

## ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING & TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

### STRATEGIC FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME MAY 2002-[APRIL?] 2003

#### Introduction

1. The Environment, Planning and Transport 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. 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-July 2002 is attached at **Annex B** [to follow].

#### Remit

3. The Committee's remit is based on the portfolio of the Minister for Environment, Sue Essex, which embraces: sustainable development; environmental policy, including countryside issues; the National Parks Authorities; planning; transport and highways; and Cadw (ancient monuments and listed and historic buildings).

#### Aims

4. The Committee aims to champion: the sustainable management of the environment; development that respects the environment and sustains local communities; a sustainable integrated transport system; Welsh heritage.

#### 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 proposes to review topics from the following policy areas:

- Biodiversity
- Radioactive waste (and possibly hazardous waste generally)
- Incineration of waste
- *Scrutiny of the Minister (SO 9.7(ii))* - the Minister for Environment 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 Sustainable Development Action Plan.
- *Scrutiny of sponsored bodies (SO 9.7 (iii))* - the Committee will hold an annual session in the summer term where it will scrutinise the work of the Countryside Council for Wales, Environment Agency and Welsh National Parks and comment on their future work programmes. Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments will also be scrutinised annually in the spring term, when the Committee will also comment on the draft Corporate Plan. The Committee will continue to advise on the quinquennial reviews of the sponsored bodies and Cadw at the relevant times.
- *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, as appropriate;
- *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 Assembly Members to consult the Committee Chair before tabling motions inviting plenary to remit work to the Committee.

**Committee Secretariat**

**January 2002**

## 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."