

Culture Committee - CC-8-02(p.4)

Date: 25th April 2002

Time: 2.00pm-4.00pm

Venue: Committee Room 2, National Assembly Building

Culture Committee: Annual Report by the Committee under Standing Order 9.9

Background

Standing Order 9.9 allows the Committee to report to the Assembly from time to time on progress towards fulfilling its work programmes. This report sets out the progress and achievements of the Culture Committee from April 2001-March 2002. It will be laid before Plenary on the 23 May but not discussed.

Action for Committee

The Committee is invited to consider the attached draft report and to suggest amendments if necessary.

Committee Secretariat April 2002

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REPORT TO PLENARY UNDER STANDING ORDER 9.9 - MAY 2001 TO APRIL 2002

1. Introduction

1. This report summarises our activities from May 2001 to April 2002. Copies of the Committee's reports, agendas, papers and minutes can be found on the National Assembly website.

2. Membership

1. The Committee's current membership is Rhodri Glyn Thomas, Chair, Lorraine Barrett, Rosemary Butler, Glyn Davies, Delyth Evans, Alison Halford, Jenny Randerson (Minister for Culture, Sport and the Welsh Language), Owen John Thomas and Dafydd Wigley. Glyn Davies replaced Jonathan Morgan from November 2001; Dafydd Wigley replaced Gareth Jones from June 2001.

3. Remit and Responsibilities

1. Our remit mirrors the portfolio of the Minister for Culture, Jenny Randerson and covers arts and culture, sport and recreation, the Welsh language and museums and libraries. The Committee also has oversight of eight Assembly sponsored or grant aided public bodies.

4. Priorities

1. Within its range of responsibilities, the Committee has established a firm set of priorities which are set out in its strategic forward work programme. The work programme draws out the links between the Committee's priorities and the targets set in the Assembly's 'Better Wales' strategy, in particular, promoting active citizenship, creativity and entrepreneurship; raising the international profile and influence of Wales and establishing it as a first class place to live, study, visit and do business; extending access to the awareness of the Welsh language, culture, heritage and sporting opportunities.
2. The Committee has sought to develop a strategic approach to its work and has focused in depth on a major review of the Welsh language.

5. Work and Achievements to date

1. During the reporting period we met nineteen times. Our principal achievements were as follows:-

- **Policy Review of the Welsh Language.**

1. A review of the Welsh language has provided the major focus of the Committee's activities during the reporting period.
2. The review's terms of reference were as follows:-

"To seek to define more closely the National Assembly's established objective of 'creating a bilingual Wales'. The Committee will aim to suggest a concrete strategy of actions for achieving that objective.

The review will pay particular attention to the following themes:-

- *enabling people to use either language or both in all aspects of national life and in their communities;*
- *supporting Welsh as a family and community language;*
- *providing opportunities for people to learn Welsh, and to use it;*

- *promoting equal respect for both Welsh and English, and monitoring national consensus and goodwill about bilingualism.*

The Committee will examine the work of the Welsh Language Board, and it will also examine the role and contribution of a range of other organisations. These will include agencies involved in economic development, tackling social exclusion, improving learning and improving the quality of life."

1. In April 2001, the Committee appointed Euryng Ogwen Williams as its expert advisor. From May 2001 to February 2002 the Committee oral presentations from 54 organisations and individuals, received 175 written responses and held six roadshows throughout Wales. The four Regional Committees also held consultation sessions on the review and the review was discussed by all but one of the other subject committees. In addition, the Committee held a joint session with the members of the Local Government and Housing Committee to discuss issues of common interest to both Committees. In parallel with this activity, the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee is reviewing Welsh language provision in schools and colleges. The Committee's final report is due to be published in July 2002.

- **Other activities relating to the Welsh language**

1. The Committee has had considerable input into the Assembly's Welsh language scheme and considered a draft scheme in July 2001.

- **Arts and Culture**

1. One of the last acts of the Committee's predecessor, the Post 16 Education and Training Committee was to publish an extensive report 'A Culture in Common' into arts and culture in Wales. This Committee inherited that report, but did not formally adopt its recommendations. The Committee has taken a keen interest in following up the recommendations made in that report, and in particular has received and commented on the Minister's Culture Strategy. The Committee has also held regular sessions with the Arts Council of Wales on progress towards restructuring.

- **Sport**

1. The Committee has agreed to hold a review of sports provision in Wales. The terms of reference for this review will be considered in July 2002.

1. **Other Standing Order Requirements**

- **Review of Expenditure and Administration (S.O. 9.7 (ii))**

1. The Committee regularly scrutinised the Culture Minister via her monthly Minister's report.
2. The Committee was also asked by the Finance Minister to consider the viability of the Wales Millennium Centre's (WMC) revised business plan. It met representatives of the WMC in May 2001 and concluded that it was content with the WMC's proposals and that the project should proceed.

- **Scrutiny of Public Bodies (S.O. 9.7 (iii))**

1. The Committee held review sessions with some of its Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies (ASPBs) during the reporting period, but will meet all of them during May - July 2002. The Committee contributed to the quinquennial reviews of the Welsh Language Board and the National Museum & Galleries of Wales and held a session with the latter on its consultation on the display of art in Wales. It was also considered in terms of reference of the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales and the National Library of Wales.

- **Legislation (S.O. 9.8 (i))**

1. The Committee considered in the Minister's proposal to include 17 bodies in Assembly subordinate legislation under section 6 (I) (0) of the Welsh Language Act.

- **Budget (S.O. 9.8 (ii))**

1. The Committee considered the Assembly's draft budget in July 2001 and commented upon the budget proposals in November 2001.

- **Complaints (S.O. 9.8 (iii))**

1. No complaints were referred to us during this period.

- **Public Appointments (S.O. 9.8 (iv))**

1. The Committee's public appointment nominees were consulted on several appointments to public bodies during the reporting period.

1. **Forward Work Programme**

7.1 The Committee has agreed a strategic forward work programme for 2002-03 and a detailed work programme for the May - July 2002 period. This is attached (annex A), although the latter is subject to regular updating.