

Date: 11 June 2003

Time: 9.00 – 12.30

Venue: Committee Room 1, National Assembly for Wales

AGENDA ITEM 4 - COMMITTEE STRATEGIC FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

INTRODUCTION

1. Standing Order 9.9 requires subject committees to maintain “rolling programmes of work” covering at least 12 months and to submit their forward work programmes to plenary, having first consulted other subject committees and the Assembly Cabinet on them.

2. This paper seeks Members’ views on the contents of the Committee’s strategic forward work programme.

3. A copy of the predecessor Culture Committee’s legacy paper for its successor is at paper [CSWL(2)-01-03(p.5)] for committee members’ information.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

4. Standing Order 9.7 (i) provides for subject committees to contribute to the development of the Assembly’s policies. This can be achieved either by commenting on the new strategies and policies being developed by the Assembly Minister or by undertaking committee policy reviews.

Policy Reviews

5. The following possible topics for policy reviews were suggested by the predecessor committee:-

- English-medium Welsh culture
- Arts and young people
- Music
- Dance

6. Other topics which have been suggested by the Chair or committee members include:

- The contribution of arts and sport to community regeneration (links with the Social Justice and Regeneration Committee’s portfolio).
- Cultural tourism (note – consideration would need to be given to joint working with the Economic Development and Transport Committee, which has responsibility for tourism more generally).

- Broadcasting and access issues (a non-devolved matter so liaison with the House of Commons Select Committee on Welsh Affairs could be beneficial).
- Developing Wales' craft industry (links with EDT portfolio).

7. Undertaking a policy review can have a very significant impact on the time available for other committee business, particularly if a very broad topic is chosen. Reviews which involve written consultations and oral presentations by a series of stakeholders generally take a minimum of 9 to 12 months. Committee members will wish to consider how long they would wish spend on one policy review. *If members would prefer to avoid year long reviews, the committee will need to select narrowly-focused topics.*

Questions

- Does the committee wish to undertake one or more policy reviews in the next year?
- How many months would the committee wish to spend on a single policy review?
- In priority order, which policy review(s) would the committee wish to undertake in the next year and future years?

MINISTERIAL SCRUTINY

8. Standing Order 9.7 provides for subject committees to keep under review the implementation of policies. This is achieved via question sessions on the Minister's monthly report and via ad hoc sessions on specific topics.

9. The predecessor committee suggested that its successor should continue to monitor progress with implementation of the following strategies:

- A Culture in Common / Creative Futures
- Our Language: Its Future / Iaith Pawb
- Culture Committee Report on Participation in Sport and Physical Exercise

10. Other scrutiny topics which have been suggested by committee members include:

- Lottery funding in Wales.
- The forthcoming draft National Events Strategy.
- Support for festivals in Wales (both arts and non-arts festivals).
- Impact on Wales of the London Olympic bid and the Liverpool Capital of Culture bid.
- The creation of an OFCOM Wales office.

Questions

- iv. Does the committee wish to undertake scrutiny/ monitoring sessions on the topics identified above?
- v. Are there other topics on which the Committee would like to undertake a scrutiny session?

SCRUTINY OF PUBLICLY FUNDED BODIES

11. Standing Order 9.7 provides for subject committees to review “the discharge of public functions” by public, voluntary and private bodies. This mainly involves scrutiny of Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies (ASPBs).

12. There are a high number of ASPBs in the Committee’s portfolio:

- Arts Council of Wales
- National Library of Wales
- National Museums and Galleries of Wales
- Sports Council of Wales
- Welsh Language Board

13. Cadw is an executive agency of the National Assembly for Wales. It sponsors three ASPBs:

- The Ancient Monuments Board (advisory ASPB)
- The Historic Buildings Council (advisory ASPB)
- The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (executive ASPB)

14. The Welsh Assembly Government also funds the following bodies (which are not ASPBs).

- Welsh Books Council
- The Council for Museums in Wales (CyMAL: Museums Archives and Libraries Wales from 1st April 2004)
- The Library and Information Services Council (Wales)

15. Sponsorship of ASPBs is the responsibility of the Assembly Minister but the Committee will wish to ensure that its priorities are taken into account by the Minister in his dealings with the ASPBs. The annual planning and reporting cycle involves the following opportunities for the committee to have an input:

- (Autumn) – annual report and audited accounts for the previous financial year published;
- (January) – Minister issues “remit letters” for the coming financial year;

- (July) – draft corporate plans for following three years submitted to Minister.

16. The number of ASPBs in the portfolio means that the Committee will need to consider carefully how it makes best use of the time available to it for ASPB scrutiny.

Questions

- vi. Does the Committee wish to spend a brief amount of time on considering plans and reports of each of the 5-8 ASPBs and Cadw?
- vii. Does the Committee wish to select one or two ASPBs for detailed scrutiny at each point in the planning cycle?
- viii. Does the Committee wish to appoint committee members to act as “rapporteurs” who would scrutinise the annual reports/ draft corporate plans on behalf of the Committee?
- ix. Does the Committee wish to hold “ad hoc” scrutiny sessions with the ASPBs on specific topics of current interest, outside the framework of the annual planning cycle?

LEGISLATION

17. Standing Order 9.8(i) provides for subject committees to advise on proposed primary, secondary and European legislation affecting Wales. Generally there is limited secondary legislation within this portfolio. On primary legislation, the predecessor Culture Committee considered both the Communications Bill and Licensing Bill (both non-devolved issues). The Queen’s Speech debate in the autumn will provide an opportunity for the Committee to identify forthcoming primary legislation which is of interest to it. In accordance with a protocol agreed by Business Committee, Assembly Ministers provide regular reports to committees on forthcoming secondary legislation within the portfolio.

BUDGET SCRUTINY

18. Standing Order 19 requires Ministers to consult subject committees on the Assembly budget in the late summer and early autumn.

OTHER TOPICS

19. Other topics which have been suggested for consideration by the Committee include:

- A proposal for a Sports Hall of Fame
- Promoting the 100th and 50th anniversaries of Cardiff as a city and a capital city.

Question

- x. Are there any other topics which committee members would like the Committee to cover in the future?

OTHER WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

20. Committee members may wish to consider the committee's other working arrangements, as follows.

Formal committee meetings held off-site

- xi. Does the Committee wish to hold any formal committee meetings off-site? If so, how many off-site meetings would members wish to arrange in a year? Is there a location which the Committee would like to visit first?

Visits

21. The predecessor committee was planning a visit to the National Waterfront Museum in Swansea; and it has been suggested that the Committee should visit the National Library in Aberystwyth.

Questions

- xii. Does the Committee wish to include these two visits in its forward work programme?
xiii. Are there other visits the Committee would wish to make?

SUMMARY

22. Members' views are invited, as indicated in the questions above, on:

- Topics for committee policy reviews
- Topics for Ministerial scrutiny
- Handling of ASPB scrutiny
- Other discussion topics
- Working arrangements

23. In the light of Members' comments, the Secretariat will produce a draft forward work programme for the Committee's consideration.

**Members' Research and Committee Services
June 2003**