

# Education Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee

## ELLS(2) 07-06(p8)

### Strategic Forward Work Programme May 2006 to May 2007

Standing order 9.9 requires subject committees to maintain a rolling programme of work covering periods of at least 12 months. The strategic forward work programme sets out the Committee's priorities for the coming 10 months. It is complemented by detailed programmes covering around three months at a time.

#### The Committee's Portfolio

In accordance with s57(4) of the Government of Wales Act 1998, the Committee's portfolio mirrors that of the Assembly Minister:

Nursery and early-years education in Wales;

Standards of school education in Wales, including the activities of Estyn (Her Majesty's inspectorate of education and training in Wales);

School organisation in Wales, including approval of school mergers and closures;

Oversight of local education authorities in Wales;

The national curriculum in Wales;

All matters relating to pupils with special educational needs;

All activities of ACCAC (the qualifications, curriculum and assessment authority for Wales) and matters relating to academic qualifications generally;

Capital grants for schools in Wales;

Teaching standards in Wales, in collaboration with the General Teaching Council for Wales;

Appraisal of teachers in Wales, but not their pay and conditions;

Policy on further and higher education in Wales;

All activities of the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales and the National Council for Education and Training in Wales (ELWa);

Powers relating to tuition fees and student support, conferred to the National Assembly by the Higher Education Act 2004;

Careers policy, including all activities of Careers Service companies;

Youth services and youth issues generally;

Provision of, and support for, work-based and other vocational training in Wales;

Inspection of training providers and careers service companies; and

Oversight of the Children's Commissioner for Wales.

### **The Committee's Responsibilities are set out in Standing Orders :**

9.7. Each subject committee shall:

contribute to the development of the Assembly's policies within the fields for which the relevant Minister is accountable to the Assembly and in the areas for which that Minister has been allocated other responsibilities (with the exception of the management of the Assembly's business and its finances and matters within the terms of reference of the Committees on Equality of Opportunity and European and External Affairs);

keep under review the expenditure and administration connected with their implementation; and

keep under review the discharge of public functions in those fields by public, voluntary and private bodies.

9.8. Each subject committee shall also, within the relevant fields,

advise on proposed primary, secondary and European legislation affecting Wales, including performing its functions under Standing Order 24;

provide advice to the Assembly Cabinet on matters relating to allocation of the Assembly's budget, in accordance with Standing Order 21;

perform its functions under Standing Order 23 (complaints);

perform any functions assigned to it under the Code of Practice on Public Appointments Procedure made by the Assembly under Standing Order 22; and

consider matters referred to it by the Assembly within its fields and areas of responsibility."

## **The Committee's Aims and Objectives**

4. The Committee's aim is to scrutinise the policies of the Welsh Assembly Government and to monitor their implementation, to ensure that the people of Wales have access to a broad range of opportunities for education and lifelong learning. The Committee believes that education is the key to a fulfilling life and a prosperous nation.

5. In reviewing and developing policy, the Committee will make recommendations that will lead to high quality, cost effective services that are properly regulated and inspected.

## **The Committee's Priorities**

6. The Committee's strategic focus for the period of this forward work programme will be on the following issues which, together with its responsibilities under Standing Orders 9.7 and 9.8, will be its priorities for meetings:

The implementation of policy stemming from the Assembly Government's response to the Committee's report on the first stage of its review of special educational needs, focusing on early identification and intervention;

The implementation of policy stemming from the Assembly Government's response to the Committee's report on the second stage of its review of special educational needs, focusing on statutory assessment;

The implementation of policy stemming from the Assembly Government's response to the Committee's report on its review of school transport;

## **Policy Reviews:**

Special Educational Needs (Part 3): Transition

Scrutiny of the delivery of the newly established Department for Education Lifelong Learning and Skills following the merger of the Welsh Assembly Government and the National Council for Education and Training (ELWa) and ACCAC (Curriculum, Assessment and Qualifications Body)

The implementation and progress of the Youth Services in Wales merging into the Welsh Assembly Government

Scrutiny of relevant public, voluntary and private bodies; including undertaking rapporteur visits:

Higher Education Funding Council for Wales

Estyn (Inspectorate of Education and Training in Wales)

General Teaching Council for Wales

Careers Wales

### **Consideration of the annual reports of:**

The Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales (Estyn)

The Children's Commissioner for Wales

Higher Education, with particular regard to student support and reconfiguration;

The Graham Review into Part Time Higher Education Study in Wales

The implementation of 'Flying Start' and the 'Foundation Phase';

Primary legislation remitted to the Committee by the National Assembly;

Secondary Legislation, as identified by the Committee for scrutiny, or remitted to the Committee by Business Committee;

European legislation, as identified by Committee for scrutiny;

Budget Priorities

### **The Statutory Schemes**

The Committee will take account of the National Assembly's statutory schemes for relations with local authorities and the voluntary sector, and the sustainable development scheme. The Committee will have regard to the requirements of the Race Relations Act.

The Committee will take account of the recommendations in the report of the Equality of Opportunity Committee on Mainstreaming Equality in the Work of the National Assembly.

The Committee will consider a report of the Assembly Minister's meetings with the Voluntary Sector at least once a year in accordance with section 3.7 of the Voluntary Sector Scheme.