

Agriculture and Rural Development Committee

Forward Work Programme - Strategic

May 2001 - December 2002

Duties of the Committee

The National Assembly's 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 SO22;
- 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."

Standing Order 9.9 requires the subject committee to maintain a rolling programme of work covering periods of at least 12 months identifying 'topics or matters within the committee's remit which are for detailed consideration.'

The Committee's aims and objectives

The Committee will seek to contribute to the achievement of the aims and objectives set out in *Better Wales*, the Assembly's strategic plan. In particular, 'to build a better, stronger economy'.

The Committee's priorities

Better Wales sets out a number of issues for action in the Assembly. The Committee will play a role in progressing the actions identified in chapter 5, *A better, stronger economy*, in particular, the promotion of a sustainable future for agriculture within a modern rural economy;

In taking forward its responsibilities for contributing to policy development (Standing Order 9.7 (I)), the committee attaches particular importance to:

- the development of a modern, diverse rural economy and sustainable family farms. The committee will complete its review of policies to promote a stronger and more diverse rural economy and monitor the implementation of its recommendations;
- the promotion of a sustainable future for agriculture. The committee will take an active part in the Assembly's review of Tir Gofal, helping to shape the review and offering guidance on how the scheme might be improved;
- ensuring that the impact on rural Wales is taken into account in the development of primary legislation. The committee will conduct an investigation into the effect on Wales of implementing the Hunting Bill;
- the promotion of alternative economic sectors within the rural economy. The committee will play an active part in developing proposals to take forward the Nautilus review of salmon and fresh water fisheries in Wales;
- enabling rural Wales to benefit from developments in information and communications technology. The committee will conduct an inquiry into how ICT infrastructure can be developed to the benefit of rural communities and businesses;
- improving the link between agriculture and the market. The committee will continue to monitor regularly the work of the agri-food partnership;
- improving the administration of services provided by the Assembly to farming and rural communities. The committee will continue to fulfil its obligation under Standing Order 21

<p>Review of diversification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • completion of a wide-ranging review of policies to support greater economic diversity in rural areas 	<p>by June 2001</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a sustainable future for agriculture in a modern rural economy • a competitive, more diverse economy with a dynamic SME sector • increasing the number and quality of jobs and reducing economic inactivity • raise the profile and influence of Wales and establish it as a first class place to live, study, visit and do business
<p>Active part in review of Tir Gofal</p>	<p>by end 2001</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a sustainable future for agriculture in a modern rural economy • development that conserves natural resources and respects the environment • high standards in the management of our environment
<p>Investigation into the effect of the Hunting Bill in Wales</p>	<p>mid 2001</p>	
<p>Developing the potential of salmon and fresh water fisheries</p>	<p>by end 2001</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a competitive, more diverse economy with a dynamic SME sector • increasing the number and quality of jobs and reducing economic inactivity

Developing ICT infrastructure in rural Wales	by mid 2001	cuts across all <i>betterwales</i> target areas	
Monitoring and Review (SO 9.7(ii))			
Agri-food partnership	quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a sustainable future for agriculture in a modern rural economy 	
Structural fund programmes & Rural Development Plan	ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a sustainable future for agriculture in a modern rural economy 	
Monitoring of ASPBs (SO 9.7(iii))			
All major ASPBs with a rural dimension	ongoing		
Legislation (SO 9.8(i) and SO 22)			
	as necessary		
Budget (SO 9.8 (ii))			
	by 30/9 - initial views on priorities by 30/11 - views on preliminary draft budget by 31/1 - views on allocated resources		
Public Appointments (SO 9.8(iv))			
	as necessary		
Scrutiny of Assembly Secretary			

fortnightly report from AS

Secretariat

February 2001