

European and External Affairs Committee

Date: 29 April 2004

Time 9:30

Venue: Committee Rooms 3 & 4, National Assembly Building, Cardiff Bay

Title: Sustainable Development Action Plan

Purpose

To inform the Committee and seek its views on the draft action plan.

Summary / Recommendations

Attached is the draft action plan for comment at the request of the Committee following an invitation by the Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside in plenary on 16th March to all Subject Committees to consider it.

The consultation period on the draft Scheme will run until the 21st May to enable the final action plan to be brought before plenary before the summer recess.

Background

The Action Plan has been developed to accompany the revised Sustainable Development Scheme, which was adopted by Assembly Members in plenary on 16 March.

The revised Scheme clarifies the vision of what the Assembly is trying to achieve; the principles we are following; the commitments the whole Assembly is making; and how the Assembly Government will, with partners, bring about a more sustainable pattern of development in Wales. The Action Plan will set out what the Welsh Assembly Government will do to fulfil the commitments laid out in the Scheme to deliver real change. Ministers have it in mind that, once finalised, the Action Plan will also have the status of a formal addendum to their strategic agenda Wales: A Better Country.

Consideration

Of particular interest to this Committee may be the section on ‘Wales: A Global Citizen which focuses on helping to address international barriers to sustainable development and working with other regions and spheres of governance to share learning and best practice.

Financial Implications

Committee is not asked to make any expenditure decision in response to this paper, but may wish to note the financial position regarding the proposals in the draft Action Plan. The proposed commitments in the draft Plan that fall to the Sustainable Development budget can be met within it. Otherwise, the Plan has been drafted to be containable within existing resources. (Proposed pilot schemes might support a case for extra spend, but that would be a matter for separate decision later in the context of future planning rounds). Particular commitments would imply a higher initial unit cost within the relevant programme, to generate longer-term savings. For these to be containable within existing resources, the volume of units bought would have to be reduced slightly. The financial implications of any additional commitments would need to be considered before they could be included in the final version.

Cross Cutting Themes

Local government, business and the voluntary sector contributed to the consultation on the Scheme and were well represented at workshop events held during January, the output of which have contributed to the draft Action Plan.

Action for Subject Committee

The Committee is invited to comment on the draft action plan.

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