

Y Pwyllgor Menter, Arloesi a Rhwydweithiau

EIN(2) 04-07(p7)

Dyddiad: Dydd Mercher 21 Mawrth 2007

Lleoliad: Ystafell Bwyllgora 2, y Senedd, Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru

Teitl: Adroddiad y Pwyllgor o dan Reol Sefydlog 9.9

Diben

1. Gwahoddir y Pwyllgor i gytuno ar yr adroddiad yn Atodiad 1.

Cefndir

2. Mae Rheol Sefydlog 9.9 yn ei gwneud yn ofynnol i bwyllgorau pwnc adrodd i'r Cynulliad "o bryd i'w gilydd" ar eu cynnydd o ran cyflawni eu rhaglenni gwaith. Bob blwyddyn mae'r pwyllgorau wedi gosod eu hadroddiadau gerbron y Cynulliad. Mae'r adroddiad yn Atodiad 1 yn cynnwys y cyfnod o 1 Mai 2006 hyd at 31 Mawrth 2007.

Cam i'w gymryd

3. Bydd yr adroddiad, fel y cytunwyd arno gan y Pwyllgor, yn cael ei osod gerbron y Cynulliad.

**Gwasanaeth y Pwyllgorau
Mawrth 2007**

Atodiad 1

Enterprise, Innovation and Networks Committee

Report under Standing Order 9.9: April 2006 to March 2007

Introduction

1. The Enterprise Innovation and Networks Committee is one of the Assembly's seven subject committees. This report is made under Standing Order 9.9 which requires subject committees to report to the Assembly from time to time on their progress in fulfilling their forward work programme. This report covers the activities of the Committee from April 2006 to the end of the spring term 2007.

Membership of the Committee

2. The current members of the Committee are: Chris Gwyther (Chair), Leighton Andrews, Alun Cairns, Andrew Davies (Enterprise Innovation and Networks Minister), Janet Davies, Alun Ffred Jones, Carl Sargeant and Kirsty Williams.

The Committee's Remit

3. The Committee's remit is based on the portfolio of the Minister Enterprise Innovation and Networks which currently embraces:

- Innovation and enterprise;
- Industrial policy and business support;
- Inward investment, promotion of indigenous companies and regional development;
- Transport;
- Energy;
- Tourism;
- Strategic co-ordinating responsibility for ICT;
- Structural Funds.

The Committee's priorities

4. The Committee's priorities were set out in its Forward Work Programme which was agreed at its meeting on 3 May 2006.

Meetings held

5. EIN held 15 formal meetings in 2006-7. All meetings except one was held in public. The Committee considered the recommendations for the Science Policy review in private.

6. In June 2006 the Committee met in North Wales to discuss issues relating to business support and tourism following the merger of the Welsh Development Agency (WDA) and Wales Tourist Board (WTB) with the Welsh Assembly Government, Department of Economic Development and Transport (EDT) to create the new Department for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks (DEIN) The Committee heard the views of the North Wales Economic Forum, the Federation of Small Businesses, the Confederation of British Industry, Flintshire County Council and North Wales Tourism.

Work and Achievements

SO 9.7(i) - contributions to the development of the Assembly's policies within the fields for which the Assembly Minister is accountable to the Assembly;

7. The Committee published its report on science policy in Wales in September 2006. It began the review in March 2005 and took evidence from higher education bodies, the business sector, local authorities, regional, education and science awareness bodies. The Committee decided to undertake

the review because science expenditure in Wales lagged significantly behind the rest of the UK, and whilst Wales had well-developed policies to promote innovation, these were of limited value if they were not underpinned by a healthy science base. As this was a complex and wide-ranging issue but one of crucial importance for Wales, the Committee appointed Dr Robin Fears as expert adviser to the review, and enlisted the support of a 'Reference Group' of representatives from a small number of key outside organisations to advise on the Terms of Reference and identify organisations to give oral evidence. A written consultation exercise was carried out between August and September 2005. A total of 18 recommendations were put forward, 9 were accepted and 4 partially accepted by the Welsh Assembly Government.

8. Following the completion of the Science policy review, the Committee reviewed developments and progress made in implementing the recommendations from previous policy reviews. They looked at the Welsh Energy policy review which was carried out by the Economic Development Committee in 2003, and received evidence from the Confederation of British Industry Wales, Friends of the Earth and Dulas Ltd. The Committee also looked at the progress made in implementing the recommendations of its report on Economic Inactivity which was published in April 2005 and invited representatives of Job Centre Plus, the British Medical Association, Community Transport Association UK and Chwarae Teg to give evidence.

9. The Committee has also discussed and commented to the Welsh Assembly Government on a number of economic issues which include: the Energy Route Map; WAVE: Wales a Vibrant Economy and in particular the equality aspects of this policy; the Regional Aid Guidelines, the Heads of the Valleys Strategy, Towards e-Wales, the Wales Transport Strategy and proposals for an All Wales Small Business Rate Relief Scheme.

SO 9.7(ii) - keeping under review the expenditure and administration connected with their implementation

Regular scrutiny of Minister

10. The Committee regularly scrutinises the Enterprise Innovation and Networks Minister on the written report he provides to the Committee detailing latest developments within his area of responsibility. Discussions of these reports have formed a major part of most meetings.

11. The Committee also receives regular analytical reports on the economy in the form of the Quarterly Economic Report for Wales and the Quarterly Statistical Bulletin and a six-monthly report on the operation of the Regional Selective Assistance scheme.

12. Discussions on the various policy issues referred to under the section above relating to the development of policy also contain an element of scrutiny and these have not been mentioned separately here.

European Structural Funds

13. The Committee continues to consider it a priority to ensure that maximum benefit is achieved for

Wales from the European Structural Funds programmes. It has regular discussions on these with the Enterprise Innovation and Networks Minister, as well as receiving regular quarterly reports from the Chief Executive of the Wales European Funding Office and from the Chairs of the Programme Monitoring Committees.

14. In May the Committee responded to the DTI's consultation National Strategic Reference Framework which set out the broad strategy for Structural Funds and contained a Wales Chapter. The Committee also responded to the Welsh Assembly Government on the consultation on the Convergence Programmes 2007-2013 and the Draft Operational Programme for the East Wales Regional Competitiveness and Employment Programme 2007-2013.

SO 9.7(iii) - keeping under review the discharge of public functions in those fields by public, voluntary and private bodies:

15. As a result of the merger of the Welsh Development Agency (WDA) and Wales Tourist Board (WTB) into the Welsh Assembly Government, the Committee received its last WDA Annual Report and WTB performance report. The Committee considered the first full Department for Enterprise Innovation and Networks (DEIN) Business Plan, which incorporated the work of the former ASPBs along with that of the Transport Wales, WEFO and the former Economic Policy Division.

16. At its meeting in December the Committee considered the first DEIN half year performance report, which covered the period 1 April 2006 to 30 September 2006. The report summarised the Department's performance against certain key deliverables as set out in its Business Plan for 2006-07.

17. The Department for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks (DEIN) is developing a new operating model, 'DEIN going forward'. The Minister outlined the new model at the Enterprise, Innovation and Networks Committee's meeting on 17 January. The Committee sought the views of various stakeholders and it was discussed at their meeting on 21 March.

18. The Committee continued to monitor the provision of rail services in Wales and met with representatives of First Great Western; Department for Transport and Passenger Focus. They also met with representatives of Network Rail and Arriva Trains Wales and discussed issues relating to performance against the franchise; the draft timetable for December 2006 and the Business Plan.

S.O. 9.8 – other responsibilities

Legislation

19. The Committee regularly receives a schedule of secondary legislation proposed by the Welsh Assembly Government, from which Members identify any items they consider should be scrutinised by the Committee, and has scrutinised a number of items of secondary legislation this year.

20. The Road Transport Bill (draft) was remitted to the Committee following the plenary debate in November on the Queen's speech to Parliament. The Bill has not yet been published.

21. The Committee considered the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Bill on 16 March. Members raised a number of concerns, particularly in relation to the scope of the Bill's powers in conjunction with the Government of Wales Bill, and requested an opportunity for further scrutiny. The Bill was further scrutinised on 3 May and a report sent to Business Committee. This was also circulated to all Welsh Lords, prior to its consideration by the House of Lords in June.

22. The Committee has spent an increasing amount of time considering European legislation affecting Wales within the EIN portfolio. In March the Committee considered the Green Paper on a future EU Maritime Policy. The Environment, Planning and Countryside Committee also identified this as a priority so EPC Members were invited to the meeting. The Committees invited organisations in Wales with an interest in maritime affairs to submit written views on the green paper and at the meeting Mr John B. Richardson, Head of the Maritime Policy Task Force, Directorate-General for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs and the Wales Coastal Partnership gave evidence. Following the meeting the Committee responded to the Commissions consultation.

23. At that meeting, the Committee also considered the Communication on Clean Coal Technologies, which had been identified for further scrutiny from the European Commission's annual work programme.

Enterprise Innovation and Networks Budget

24. EIN has been closely involved with setting the priorities for the Assembly's economic development budget each year and commented on the Minister's budget proposals for 2006-07.

Public Appointments

25. Chris Gwyther and Janet Davies have been the Committee's nominees for public appointments.

26. At its meeting on 16 March, the Committee agreed to establish a sub-committee comprising the two Members who are the Committee's nominees on public appointments, Chris Gwyther and Janet Davies, to undertake the function of the appointment of a National Assembly for Wales Member to the Rail Passengers Council. At its meeting on 18 May the Committee noted the appointment of Stella Mair Thomas to serve as the National Assembly for Wales Member of the Rail Passengers Council.

27. The nominees were also consulted on three other appointments during the reporting period.

Chris Gwyther
Chair