

Education and Life Long Learning Committee, Strategic Forward Work Programme: January 2001 – April 2002

Duties of the Committee

The Education and Life-Long Learning Committee is one of seven subject committees. The responsibilities of the subject committees are set out in the National Assembly's Standing Orders:

"9.7. each subject committee shall

- i. contribute to the development of the Assembly's policies within the fields for which the relevant Assembly Secretary is accountable to the Assembly;
- ii. keep under review the expenditure and administration connected with their implementation; and
- iii. 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,

- i. advise on proposed legislation affecting Wales, including performing its functions under SO22;
- ii. provide advice to the Assembly Cabinet on matters relating to allocation of the Assembly's budget in accordance with Standing Order 19;
- iii. perform its function under Standing Order 21(complaints);
- iv. perform any functions assigned to it under the Code of Practice on Public Appointments Procedure made by the Assembly under Standing Order 20; and
- v. consider matters referred to it by the Assembly within its fields."

Standing Order 9.9 requires the subject committee to maintain a rolling programme of work covering periods of at least 12 months.

The Committee's Aims and Objectives

The Committee will seek to contribute to the achievement of the aims and objectives set out in "Better Wales", the National Assembly for Wales's strategic plan and "Putting Wales First: A Partnership for the People of Wales", the First Partnership Agreement of the National Assembly for Wales. In particular, to make Wales 'prosperous, well educated, skilled, healthy and environmentally rich' a country where the people of Wales be given 'every chance to fulfil their potential.'

The Statutory Schemes

The Committee will also take account of the National Assembly's statutory schemes for relations with the local authorities and the voluntary sector, and the sustainable development scheme.

The Committee's Priorities

"Better Wales" sets out in Chapter 4 'Better opportunities for learning' a number of issues for early action by the Assembly.

"Putting Wales First: A Partnership for the People of Wales" established a number of principles for education and lifelong learning that will guide the Committee as it takes forward its programme of work. The Committee will play a major role in progressing the actions identified in both papers, in particular these include:

- a fresh approach to provision for the under-fives throughout Wales;
- no infant class with more than 30 pupils;
- a new fund to lift youngsters' educational achievement and engage them in creative activities;
- establish a rural schools policy to encourage federation;
- action to combat disadvantage in schools, reduce exclusions and raise relative performance;
- more investment to improve school buildings;
- a strengthened teaching profession which is valued and rewarded;
- a National Grid for Learning, with links to museums and libraries;
- the pilot of a new qualification a 'Welsh Baccalaureate';
- an increase in the number of students in further and higher education;
- an independent investigation into student hardship and funding in Wales;
- advice on learning, assessment and careers through Careers Wales and the Youth Gateway Scheme; and
- a new National Council for Education and Training to implement the Education and Training Action Plan.

The Committee has decided to spend a large proportion of its time developing policy for specific identifiable issues that will help improve the provision of education in Wales so as to ensure that the potential of all children is realised and that Wales' status as a learning country is enhanced.

The Committee is to consider adopting revised framework principles for education policy in Wales to cover its full remit. This will build on the framework principles paper agreed by the Pre 16 Education and Early Years Committee, set out in paper PRE 16 03-99(p.4) the overarching principles of which are to:

- Ensure that education is of high quality for all;
- Inclusive;

- Based on a partnership approach.

Specifically the Committee intends to undertake the work outlined below. In relation to Policy Development the Committee has expressed an interest in each of the specific areas identified. The final selection and timing of reviews will depend on information available to provide background to the review, the impact of the legislative timetable, new developments in education and the Committee's wish to be responsive to current needs as they arise. A revised timetable including specific policy development reviews will be put to the Committee for agreement at least once a term.

Policy Development (SO 9.7(i))	Timescale	Better Wales' and Partnership Targets
Early Years Provision for 3 Year Olds	To present its Report to Plenary on 6 March	A fresh approach to provision for the under-fives throughout Wales by providing nursery education to all children from the age of three, whose parents want it
Information and Communication Technology in Schools	To present its Report to Plenary on 13 March	A National Grid for Learning with links to museums and libraries.
Supply of School Places	September 2000 to April 2001	No infant class with more than 30 pupils
Building effective communities and the School of the Future Higher Education Review Youth Strategy Skills and Training (attitudinal approach e.g. enterprise, team working links to the needs of the economy)	May 2001 - April 2002 Nov 2000 - Nov 2001 To be agreed To be agreed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A National Grid for Learning with links to museums and libraries • Action to tackle inequalities across the board. • Action to combat disadvantage in schools, reduce exclusions and raise relative performance • More investment to improve school buildings through the "School Buildings Upgrade Fund" and to

		phase out all substandard mobile classrooms
<p>Monitoring of ASPBs</p> <p>(SO 9.7(iii))</p> <p>No full review is planned but meetings to look at annual report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACCAC • Estyn • Higher Education Funding Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oct 2001/Oct 2002 • Mar 2001/Mar 2002 • To be agreed 	
<p>Legislation</p> <p>(SO 9.8(i) and SO 22)</p>	As necessary	
<p>Budget</p> <p>(SO 9.8 (ii))</p>	<p>Annually</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • initial views on priorities • views on preliminary draft budget • views on allocated resources. 	

Public Appointments (SO 9.8(iv))	As necessary	
Scrutiny of Assembly Secretary	Monthly	

Committee Secretariat
January 2001