

Culture Committee - CC-18-01(p.6)

Date: 21st November 2001

Time: 9.00am - 12.30pm

Venue: Committee Room 1, National Assembly Building

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE QUINQUENNIAL REVIEW OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON ANCIENT AND HISTORICAL MONUMENTS.

Issue

1. Under Standing Orders, the Committee is invited to offer comments on the draft terms of reference for the Quinquennial review of the Royal Commission.

Recommendation

2. Members are invited to comment on the attached draft terms of reference.

Timing

3. After considering comments made by Committee members, Edwina and I hope to announce the start of this review shortly.

Background

4. In Plenary on 10 May 2000, Edwina Hart set out for us the overall regime for the review, (every 5 years) of executive Assembly Public Bodies (ASPBs). The last review of the Royal Commission was undertaken in 1994.

5. The reviewer for this review will be Martin Rolph, a member of the Assembly staff currently on attachment to the Finance Group. He recently started work on the quinquennial review of Cadw. This will be a separate review, although there are clear areas of common interest between Cadw and the Royal Commission. Subject to considering your comments on the draft terms of reference attached, I propose to announce the formal start of this review shortly.

Compliance

6. The Assembly has the powers to reviews the Royal Commission in the way proposed. The reviewer will follow the Assembly guidance for quinquennial reviews of executive ASPBs, which was issued by Edwina Hart in tandem with her announcement to Plenary on 10 March 2000. Some of the detailed aspects of the review will reflect the Royal Commission's particular status, but the main thrusts will be the same.

Cross Cutting Themes

7. These are explicitly referred to in the draft terms of reference.

Financial Implications

8. The costs of the Assembly Official undertaking the review will be accommodated within the administration cost budget, and because the reviewer is a member of staff already engaged on other review work, the costs will be relatively low for this type of activity. The draft report's contents will include reference to the review's costs.

Action for Subject Committee

9. The Committee is invited to note and comment on the draft terms of reference, prior to formal announcement in their final version.

JENNY RANDERSON

QUINQUENNIAL REVIEW OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON ANCIENT AND HISTORICAL MONUMENTS (RCAHMW)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. PREAMBLE

1. The Quinquennial Review of the RCAHMW is being undertaken in the context of the National Assembly's published Quinquennial Review Guidelines for executive Assembly Public Bodies. This includes self-assessment by the Royal Commission, discussion with its senior staff, and inviting the views of major stakeholders including customers, all staff and their trade unions, and other partners, including the public at large. This exercise also offers all the above the opportunity to offer views about the Royal Commission's past achievements, current activities and future.
2. The Terms of Reference set out the key questions which the Review has to answer. The Terms of Reference also take account of issues specific to the Royal Commission.

1.3 The Review will be in two parts: the Strategic Review and the Corporate Governance Review.

2. STRATEGIC REVIEW

2.1 The context for the Strategic Review is the Assembly's strategic plan, the Partnership Agreement, draft plan for Wales 2001 and related policy documents.

Stage 1 The Strategic Context within which the Royal Commission exists

2.2 In the light of the duties and functions of the Royal Commission and the National Assembly's objectives, is there a continuing need for all the functions of the Royal Commission and, if so, is the current organisational framework the most appropriate?

- a. What is the legal framework governing the functions of the Royal Commission in terms of primary, secondary and European legislation and formal framework documents.
- b. Is the Royal Commission still necessary and for how long?
- c. Do the functions need to be carried out by an Assembly sponsored Public Body - are other organisational frameworks likely to be more

effective?

d. Is there scope to rationalise the functions of the Royal Commission and other bodies working in similar or related fields?

Stage 2 Strategic effectiveness

2.3 Are there improvements which should be made to the way in which Royal Commission's functions are delivered, taking account of the National Assembly's values and objectives, and to the functioning of its place with the National Assembly?

a. What have been the main strategic achievements of the Royal Commission since its inception, has it met its objectives, what has been its performance against targets, how does its performance compare with that of comparable bodies, are there performance issues which need to be addressed?

b. How effective is the corporate planning of the Royal Commission in developing clear strategic direction, setting targets and priorities? In addressing the full range of its responsibilities, how effective is the match between inputs, in terms of resources, and the objectives and targets it sets?

c. Is the organisational structure of the Royal Commission fit for purpose? Does the structure of the organisation enable regional needs to be fully recognised?

d. Is there an effective mutual understanding of the roles of senior managers in setting corporate objectives and monitoring their implementation?

e. Do the staff generally understand and feel a sense of ownership of the corporate objectives?

f. To what extent do the Royal Commission's objectives and conduct of business chime with the Assembly's objectives, guiding themes and values (sustainable development, tackling social disadvantage, equal opportunities, acting strategically, working in partnership and being inclusive). What needs to be done to build closer connections with the guiding themes?

g. Does the Royal Commission have productive relationships with key partners in terms of policy, planning, implementation? How might these relationships be strengthened?

h. Is the Royal Commission responsible to its partners and customers? Does it have their confidence as an organisation with which they can do business, are there ways in which relationships might be strengthened?

i. Is the Royal Commission an accessible organisation to the public, does it promote its purposes and services effectively?

2.4 Are there improvements needed in the way the Royal Commission relates to the Assembly?

- a. Is the Royal Commission able to advise the Assembly effectively on policy on historic environments, and is it able to advise effectively on proposals for new primary and secondary legislation relevant to its work?
- b. Are the reporting arrangements between the Royal Commission and the National Assembly an adequate framework?
- c. Does the Royal Commission need different freedoms and flexibilities to improve the delivery of its functions, and if so how might they be achieved while not weakening its overall accountability to the Assembly?

3. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE REVIEW

Is the Royal Commission managing its finances effectively and in accordance with the requirements of regularity, propriety and value-for-money , and the provisions of its Financial Memorandum and Management Statement? What progress has the Royal Commission made in improving the efficiency of its operation? In the light of the above, what changes should be made to its control documents?