come from next year's budget. Then, there will be a better understanding of what would be left from that £1.2 million. Then, the Minister and I would have to have a discussion as to what the next steps would be for what was left of that £1.2 million.

[283] **William Powell:** Thank you, Minister, for that clarification. One inevitable consequence of this latest turn of events is that there are going to be some farmers out there—particularly in the intensive action zones—who are going to be very close to despair, having been taken up the hill of

vaccination and having been given some faith in the future of that. Would you look with some favour on the possibility of supporting, in such cases, the rural stress network or other support organisations, if there is evidence that we've got acute difficulty and stress caused by this latest policy situation? I know that was something your ministerial colleague did in the 2013 extreme weather events. This is a completely different scenario. But, within the upcoming budget, I would make an appeal for you to give some consideration to that in this particular situation.

[284] **Rebecca Evans:** Thank you. I know that we have funded organisations such as the Farm Crisis Network, as was, in the past, and so on, in situations that have been difficult. I would encourage farmers, obviously, to speak to our farm liaison service in the first instance to talk about what support might be available for them. Christianne, did you want to—?

[285] **Dr Glossop:** I would just like to add, Deputy Minister, that we have been having discussions with FCN over the last year or so to look at how we might work with them, not just in the IAA, but how we can equip some of their staff—you know, train them in some aspects of TB. I addressed a meeting of FCN a few months ago, and so those discussions are ongoing.

[286] **William Powell:** That's helpful. There has been some particularly useful work done by your opposite number in Northern Ireland, I think, in terms of rural health issues and the impacts of policy decisions. So, I would urge you to look at that in a little more detail. Thank you.

[287] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Do you monitor the numbers of badgers before and after these trials, and so on?

[288] **Dr Glossop:** Before we started the intensive action area, we did a badger sett survey. We estimated the number of badger setts, or counted them, and then made a calculation of the population of badgers. This last year—the fourth year of vaccination—we have also been carrying out a hair-trapping exercise, which is an exercise that involves getting a more accurate estimate of the number of badgers. You know how many setts you've got, but we don't know how many badgers live in each sett. By taking hair samples from badgers that we've vaccinated, and also collecting hair samples from the area—we have put out traps to collect hair—we can do DNA testing to match up the badgers that we've caught with the samples that we've collected. In that way, we can make an estimate of what proportion of badgers we've actually vaccinated and the overall population size. So, we will

have that information, and I would think that that will be available to put into the year 4 report on the intensive action area, which will be published in the summer, as is normal practice.

[289] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Okay. I'm not quite sure I understood that, but—

[290] **Dr Glossop:** Sorry. [*Laughter.*]

[291] **Alun Ffred Jones:** —I got the last bit. Joyce Watson.

[292] **Joyce Watson:** Thank you for your answers so far, but we know that vaccination was one part of the total programme. We are here looking at budgets, and you have, like everyone, had to take a reduction in your budget. So, are you confident, Minister, that all the other things—because I'm not going to ask the same question, as there's no point—that you currently do to have the reduction in TB cases that you have achieved, which has been fantastic—? Are you confident that all the other things are able to be managed within your proposed budget?

[293] **Rebecca Evans:** Yes, I am confident that we will be able to continue the wide suite of measures that we have, for example, Cymorth TB, the work that we're doing on annual testing, the six-monthly testing in the intensive action area, and all of the good work that we're doing on bio-security, for example. I'm confident that that is safe in the budget. The TB budget is interesting because I see it as an invest-to-save budget essentially, because the sooner we can continue to make inroads into the level of TB in Wales, the more we will save because we are paying out a large amount of money in compensation to farmers and we have European funding to help us do that. Much of that budget is demand-led, so there is obviously some risk for Welsh Government and we manage that by working very closely with the Animal and Plant Health Agency to look at trends in-year as to what's happening in TB, but also to be notified very early—for example, one large herd breakdown could have a really significant impact on our budget. So, those kinds of discussions are ongoing and the programme, again, because it attracts European funding, does have a robust monitoring and evaluation programme attached to it as well. So, we work with partners such as the APHA to make sure that that's undertaken robustly. Christianne, do you want to add anything?

[294] **Dr Glossop:** No, that's exactly right.

[295] **Alun Ffred Jones:** William Powell, the advisory panel.

[296] **William Powell:** Thank you very much, Chair. I wonder if the Minister could update us on the progress in developing the panel that arises out of the Agricultural Sector (Wales) Act 2014 in terms of staffing and budgetary implications.

[297] **Rebecca Evans:** Yes, the work towards the panel is ongoing. I had hoped for it to be established or to bring it to the Assembly in the first week of February. Unfortunately, I was unable to do that through no fault of Welsh Government, I have to say. It's just that one of the partners who we hoped was going to take a seat on that panel decided that they didn't wish to do so. So, as a result we did have to have some further discussions. But, it will come to the Assembly in the first week of March and, hopefully, then come into effect on 3 March.

[298] **William Powell:** Are you confident that £183,000 will be sufficient to actually fund that initial year's work of the board, given that there is no longer any equivalent body in England to be sharing resources, particularly in terms of research? Because that seems on the face of it to be a relatively modest budget for taking forward an important piece of work.

[299] **Rebecca Evans:** The annual budget of £183,000 was based on the budget that was previously held by the Agricultural Wages Board across the border. So, we worked out that that would be a reasonable amount of money to apportion to this, and based on the experience of similar boards in other devolved nations as well. We expect the actual cost of the running of the panel to be no more than about £76,000 and that was what we put in our regulatory impact assessment. The remainder of the funding then will be to deliver the rest of the Act, so, for example, if people wish to bring a case forward under the Act. The work on skills is met elsewhere in Welsh Government funding because the panel takes a strategic role in advising on skills and development rather than a delivery role as such. So, that's an advisory strategic role.

[300] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Okay. Mick Antoniw.

[301] **William Powell:** Thank you for that.

[302] **Mick Antoniw:** Minister, we do, of course, very much welcome the interim 6 per cent increase that you've awarded all the agricultural workers

as a result of this legislation. I was just wondering though, within the budget, what element of the £183,000 is there for, I suppose, communication, monitoring and enforcement, because it's all very well making the increase, but we've got to make sure that people know it's there and it's implemented and takes effect.

[303] **Rebecca Evans:** I'll ask Andrew to address that, but before he does I just wanted to let you know that before the panel comes into place, the pay rise will take effect. So, the Order should be laid for the pay rise to take effect before the panel comes into place, so that should be next month because I know that you've been keen to have an update on that.

[304] **Mr Slade:** Just to add that, again, as the Deputy Minister was saying, in light of the experience elsewhere in terms of how the former wages board worked, we think we've got the money available in that budget to do the enforcement work, but it is an important part of the package—and communication with that.

[305] **Mick Antoniw:** Okay.

[306] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Julie Morgan on animal health and welfare.

[307] **Julie Morgan:** Yes, thank you very much. I'm going to ask questions about funding for animal welfare. We're awaiting the report of the RSPCA group that's been meeting on responsible dog ownership. I wondered if you could update us on when that's actually going to report and, if there are any recommendations there that will require finance, how those will be met.

[308] **Rebecca Evans:** I'm expecting the report in March now. There has, unfortunately, been a delay in producing the report, and that was for technical reasons around the transcription equipment that was used when the evidence was being gathered. But I am promised that it will be with us in very early March. So, I very much look forward to seeing that. I know officials have been presented with a draft copy of the report. However, that doesn't include any recommendations because we didn't want to see anything to do with what they might be asking of Government until the final report came, because that's a fairer and more transparent way for that to happen.

[309] **Julie Morgan:** So, we don't know at the moment whether any of the recommendations will have any financial implications.

[310] **Rebecca Evans:** No, we don't, but some of the other work that we've undertaken has been at minimal cost to Welsh Government in terms of improving the welfare of dogs and dog ownership in Wales, such as the Animal Welfare (Breeding of Dogs) (Wales) Regulations 2014 and the Microchipping of Dogs (Wales) Regulations 2015 as well. All of these things have been at minimal cost to Welsh Government. I understand there's an enforcement cost to local authorities, but with dog breeding, for example, we tried to give the opportunity for that to be cost-neutral by allowing local authorities to introduce the licensing, which would recover costs for that. With dog microchipping, we hope that that will actually allow cost saving to local authorities because the expense of keeping a dog just for one night is in the order of £25, for example, and some dogs are kept for a long time before they're reunited with their owners. So, hopefully, microchipping will be happily reuniting owners and dogs much sooner, but also allowing a cost saving to local authorities there.

[311] On the dog breeding regulations, I promised to review that after a year, and we'll be looking at all of these issues—both the ratio, which I know is of interest to the committee, but also implementation and the effect it had on local authorities and so on.

[312] **Julie Morgan:** On the anti-social behaviour legislation, have you got any information about how that is actually working and what costs have been incurred? As you know, the Government here did have a plan to have dog control orders, which I regret that we didn't go forward with. But I wondered how the legislation that was seen as a substitute for that has worked and what the cost has been.

[313] **Rebecca Evans:** There wouldn't be costs to Government as a result of that, so I wouldn't be able to say what the costs were. I would assume that those would lie with either the local authorities or the police, but I expect that the report that comes from the RSPCA will consider this, because we have asked it to consider this within the context of the previous legislation that was proposed. So, I'm sure there might be recommendations with regard to that when it comes forward.

[314] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Llyr—. Sorry.

[315] **Dr Glossop:** I was just going to say that it is within the terms of reference of the group that was set up to provide evidence on the existing legislation and how it's being delivered and what impact it's having. So, yes, I



would expect that within the report that we hopefully will get in March.

[316] **Julie Morgan:** Thanks very much. I wanted to ask some other questions, but is Llyr's on this?

[317] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Llyr, is it on this?

[318] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Well, I wanted to ask about animal health and I was going to move to the six-day standstill stuff, but if you—

[319] **Julie Morgan:** Shall I just ask mine quickly, then?

[320] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Yes.

[321] **Julie Morgan:** The issue of snares has caused quite a lot of concern and whether the Welsh Government has the power to take any action in relation to snares, and obviously any possible financial implications of that. Would you be able to update us on the legislative capacity for doing something about snares?

[322] **Rebecca Evans:** Yes. We have had the Law Commission's report now. I think there are in the order of 278 recommendations within it, many of which are complex and technical in nature. Officials have met with their counterparts in the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to discuss this because there is a certain amount of crossover, inevitably, on this. Some things fall within my portfolio, such as snares, raptor poisoning and so on. Other things are in the Minister's portfolio, such as taking, illegally, eggs and so on.

11:15

[323] So, there's so much within the Law Commission's report that we will have to consider. The UK Government is duty-bound to provide an interim response to the report by May of this year, and then a final formal response to it by November. The Welsh Government isn't under any similar obligation to respond to it; however, we are taking it very much on board to see what this might mean for us.

[324] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Thank you very much for the information; not quite on the budget, but—. Llyr.

[325] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Well, I wanted to—[*Inaudible.*—in budgetary terms what provision there might be for the proposal to lose quarantine units and, you know, what the cost implications of that might be and how that’s covered within your proposed budget.

[326] **Rebecca Evans:** Yes, we have a proposed budget of the order of £300 and—somebody will have to remind me of the exact amount.

[327] **Dr Glossop:** £366.

[328] **Mr Clark:** £366.

[329] **Rebecca Evans:** £366 million in terms of the—

[330] **Dr Glossop:** Thousand.

[331] **Mr Clark:** Thousand.

[332] **Rebecca Evans:** Not £366 million. Gosh; that comes as news for everyone. [*Laughter.*] It’s £366,000 in order to implement that, with a margin of error, if you like, of 50 per cent either way. The reason for that is because we don’t actually know what the take-up might be. We’re basing that on take-up of around 6,000 quarantine units. The funding then will go towards getting the inspection regime in place and transferring funds to Rural Payments Wales in order to do the work that’s required there, in the background. So, I do believe that that, given the margin of error, is going to be adequate for that.

[333] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Okay. That’s very useful. Thank you for that. More generally, in terms of—. We’ve already touched on cuts to the DEFRA budget, would you be concerned that, given that it’s a dozen or more organisations that are funded or partly funded by DEFRA that are operational in Wales, clearly that would have an impact? Is there a risk that Wales becomes a bit more susceptible to animal health risks? I know that the British Veterinary Association, for example, have expressed concerns about the APHA surveillance network, and I know that there are certain initiatives here in Wales that we can point to and promote further, but I’d just be interested in your take as to what the impact of those cuts will be in terms of animal health here in Wales.

[334] **Rebecca Evans:** I meet regularly with APHA, as does Christianne. We

have had some concerns, actually pre-dating the budget. My concern was, really, that the governance arrangements weren't really working in the best interests of Wales. I felt that Wales needs to be consulted by APHA earlier and in greater depth before they take decisions. So, I asked Christianne and her team to do a bit of work to see how we could improve those governance arrangements. Hopefully, if we get that right, we'll be in a strengthened position with the organisation to ensure that we don't—you know, that we aren't susceptible under the cuts. Obviously, animal health and welfare is critical, particularly when we're trying to keep out disease, which can have a devastating impact on not only farmers, but rural communities as a whole. So, this is something that you can't cut corners on. Would you like to add anything?

[335] **Dr Glossop:** Yes, I'd like to, thank you. You're right; we must be concerned about potential impacts on animal health and welfare here in Wales. I've been assured by DEFRA that the significant cuts to their budget are impacting more on the centre of DEFRA than on their agencies. So, although there is a projected reduction in funding from DEFRA for the Animal and Plant Health Agency going forward, the cuts are smaller than anticipated, which is good news. Having said that, it's caused APHA—the abbreviation of Animal and Plant Health Agency—to sort of revisit its efficiencies. There's a restructuring process going on there, which we're involved with. We've fed in, and they've been listening very carefully to our requirements. So, I think there will be some efficiency savings, which is always a good thing, because I prefer to see that money reinvested in the front line.

[336] With regard to surveillance, we are closely involved with APHA and DEFRA on the surveillance network and making sure that the recommendations of the surveillance 2014 report are being delivered here in Wales, and importantly in England as well. It's important to us to know that if there's a disease outbreak happening in East Anglia, there's a good robust mechanism to identify it before it even gets to Wales. So, we are part of the surveillance kind of governance group, and we have seats on all the relevant groups. So, I'm really pleased to see that the benefits to Wales of the surveillance 2014 report are being delivered. If you look at the postmortem examination contract for carcasses from Wales that are now going into the Aberystwyth lab, which is being run by our veterinary partnership Iechyd Da, joined with the university of Aberystwyth, that's an example of where, working with APHA, we've made sure that services to Wales and the surveillance network are alive and well. Investing money in the Carmarthen lab to make sure that we could do our own gamma interferon blood testing

for TB is another example of where we're working with APHA to make sure that services, not just in Wales but for Wales are being preserved, maintained—

[337] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Okay. I'll have had to stop you there—

[338] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Thank you.

[339] **Alun Ffred Jones:** —to try and get some questions in before we close. Russell.

[340] **Russell George:** Thank you, Chair. Deputy Minister, the agriculture and food budget has received a greater reduction in funding than any other Government department, so what I wanted to understand is: you've supplied us the information that shows us that you've distributed that reduction across different budget lines, but how does that process work? What processes do you have in place to decide where that reduction will come from?

[341] **Rebecca Evans:** The Minister and I meet with our senior management team regularly, and a regular item on the agenda is a discussion of the budget, and then we take a decision together as to what we do within the budget that we have available to us.

[342] **Russell George:** There is a significant reduction in your budget, so what has to give in your budget this year or in the 2016–17 budget? What has to give? What projects do you believe you aren't able to carry out as a result of the reductions you had to make this year?

[343] **Rebecca Evans:** I'll give you an example as to how we've tried to deal with the cut that we've had passed down from the Conservative Government to the Welsh Government. There's been a £3.4 million cut to the RDP, for example, and you'll see that transparently in the papers we've provided you with. But then we have to remember that there are three different sources of funding for the RDP, so we've got the European element, domestic co-financing and the 15 per cent transfer from pillar 1 to pillar 2. Now, the European element and the domestic co-financing match, euro for euro, broadly speaking, but within different elements of the RDP, there are different co-financing rates. The European element is fixed and the 15 per cent is fixed. What isn't fixed is the domestic co-funding. We found that the exchange rate actually favours us at the moment, so we were able to take

this money out of the RDP to meet other pressures across Government, but this is just one year in a multi-year programme, so we have that flexibility I was talking about earlier on. So, we're still able to draw down the full amount of European funding within co-financing, thanks to the exchange rate at the moment.

[344] **Russell George:** You've mentioned your unhappiness over a reduction from the Westminster Government, but your colleagues here in the Welsh Government have provided your portfolio with a greater cut than any other Government department, so how do you have an input into that and how was that decision made in conjunction with the finance Minister?

[345] **Carl Sargeant:** Can I respond to part of the question, if I may, Chair? I'm responsible for the finance of this division, and the Deputy Minister and I and our senior management team have long conversations about our priorities within the division. The Minister's right when she says we are affected by a UK decision to reduce national budgets and, of course, our priorities are health and education, as alluded to by the First Minister. We fully support that process.

[346] Let us not forget—the first question, I think, given to the Deputy Minister was about our investment in RDP, so, despite the reductions in budgets, actually, we've got a very exciting programme for rural development communities where we are investing in all of the proposals that the Deputy Minister raised with you earlier. So, despite the reductions, we are profiling this effectively over the seven- or ten-year programme, and we do believe we can still deliver for communities across Wales, despite the circumstances we are faced with due to the UK Government.

[347] **Russell George:** And can I finally ask the Deputy Minister—? You know, you've pointed out your unhappiness that there is a reduction from the UK Government in funding, but if you had the level of funding that you would like, what would you do with that extra funding?

[348] **Rebecca Evans:** Oh, if I had the level of funding I would like—  
[*Laughter.*] There's always more that we can do—

[349] **Russell George:** What can't you do as a result of the reduction that you've received?

[350] **Rebecca Evans:** Well, for example, because you mentioned the food

budget, we might have to think about what programmes we're able to offer within the food division, particularly, because we've had to take £0.5 million out of that. Do you want to say anything?

[351] **Mr Slade:** You look at areas where you could bring in new programmes or add to work that you're already doing. The other thing you do is you phase work where you might previously have thought you do everything in parallel. It may make more sense to phase that activity. Those would be the sorts of choices you'd be looking at.

[352] **Carl Sargeant:** It goes back to what I said earlier on, Chair: it's not about stopping things wholesale. This is about profiling. Of course, in all of the schemes that we've launched, maybe we'd have liked to increase the opportunity for individuals across Wales. It's just prohibitive, and we've got to work within the financial envelope that we have.

[353] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Joyce, did you have a question on the budget?

[354] **Joyce Watson:** One of the most high-profile successful programmes, of course, within the food industry has been what is commonly known as 'the scores on the doors', where people now know whether a kitchen or an establishment has certain hygiene standards and choose to eat or not accordingly. So, my question is: within your budget, are you content, Minister, that that programme is funded to continue in terms of the inspections that are carried out? Now, I know we don't carry out the inspections—

[355] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Is this relevant to this budget?

[356] **Joyce Watson:** Well, I would think it should be, but I'm about to find out if I'm wrong.

[357] **Carl Sargeant:** If I may answer, that lies with—. I think that food safety lies with Vaughan Gething, but I can say that it is a very successful scheme and it is one that we were pleased to develop here in Wales and has been very popular.

[358] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Thank you. William.

[359] **William Powell:** Deputy Minister, you've had a long-standing commitment to welfare at the time of slaughter. What are the budgetary

implications of implementing the milestones in terms of the closed-circuit television in slaughterhouses and other initiatives that you've been promoting?

[360] **Rebecca Evans:** Thank you for giving me the opportunity to talk about this. We did have an excellent meeting. I made a statement on CCTV in slaughterhouses in which I said that I'd be bringing together the food business operators from across Wales. We had a meeting at the winter fair, which was excellent. We had representations from all of the major bodies that represent food business operators. So, you know, from the smallest abattoirs to the largest in Wales, it's important that we do take that approach. I was pleased, actually, that the industry has agreed to come on board and take some leadership for itself on this issue.

[361] That meeting looked specifically at CCTV, and I hope that perhaps we can look at welfare at slaughter more generally through that group in future. The group has agreed to continue and form a task and finish group, which will have representation from small, medium and large abattoirs. It will also have officials from the Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer and the Food Standards Agency on it, looking at CCTV in the first instance, and I hope that they would come forward with some recommendations. The budgetary implications for the Welsh Government at the moment on this are minimal because it's just about supporting and facilitating the work of the group.

[362] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Okay. Budgetary minimal, so—

[363] **William Powell:** Chair, it was remiss of me not to mention that the business of which I'm a partner has a commercial relationship with a micro-abattoir in Powys, owned by W.J. George. I think I should put that on the record.

[364] **Alun Ffred Jones:** It's on the record now.

[365] **William Powell:** Chair, might I pursue one other line of questioning very briefly—

[366] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Very briefly, because—

[367] **William Powell:** —and in the context of budget? It relates to an answer that the chief vet gave earlier in relation to animal health. Is there an opportunity to actually make some savings in this field by working more

intensively with the fallen stock scheme in Wales in terms of gaining intelligence from patterns of animal mortality, and actually potentially saving in situations that could lead to improved animal health? Is that something that we could look at in more detail?

[368] **Dr Glossop:** Certainly, the National Fallen Stock Company are taking quite an active interest in this area because, by definition, they are involved in picking up all those animals that have died on-farm, not fit for human consumption. Michael Seals, the Chair of the NFSCo has called a meeting, actually, next Friday in Derby—I'm attending that meeting—to look at how we can make better use of fallen stock collectors in terms of feeding into the surveillance network. So, again, watch this space.

[369] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Again, I have to say that I don't think this is on the budget.

[370] **William Powell:** It will be very useful to have an update on any budgetary implications of that important meeting.

[371] **Dr Glossop:** Train fare. [*Laughter.*]

[372] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Janet, finally, did you have a question?

11:30

[373] **Janet Haworth:** Yes, I did. Going back to dogs, I welcome the steps that have been put in place to promote more responsible dog ownership. I'm sure I've come across cases, as people around the table probably have, of two instances—

[374] **Alun Ffred Jones:** A very quick question now.

[375] **Janet Haworth:** —which really concern me. I know there is a cost element to dealing with this. One is puppy farming. I went out with the RSPCA and I saw female dogs that are clearly being abused in this way just having batch after batch of puppies. The other issue is around the crossbreeding of prohibited dogs. I hear from vets that, if a certain dog is prohibited, then people are tending to crossbreed it with another, feed it on steroids, bring it up to be very aggressive and I just wonder whether—

[376] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Budget—



[377] **Janet Haworth:** I know it's going to cost money to do this, but I just wondered whether we're going to be moving on those two issues.

[378] **Rebecca Evans:** Well, we've already moved significantly on the issue of dog breeding, because we introduced the dog breeding regulations in Wales, which I really hope will have an impact on raising the welfare of dogs and dog breeding in Wales and give dog breeders much more responsibility and accountability and scrutiny and so on. As I say, I've agreed to review that legislation after a period of just one year to check that it is giving us the outcomes that we hoped it would.

[379] With regard to dangerous dogs, that's a non-devolved matter, and it's a matter that I do have discussions on nonetheless with the police lead who is in north Wales. So, I did have a recent discussion with Gareth Pritchard and we talked about dangerous dogs and actually very much about, as you're talking about, how people are trying to skirt around the law and how there are still difficulties in terms of identifying dangerous dogs once they are in the custody of police or local authorities, because it's often difficult to tell which breed a dog is, precisely for that reason.

[380] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Okay. That's interesting—

[381] **Janet Haworth:** Because, Chairman, there is a cost to dealing with this irresponsibility, so if we can remove—

[382] **Rebecca Evans:** But it's not met by Welsh Government—

[383] **Alun Ffred Jones:** It's not met by Welsh Government, so that's irrelevant. Okay.

[384] Diolch yn fawr iawn i'r [385] Thank you very much to the Gweinidog a'r Dirprwy Weinidog a'r Minister and Deputy Minister and the swyddogion am ddod gerbron. officials for attending.

[386] Thank you very much for helping us with our scrutiny of the budget.

11:32

**Cynnig o dan Reol Sefydlog 17.42 i Benderfynu Gwahardd y Cyhoedd o  
Weddill y Cyfarfod ac o'r Cyfarfodydd ar 27 Ionawr a 10 Chwefror  
Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to Resolve to Exclude the Public  
from the Remainder of the Meeting and the Meetings on 27 January  
and 10 February**

*Cynnig:*

*Motion:*

*bod y pwyllgor yn penderfynu that the committee resolves to  
gwahardd y cyhoedd o weddill y exclude the public from the  
cyfarfod ac o'r cyfarfodydd ar 27 remainder of the meeting and the  
Ionawr a 10 Chwefror yn unol â Rheol meetings on 27 January and 10  
Sefydlog 17.42(vi).*

*February in accordance with Standing  
Order 17.42(vi).*

*Cynigiwyd y cynnig.*

*Motion moved.*

[387] **Alun Ffred Jones:** We move on to item 3. Can I have a motion to go to private session? All agreed? That should be extended as well to the meeting on 27 January and 10 February, which will also be partly in private.

*Derbyniwyd y cynnig.*

*Motion agreed.*

*Daeth rhan gyhoeddus y cyfarfod i ben am 11:33.*

*The public part of the meeting ended at 11:33.*