

EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING COMMITTEE

STRATEGIC FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

MAY 2002- MAY 2003

Introduction

1. The Education and Lifelong Committee is one of the National Assembly's seven subject committees. The responsibilities of the subject committees are set out in Standing Orders, as reproduced at **Annex A**.

2. Standing order 9.9 requires subject committees to maintain a rolling programme of work covering periods of at least 12 months. The Panel of Chairs has agreed that committees' work programmes should be strategic and cover an 18 month to 2 year time frame, supported by more detailed work programmes covering a three month period. However, this work programme sets out the Committee's strategic priorities between May 2002 and the next Assembly elections in May 2003. A detailed work programme for the period May 2002 to July 2002 will be made available later this term.

Remit

3. The Committee's remit is based on the portfolio of the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning, Jane Davidson AM. The Minister's portfolio embraces education and lifelong learning, this includes, amongst other things, the national curriculum and qualifications, all aspects of schools administration and organisation, further and higher education, supply side employment policy, including the New Deal and the work of the employment service, career services and work related training. There is an overlapping interest with the Health and Social Services Committee, which has responsibility for children and young people.

Aims

4. The Committee aims to promote and encourage long term and sustained improvement in the quality of education in Wales, with the aim of extending high-quality education and lifelong learning opportunities to all the people of Wales.

Priorities

5. With such a broad remit, the committee has developed develop a strategic approach to its work. Priorities for the coming year are as follows:

- *Policy development (SO 9.7(i))* - the Committee will focus on those areas of policy development where it can make the greatest impact, and will and will seek to complement, rather than duplicate policies being developed by the Minister. In the coming year the Committee intends to review the following policy areas:
 - The Welsh Language in Education
 - The School of the Future
- *Scrutiny of the Minister (SO 9.7(ii))* - the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning will report to the Committee monthly on current developments within the portfolio. Once a year the Committee will scrutinise the Minister on performance against targets, but may also undertake thematic scrutiny sessions from time to time. The Committee also intends to scrutinise the delivery of The Learning Country programme.
- *Scrutiny of sponsored bodies (SO 9.7 (iii))* - the Committee will hold an annual session in the spring/summer terms where it will scrutinise the work and comment on the future work programmes of ELWa-Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, ELWa-National Council for Education and Training, General Teaching Council for Wales, ACCAC and Estyn.
- *Other items (SO 9.8)* - the Committee will also consider the following items as they arise:
 - *proposed legislation affecting Wales (SO 9.8(i) and 22)* – each term the Minister will outline forthcoming secondary legislation to enable the Committee to identify areas where it wishes to be consulted. Following the National Assembly’s consideration of the Queen’s speech, the Committee will consider any draft primary legislation remitted to it by plenary. The Committee will also consider draft secondary legislation referred to it by the Business Committee [although it would ask not to be consulted on those areas where it has not expressed an interest];
 - *proposals for the Assembly's budget (SO 9.8(ii))* – the Committee will indicate its budget priorities in the summer term and comment on the draft budget in the autumn term;
 - *complaints (SO 9.8(iii) and 21)* – the Committee will consider any complaints referred to it;
 - *public appointments (SO 9.8(iv) and 20)* – the Committee’s two public appointment nominees will take part in the process of appointments to public bodies as vacancies arise;

- *other matters referred by the Assembly (SO 9.8 (v)) – the Committee will consider other matters referred to it by the National Assembly, [but would ask Members to consult the Committee Chair before tabling motions inviting plenary to remit work to the Committee].*

Committee Secretariat

January 2002

ANNEX A

RESPONSIBILITIES OF SUBJECT COMMITTEES

1. Standing orders 9.7 and 9.8 set out the responsibilities of subject committees.

"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 standing order 22;
- 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."