

ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Date: Wednesday 31 January 2001
Time: 2.00 to 5.30 pm
Venue: Committee Room 2, National Assembly Building

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: DRAFT ACTION PLAN

Purpose

1. To show Members an early draft of the SD Action Plan so that they can satisfy themselves as to work in progress, give comments and suggest amendments or further work as needed.

Timing

2. A Plenary session will consider the Action Plan on 15 February.

Background

3. The Assembly adopted its Sustainable Development Scheme on 16 November 2000. Four further specific pieces of work were agreed to. These are:
 - the preparation of an Action Plan setting out how the commitments in the Scheme would be taken forward
 - the development of practical options on internal and external structures to ensure that SD is mainstreamed and promoted
 - deciding an initial set of indicators of sustainable development
 - submission of an application for European Regional Innovation Grant based on the SD Scheme

The first three of these carry a three-month deadline (by 16 February).

4. This Action Plan seeks to set out simply how the commitments in the Scheme will be delivered. It is arranged under the headings ' Decision Making ', ' Policy Development/Review ', ' Working With Others ', ' Leading By Example ', ' Indicators ' and ' Monitoring & Evaluation'. The intention is that the Action Plan, when complete, will identify who is doing what and by when. It will also show which actions are dependent on others, some work being possible only after other elements are complete. For this reason this first draft has some key actions shown in bold type to illustrate the point. At the moment there is still a great deal of activity to be reflected either in the Plan or its accompanying Annexes, but until discussions are complete with Cabinet Members and their Divisions it is not possible to provide details.
5. Because of the broad basis of the Plan it also covers (to a greater or lesser extent) the specific areas of work referred to paragraph 3 above. Although still under development, the draft Annexes to the Plan provide information on where we are with the first three commitments. Annexes C&D cover external and internal structures and Annex E covers Indicators. Action is progressing quickly on these fronts.
6. Action on the European Regional Innovation Grant bid is reflected under Policy Development/ Review and in Annex C. It is also the subject of the recently issued consultation paper 'Towards a sustainable Wales', which is the first step in bidding to the Commission for Innovation Grant resources. A seminar in Techniquest on 7 February will bring together interested bodies. The consultation paper can be seen on the Industry web page using the following hyperlink: http://www.wales.gov.uk/polinifo/industry/indust_e.htm
7. The Action Plan will need to be kept constantly under review and updated at least annually. At this stage it is important that Members indicate whether they are satisfied with work in progress and the general approach taken.

Cross cutting themes

8. The development of the Scheme is being taken forward in the context of the other Assembly schemes and specifically underpins the work being done on social inclusion.

Action

9. The Committee is invited to comment on the draft Plan, in particular:
 - whether the format can be improved;
 - options relating to a Panel/Forum;
 - how to balance the role of new internal structures against the responsibilities of existing Committees;
 - whether the proposed approach to indicators is acceptable.

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