

Gwybodaeth Ychwanegol at y Cyfarfod Llawn Information Further to Plenary

Cyhoeddir ymatebion yn yr iaith y'u darparwyd, gyda chyfieithiad Saesneg o ymatebion yn y Gymraeg.

Responses are published in the language in which they are provided, with a translation into English of responses provided in Welsh.

Gwybodaeth ychwanegol at OAQ(4)0140(BET) a gyhoeddwyd gan Edwina Hart, y Gweinidog Busnes, Menter, Technoleg a Gwyddoniaeth, ar 22 Mehefin 2012 Information further to OAQ(4)0140(BET) issued by Edwina Hart, the Minister for Business, Enterprise, Technology and Science, on 22 June 2012

At/To Aled Roberts:

Following your question in the chamber on 13 June I am responding to you regarding State Aid and the review of the Regional Aid Guidelines for post-2013.

The Welsh Government has been working very closely with the UK Department for Business, Innovation and Skills on the Commission's review of the Regional Aid Guidelines for post-2013. We have made a number of representations to the UK Government with regards to the proposed changes. The Welsh Government was represented in the UK delegation to a Commission workshop in Brussels on the review in February. The First Minister wrote to the Secretary of State on the matter in April. Three letters in total have been sent regarding the review.

Gwybodaeth ychwanegol at OAQ(4)0141(BET) a gyhoeddwyd gan John Griffiths, Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd a Datblygu Cynaliadwy, ar 28 Mehefin 2012 Information further to OAQ(4)0141(BET) issued by John Griffiths, the Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development, on 28 June 2012

At/To Russell George:

You recently raised the matter of Clywedog reservoir in a question to the Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Food, Fisheries and European Programmes in Plenary on 13 June 2012, and separately in a letter to me on the same date.

The Clywedog reservoir was constructed to provide additional water for public supply whilst maintaining an adequate river flow to support the abstraction of water from the River Severn made downstream by the Severn Trent Water company. As you have noted, the reservoir also provides some protection against flooding.

The Environment Agency has advised that operational rules are in place for the Clywedog reservoir and that these rules form part of a statutory agreement between the Environment Agency and Severn Trent Water. These rules are in place to ensure operation of the reservoir maximises the water available for public supply during the summer when demand is greatest. However, there are also provisions to make releases from the reservoir to reduce uncontrolled spill which would result from the reservoir being full during wet weather.

Whilst all reservoirs are designed to spill and have spillways specifically for this purpose, the Environment Agency are able to instruct Severn Trent Water to release water at a controlled rate to lower water levels in the reservoir and reduce the volume of water spilled during wet weather. This process is referred to as a 'flood drawdown' and will only take place when

downstream river levels are low enough thus not to increase the flood risk to landowners downstream.

Flood drawdown releases are only permitted from 1st September to 1st May each year. This is a legal requirement and outside of these dates the priority is to keep the reservoir as full as possible to support the public water supply.

There are, however, few occasions during other times of the year where the legal obligations to make flood drawdown releases can be used at the discretion of the Environment Agency. For example, if the reservoir is at or close to full and high rainfall has been forecast which could potentially result in reservoir spillage when river levels are high, a drawdown maybe carried out at the Environment Agency's discretion.

This discretionary action was carried out on Thursday 7 June to prevent adverse impacts on landowners or river users downstream. The release lowered the reservoir sufficiently to provide the capacity to absorb some of the rainfall experienced during the weekend 8-10 June and reduced the spill from the reservoir. I can appreciate that this action must have raised concerns amongst your constituents, but it was considered necessary to prevent greater consequences from occurring.

I understand that the Environment Agency has contacted you directly regarding Clywedog reservoir and that a meeting is to be arranged between the Environment Agency and the NFU Cymru to discuss the flood event. I hope that this meeting will provide the opportunity for any concerns to be discussed.

**Gwybodaeth ychwanegol at OAQ(4)0130(FIN) a gyhoeddwyd gan Jane Hutt, Y
Gweinidog Cyllid ac Arweinydd y Tŷ, ar 28 Mehefin 2012
Information further to OAQ(4)0130(FIN) issued by Jane Hutt, the Minister for Finance
and Leader of the House, on 28 June 2012**

At/To Suzy Davies:

In Oral Assembly Questions on the 13 June 2012, you raised the question of what consideration the Welsh Government gives to providing capital investment locally by offering first refusal on surplus publicly owned buildings and land to community organisations at suitable market-based terms, before offering them on general sale.

At the time I explained that we do facilitate such cross-departmental flexibility and that I would provide you with further details.

We work closely with stakeholders to ensure the best use is made of available public land, including for local communities' benefit, for example:

In Aberbaiden, Abergavenny, the Welsh Government owns approximately 10 acres of land, acquired in connection with the Heads of the Valleys dualling scheme, and subsequently declared surplus. The local Community Council expressed an interest in acquiring the site for potential community uses including allotments and environmental projects. We recognised the potential benefits of this proposal and consequently, the Valuation Office Agency has been instructed to provide a joint valuation, under the terms of the Transfer of Interests between Public Bodies Protocol.

The Third Sector Network Meetings regularly discuss under-utilised assets with the Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage. Officials from Regeneration and Cadw departments

are working together to assess how best to bring such assets back into use and identify gaps in provision.

The National Assets Working Group has established an All Wales Public Sector Land & Property Database to map the entire public sector estate within Wales. At present the database holds the details of around 14,000 properties. This work helps to identify opportunities for co-development, co-location, asset sharing and strategic rationalisation. Protocols ensure a 40 day notification of property due for disposal, prior to going to the open market. The project is now in the initial stages of capturing similar data for the Third Sector and encouraging a similar approach to asset management to be adopted.

I trust this provides you with an overview of the approach the Welsh Government is taking to ensure the best use is made of public assets.