

ENVIRONMENT PLANNING & TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Date: Wednesday 15 November 2000

Time: 2.00 to 5.00 pm

Title: CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT BUDGET FOR 2001/2004

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to give the Committee the opportunity to comment of the draft budget for the 3 years 2001/2004 as tabled by the Minister for Finance and Communities and debated in Plenary on 26th October 2000. I also include, for you to note, a summary of the current position in relation to the Results for 2003 in *Betterwales.com* and the benchmarks for 2010.
2. Standing Order 19 provides that each Assembly Minister who is a member of a subject committee shall seek its views on the draft budget and convey them to the Assembly Minister for Finance and Communities.
3. Attached to this paper are the following documents, relating specifically to this Committee:
 - a. Annex 1 : Draft Budget package
 - b. Annex 2 : Copy of the Committee Chair's letter to the Finance

Secretary setting out the Committee's priorities for the budget
 - c. Annex 3 : A table setting out the Budget proposals in relation to the

Committee's priorities
 - d. Annex 4: A table highlighting the main areas of proposed expenditure
 - e. Annex 5 : Proposed changes to *Better Wales.com* targets

Recommendation

4. That the Committee comments on the Draft budget at Annex 1 and notes the current position in relation to the results sections of *Betterwales.com* at Annex 5.

Background

5. The budget round was launched in May this year with a paper from Edwina Hart 'Building a Better Wales Together'. The Committee set out its priorities for the budget planning round in a letter from the chair to the Finance Secretary dated 12th July 2000 (Annex 2). The table at Annex 3 sets out how the budget addresses each of the Committee's priorities.

6. Edwina Hart then set out the government's draft budget on 26th October and, having taken account of the comments from subject committees, will move the final budget around 7th December 2000.

7. This year, the budget planning round has been characterised by a closer link between spending and outcomes and results. Committees looked at priorities linked to objectives and the *Betterwales.com* vision and this part of the round seeks to preserve that link.

8. To assist this, the Explanatory Notes (Annex 4) provide a commentary on the **main** sections of the draft budget setting out in broad terms what additional activities would result.

9. Although it is not an express requirement under Standing Orders, committees are asked to note the current position in relation to the results sections of *Betterwales.com* (Annex 5). At the beginning of the round, Mrs Hart indicated the intention to revise the Assembly's corporate plan and this remains the government's intention.

10. The table in Annex 5 represent work-in-progress. Having taken the views of committees and looked further at the detailed formulation of the results, a draft revision of *Betterwales.com* will be issued for public consultation immediately after the final budget has been approved. The final version of the revised *Betterwales.com* will be debated in Plenary in March 2001.

Financial implications

11. As set out in the budget papers.

Contact Points - Officials

- **Environment, Planning, and Transport** – Martin Evans, Group Director

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- **Cadw** – Tom Cassidy, Chief Executive

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Sue Essex

Minister for Environment



Pwyllgor yr Amgylchedd, Cynllunio a Thrafnidiaeth

Environment, Planning and Transport Committee

Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay

Caerdydd / Cardiff CF99 1NA

Edwina Hart AM

Finance Secretary

12 July 2000

Dear Edwina,

The Environment, Planning and Transport Committee held an initial discussion of budget priorities on 8 June with a final discussion on 6 July, and were in broad agreement with the vision and priorities set out in your paper and Sue Essex's papers.

Our two main budget priorities are the development of a waste strategy for Wales, and improved integrated transport. We also feel that the Countryside Council for Wales, National Parks and Environment Agency should receive adequate funding to deliver their statutory responsibilities, particularly in relation to implementing the provisions of the Countryside and Right of Way Bill.

Members also strongly feel that the Sustainable Development Scheme should be the overarching strategy of the National Assembly from which all others, including Better Wales, flow. Sustainable Development should underpin all our policies and all bids for resources to deliver Better Wales objectives should be assessed for their long term sustainability.

I am copying this letter to Sue Essex and other members of the Committee.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Edwards AM

Chair of the Environment, Planning and Transport Committee

2000 BUDGET PLANNING ROUND – COMMITTEE PRIORITIES

Committee	Priority	Met	Comment
Environment, Planning and Transport	Development of waste strategy	Y	Waste Strategy for Wales to be prepared. £3/13/24 million provided for waste strategy
	Improved integrated transport	Y	£9/20/30 million extra in Transport Grant. £4/6/8 million extra in New Construction and Improvement on Trunk Roads; £1/6/6 million extra on Renewal of roads and bridges on trunk roads. £3/5/6 million extra for other local authority grants to continue special road safety funding scheme. £1/2/3 million extra for Bus Subsidy Grant. Countryside Council for Wales: Extra £4/8/10 million; National Parks : Extra £0.7/1.5/2.5 million; Environment Agency : Extra £1/2/3 million Extra £0/0.1/0.1 million
	Countryside Council for Wales, National Parks and		

	Environment Agency should receive adequate funding	Y	
	Sustainable Development should underpin all policies	Y	

BUDGET PLANNING ROUND 2000

DRAFT BUDGET ALLOCATIONS

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Environment Planning and Transport

Transport - the main implications of the draft budget are as follows;

New Construction and improvement

: + £4.0/6.0/8.0 million

- Enables the already committed start in 2002 on the first stage of the A465 Heads of the Valleys dualling between Tredegar and Dowlais Top to be taken forward over a shorter 3 year contract period; and allows us to bring forward the start on the A470 Lledr Valley Stage 2 near Dolwyddelan in Conwy to earlier in 2002. It also allows us to continue preparation of medium-term projects such as the A479 Talgarth Relief Road.
- Funds up to £1 million on community enhancement and slower speeds initiatives in villages.

- enables us to continue funding a small and medium scheme programme over the period.

DBFO: Shadow Tolls

: + £ 4.0/4.0/4.0 million

- meets the full contractual commitment of the A55 DBFO scheme on Anglesey. (last years base line of £12M reflected a part year payment)

Renewal of roads and bridges

: + £1.0/6.0/6.0 million

- to fund start of noise reduction programme on trunk roads;

- to renew the failed carriageway pavement on the A40 between Raglan and Monmouth, including a noise reducing surface.

National Cycle Network

: + £500,000 for 2001-02 from carry-forward

- to fund further crossing point schemes on the trunk road network at Trawsfynydd on the A470, Bodelwyddan on the A55 near St Asaph, and Penyclip on the A55 west of Conwy.

Programme Support etc

: + £0.1/0.1/0.1 million

- to fund the Sustrans office in Wales to encourage and promote cycling and walking;

Bus fuel duty rebate

: + £0/4/4 million, plus £2.5 million in 2001-02 out of carry-forward

- to meet the contractual commitment to fund the demand- led Bus Fuel Duty Rebate Scheme, which supports bus services as part of an integrated transport policy.

Community Transport Grant

: + £0.25/0.25/0.25 million

- to complement the ongoing review to improve the effectiveness of funding for community transport, in improving accessibility and encouraging greater integration of community transport within the broader public transport network

- the funding will enable expansion of the scope of support to rural community transport projects into urban as well as rural areas

Transport Grant

: + £8.0/20.0/30.0 million, plus £1.0 million in 2001-02 from carry-forward

- to respond to Local Transport Plans and support funding of integrated transport strategies across Wales. The funding will enable expansion of the scope
- to support rail infrastructure improvements to help deliver better services for Wales
- to fund further expansion of Safe Routes to Schools projects – guaranteed allocation of £0.5m; previously have made awards of £0.8m and £1.3m, subject to quality of bids expect to award some £2m each year

Other Local Authority Grants

: + £3.0/5.0/6.0 million

- to continue and significantly increase in years 2 and

3, the one-off special grant funding for local road safety schemes, to reduce road traffic casualties

- a 40% reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured in road accidents; a 50% reduction in the number of children killed or seriously injured; and a 10% reduction in the slight casualty rate, expressed as the number of people slightly injured per 100 million vehicle kms by 2010.

Bus Partnership Fund

: + £1.0/2.0/3.0 million

- to increase provision of subsidised, socially necessary bus services

- the new funding provides a longer term commitment which takes account of rising tender prices and should enable local authorities to negotiate better value contracts with bus operators

- assist local authorities in developing the statutory bus strategies within local transport plans by 2003

- the Assembly is currently reviewing the operation of the scheme to increase its effectiveness and transparency

In addition to the draft budget figures the Finance Minister has agreed that transport will be considered a priority area for a share of any additional funds received by the Assembly.

Planning

Planning Research

: + £0.3/0.3/0.3 million

- to improve the information base to underpin the Spatial Planning Framework, and finalise Planning Policy Wales, Minerals Planning Policy Wales and related technical advice.

SLA with Ordnance Survey

: + £0.15/0.15/0.15 million

- contractual commitment to meet the cost of services from Ordnance Survey.

Planning Inspectorate

: + £0.15/0.3/0.25 million

- contractual commitment to meet the cost of the

Planning Inspectorate in Wales; tougher performance targets to be set in the light of the Quinquennial Review due for completion at the end of this year.

Design Commission for

Wales

: + £0.1/0.1/0.1/million

- as part of the Assembly's Design Initiative, to establish a Commission for Wales to promote and raise design standards in Wales.

Arterial Drainage and Flood Protection

: Environment Agency + £0.5/0.5/0.5 million

Local Authorities - £0.5/0.5/0.5 million

- the re-allocation reflects the latest estimate of needs based on schemes in the pipeline

Environment

Wildlife and Countryside Groups

: + £0.01/0.01/0.01 million

- strengthen the support for the UK Biodiversity Action Plan in Wales

Environment Wales

: + £0.03/0.03/0.03 million

- immediate 8% uplift in project grant funding
- launch website
- strengthen the partnership arrangements and improve administration by introducing project database

National Parks

: + £0.7/1.5/2.5 million

- CROW bill implementation; providing access to the 6,000 Ha of open countryside within National Park boundaries; wardens and rights of way; establishment of local access fora
- 2 Best Value reviews in each park
- fulfil requirement for Unitary Development Plans
- improve on current performance in planning application turnaround (specific targets to be agreed with each park)

Countryside Council for Wales

: + £4.0/8.0/10.0 million

- to complete the notification of Natura 2000 sites; including in the first year, an additional 15,000 ha Special Areas of

Conservation/SSSI under management

- maintain progress on Biodiversity Action Plans
- mapping and procedures/guidance for access to the countryside underway to implement the CROW bill (subject to enactment)
- introduce management plans for AONBs

Environment Agency

: +£1.0/2.0/3.0

- enables the Agency to meet European Directives in the environment field and linked to Better Wales targets
- assisting the Agency in addressing specific

environment issues in Wales such as poor quality waste licences, maintaining bathing water quality and the enhancement of pollution prevention and waste minimisation.

Waste Strategy

: + £0/13.0/24.0 million plus £3 million for 2001-02 from carry-forward

- an Assembly contribution to the GB-wide Waste and Resources Action Program

- £200,000 for the Environment Agency Wales to fund work to counter illegal waste activities
- support for action to move waste management up the waste hierarchy.

Habitats Regulations

: + £1.0/1.0/1.0 million

- provision for a review of planning consents which may be necessary to meet the EU requirements to introduce protection for candidate Special Areas of Conservation

Sustainable Development

: + £0/0.1/0.1 million

- to develop indicators and work with statutory partners to develop the Assembly's sustainable development scheme.

BetterWales.com 2003 Targets:

CURRENT 2003 TARGET	Current Position
Achieve high standards in the management of our environment	
A reduction in the number of days which fall below air quality standards by developing a National Air Quality Strategy in 2000 and ensuring that local authorities introduce air quality plans, where necessary, to respond to local conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategy published• Air Quality regulations published• Target to be reviewed
Virtually all our bathing, drinking and river water to meet existing EU quality standards and more of our beaches to achieve Blue Flag status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quality targets met• Record number of Blue Flags awarded in Wales
Raise the quality of and access to our National Parks by launching a Sustainable Parks Scheme, by April 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scheme now launched
Complete Wales' contribution to the Natura 2000 network of sites of international nature conservation importance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work underway
To have assessed for listing 90% of the buildings in Wales and, by September 2000, all chapels in Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cadw's survey of chapels has now been completed

By working with the Environment Agency and other partners to have achieved national agreement on targets for flood defence, in 2000.

- Flood defence targets out to consultation

CURRENT 2003 TARGET	Current Position
To develop a strategy for achieving the sustainable management of waste in 2000 and implementation of the Landfill Directive, with a Welsh strategy to be produced, following consultation, in 2001-02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • England and Wales Strategy published
<p>Develop a better co-ordinated and sustainable transport system to support local communities and the creation of a prosperous economy</p>	
For all local authorities to have local transport plans , by August 2000, and bus strategies by 2003, for more people to have ready access to facilities and for more people to use public transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Transport Plans now received and being reviewed
Improved local co-ordination of services through the support of Integrated transport consortia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be reviewed in the context of the emerging Transport Framework
Better public and community transport for excluded groups by increasing subsidised, socially necessary, bus services by 60%, extending the bus network, ensuring free bus travel for pensioners and encouraging community transport schemes, by 2002.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For pensioners and disabled people, free bus passes to be introduced as from April 2001, and free local bus travel as from April 2002
A better deal for Wales by developing a rail strategy, including better north-south links, and influencing franchise negotiations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North-South Wales rail service introduced • Wales franchise process underway • Assembly rail priorities set out in guidance to sSRA and bidders

CURRENT 2003 TARGET	Current Position
A national information service for all public transport, by April 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service launched. Consider new target
Improved road safety through our new Road Safety Strategy and developing safer neighbourhoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target to be launched in light of GB Road Safety Strategy
70% of the National Cycle Network to be completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 35% completed to date
130 Heritage monuments in our care to be regularly open to the public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All 130 monuments are regularly open to the public
Streamline our work and give greater weight to the needs and views of our partners and the public, including under-represented groups	
A new national spatial development framework, linked to Assembly policies, which is updated regularly with the help of those affected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Planning Policy Wales, including spatial elements, in preparation • Work underway on developing the National Planning Spatial Framework with links to the Sustainable Development Scheme, the National Economic Development Strategy, and other Assembly strategies

BetterWales.com 2010 Benchmarks:

CURRENT BENCHMARK	CURRENT POSITION
<p>The number of days when air falls below national quality standards should have fallen sharply from the 60-70 days a year typically experienced now. The quality of drinking, river and bathing water must meet EU standards. Households in Wales should recycle at least 25% of their waste compared to about 3% today. The populations of wild birds that are now in decline must have stabilised or started to rise.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Review re-cycling targets in context of waste strategy
<p>Much improved public transport and cycleway provision, including community transport, should enable about a quarter of commuting to work to take place by these means rather than by car, compared to about a fifth in the late 1990s. A higher proportion of freight should be carried by rail.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Review targets