

Local Government and Public Services Committee

Minutes (LGPS(2)-12-06(mins))

Meeting date: Thursday 21 September 2006

Meeting time: 9.30am to 12.20pm

Meeting venue: Committee Room 2, Senedd, National Assembly for Wales

Assembly Members in Attendance

Assembly Member	Constituency
Ann Jones (Chair)	Vale of Clwyd
Sue Essex (Minister)	Cardiff North
Michael German OBE	South Wales East
Dai Lloyd	South Wales West
David Melding	South Wales Central
Catherine Thomas	Llanelli
Gwenda Thomas	Neath

Officials in Attendance

Name	Representing	Agenda item(s)
Hugh Rawlings	Director, Local Government, Public Services and Culture Group	all
Mike Chown	Local Government Finance	2 - 3
Michael Trickey	Making the Connections	2 & 6
David Fletcher	Local Government Finance	3
Lisa James	Review of Local Service Delivery Secretariat	6

Steve Pomeroy	Local Government Policy	2
Martin Stevenson	Transport & Infrastructure Policy	4
Paul Harrison	Local Government Finance	3

In Attendance

Name	Representing	Agenda item(s)
Sir Jeremy Beecham		6
Adam Peat	Public Services Ombudsman Wales	5

Assembly Parliamentary Service

Name	Job title
Lara Date	Committee Clerk
Catherine Lewis	Deputy Committee Clerk
Peter Jones	Counsel to the Assembly Parliamentary Service

Item 1: Introduction, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

1.1 The Chair welcomed Committee Members and members of the public. The Chair also welcomed Celia Blacklock, Second Clerk to the House of Commons' Science and Technology Committee, who was shadowing the Committee Clerk.

1.2 There were no apologies.

1.3 There were no declarations of interest.

1.4 A verbatim record of the meeting would be available.

Item 2: Minister's report

Paper: LGPS(2)-12-06(p.1)

2.1 The Minister introduced her report and responded to questions from Committee members.

Action

2.2 The Minister would provide a report to Committee on the outcome of the conference on Pat Niner's report on the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers, including the conference's target audience.

2.3 The Minister would provide the Committee with further information on the '101 number service' once feedback had been received from the Home Office regarding funding for roll-out throughout Wales.

2.4 The Minister would provide a summary report setting out local authorities' performance data in relation to their policy agreements. This information would be provided as part of the Minister's paper for the Committee's discussion on All-Wales local government performance data on 8 November.

2.5 The Minister would forward the Committee's comments on transport issues relating to the Wales Spatial Plan to the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Sustainable Development and Spatial Plan.

Item 3: Small Business Rate Relief Scheme

Paper: LGPS(2)-12-06(p.2)

3.1 The Minister introduced her paper and responded to queries from Committee members.

Action

3.2 Committee members would receive a copy of the responses Dai Lloyd AM had received to written questions he had asked the Minister.

3.3 The Minister would provide a paper detailing how the Assembly's extended legislative powers under the Government of Wales Act 2006 might be used to link business rate relief to Green Dragon environmental standards.

Item 4: Secondary Legislation: Legislative forward look and The Draft Regional Transport Planning (Wales) Order

Paper: LGPS(2)-12-06(p.3) and LGPS(2)-12-06(p.4)

4.1 The Committee identified 6 items of secondary legislation for detailed scrutiny: The Placement of Children (Wales) Regulations 2007, The Local Authorities (Conduct of Referendums) (Amendment) (Wales) Regulations 2007, The Non-Domestic Rating (Small Business Relief) (Wales) Order 2006, The Non-Domestic Rating (Demand Notices and Discretionary Relief) (Amendment) Regulations 2006, The Local Government Act 2003 (Commencement No.1 and Savings) (Wales) Order 2006 and The Non-Domestic Rating Contribution (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2006.

4.2 The Minister and officials responded to Members' queries on the Order.

Action

4.3 The Counsel to the Assembly Parliamentary Service would provide a briefing note for Committee members confirming whether guidance to be issued with the Draft Regional Transport Planning (Wales) Order would be statutory or non-statutory.

4.4 Members' comments relating to the guidance would be included in the Committee's report to the Business Committee.

Item 5: Public Services Ombudsman Wales

Paper: LGPS(2)-12-06(p.5)

5.1 The Chair welcomed Adam Peat, the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

5.2 The Ombudsman introduced his paper and responded to questions from Committee members.

Item 6: The Beecham Review of Local Services Delivery – Beyond Boundaries

Paper: LGPS(2)-12-06(p.6)

6.1 The Chair welcomed Sir Jeremy Beecham.

6.2 Sir Jeremy introduced his report and responded to questions from Committee members.

Papers to note

Minutes of the meeting held on 6 July
LGPS(2)-11-06(min)

Committee Service
September 2006