

**EUR-02-99(p.6)**

## **COMMITTEE ON EUROPEAN AFFAIRS**

**Date** Thursday 14 October 1999

**Time** 9.30am

**Venue** Committee Room 1, National Assembly Building

### **DRAFT FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

#### **Purpose**

1. To define the role of the European Committee, and outline a draft forward work programme which will guide the Committee in its work over the next 12 months.

#### **Recommendation**

2. The Committee is invited to discuss and approve the draft forward work programme.

#### **Timing**

3. The Committee is asked to agree the content of the draft forward work programme at this meeting so that work to prepare papers for future meetings can proceed.

#### **Background**

4. The European Committee has been established according to Standing Order 15. At its first meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 1999 the Committee discussed a paper on the Operation of the Committee on European Affairs which was presented by the First Secretary. The purpose of this paper is to summarise the role of the Committee, and propose a draft work programme for the next 12 months.

#### **The European Committee's Role**

5. The European Committee will focus on strategic issues which affect the relationship between Wales and the European Union. It will not discuss detailed policy-areas since these fall within the remit of subject committees. All subject committees are expected to consider the European dimension of their areas of work, and the European Committee will monitor their

progress in fulfilling this role.

6. The following objectives are proposed for the Committee:

*i. To increase the knowledge and understanding of Committee members of the European Union's institutions, policy-making process, major developments and broad direction.*

This objective will be achieved through a presentation by the European Commission's Head of Representation in Wales, visits to Brussels, presentations and workshops at the Wales Forum on European Affairs, regular reports on the Commission's Annual Work Programmes and priorities of the Presidencies of the European Council. Reports on major developments such as Agenda 2000 and the Treaty of Amsterdam will be prepared as issues emerge.

*ii. To ensure that Wales is responding effectively to policy developments within the European Union.*

This objective will be achieved by looking at the Assembly's arrangements for the scrutiny of European legislation, the arrangements which Committees have made to assess the impact of European Union policies on their areas of work, and UK White Papers on Developments within the European Union. Welsh participation in expert networks, and secondments of Assembly civil servants to Brussels-based organisations will be examined. Specific issues will be discussed with public, private and voluntary sector partners in the Wales Forum on European Affairs.

*iii. Institutions.*

This objective will be achieved by setting up an Assembly representation in Brussels, joining the Wales European Centre, establishing links with the United Kingdom's Permanent Representation to the European Council. It will also consider the methods which enable the National Assembly for Wales to work with central government within the framework established by the Concordat. Regular contact will be maintained with members of the European Parliament, Committee of the Regions and the Economic and Social Committee.

### **Draft Forward Work Programme 1999/2000**

7. The Work Programme at Annex A has been designed to fulfil the objectives set out above:

- Where possible items have been grouped to enable the Committee to focus on certain issues during meetings.

General reports on major developments within the European Union will be tabled at appropriate times according to the European Union's time-table.

The work of the European Committee will be augmented by the work of the Wales

Forum on European Affairs, and every effort will be made to avoid the duplication of items.

The proposed visit to Brussels will provide an opportunity to learn more about European institutions and the policy-making process.

## **Compliance**

8. Standing Order 15 outlines the Terms of Reference for the Committee on European Affairs. There are no issues about regularity or propriety. There are no financial implications from this paper, and any financial implications for individual agenda items will be highlighted in the relevant Committee reports.

## **Cross-cutting Themes**

9. None. Any implications for local government, business or the voluntary sector will be highlighted in the relevant Committee reports.

## **Contact Point**

10. European Affairs Division

## **ANNEX A**

### **COMMITTEE ON EUROPEAN AFFAIRS**

#### **Draft Work Programme 1999/2000**

#### **14<sup>th</sup> October 1999 - Representation**

1. The role of the United Kingdom's Permanent Representation to the European Council
2. The Wales European Centre (including presentation by WEC Chair and Director)
3. Policy Review – A strategy to assess the impact of European Union policies on the National Assembly for Wales
4. Report on the Concordat between the Cabinet of the National Assembly for Wales and the UK Government on the Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues – *for information*
5. Report by Rhodri Morgan on the INTERREG Conference, Dublin 24<sup>th</sup> September – *verbal report for information*

6. Programme for the Wales European Forum, 22<sup>nd</sup> October – *for information*
7. Draft 12 month forward work programme for the European Committee

### **22<sup>nd</sup> October 1999 – Wales European Forum**

### **25<sup>th</sup> November 1999 - Scrutiny**

1. Assembly Representation in Brussels
2. Assembly's arrangements for scrutiny of European Union documents and draft legislation
3. Proposed arrangements for European Committee visit to Brussels
4. UK White Paper on Developments in the EU (for information)
5. Secondments to European Union institution
6. Presentation by the European Commission's Head of Representation in Wales
7. Report back from first meeting of Wales European Forum

### **February 2000 – Inter-regional Links**

1. National Assembly of Wales: International Relations and the Profile of Wales
2. Welsh participation in European Expert Networks
3. Implications and opportunities for Wales of enlargement of the European Union
4. Policy-review – progress report on the work of Subject Committees
5. Plans for the next European Forum (to be held in April)
6. Review of the Committee's work to date
7. Commission's Work Programme for 2000 – *for information*
8. Priorities of the Portuguese Presidency of the European Council – *for information and discussion*

**March 2000 – Visit to Brussels**  
**Welsh Representation on EU Institutions**

1. Briefing on European Institutions
2. Visit the Wales European Centre
3. Meet members of Commission Cabinets
4. Meet Commission officials dealing with Wales

***April 2000 – Wales European Forum***

**May 2000 – Review**

1. Priorities of the French Presidency of the European Council – for information and discussion
2. UK White Paper on Developments in the EU
3. Report back from Wales European Forum (held in April)
4. Report from visit to Brussels
5. Review of the Committee's work to date and report to Plenary
6. Draft Work Programme for 2000/2001

**June/July – Plenary debate on Europe**