

South East Wales Regional Committee

Report to Plenary: July 2001 to July 2002

Introduction

1. The South East Wales Regional Committee is one of the National Assembly's four regional committees. The geographic area of the Committee, as specified by Standing Order 10.1, is Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend, Caerphilly, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Newport, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Torfaen and the Vale of Glamorgan.

2. During its third year of operation, the Chair of the Committee has been allocated to the Conservative Party, in line with the agreement between party groups. Jonathan Morgan was elected as Chair.

3. The other Members of the Committee are Peter Black, Lorraine Barrett, Rosemary Butler, Alun Cairns, Christine Chapman, Jane Davidson, David Davies, Geraint Davies, Janet Davies, Jocelyn Davies, Ron Davies, Sue Essex, Michael German, William Graham, Janice Gregory, John Griffiths, Brian Hancock, Jane Hutt, Pauline Jarman, Carwyn Jones, Peter Law, Huw Lewis, Dai Lloyd, David Melding, Rhodri Morgan, Lynne Neagle, Jenny Randerson, Owen John Thomas and Phil Williams.

Remit and method of working

4. The role of the regional committees, as defined by Standing Order 10.2, is to advise the National Assembly on matters affecting their regions, the effect of Assembly policies in those regions and the work of public bodies there.

5. With some refinements, the Committee has continued with the working practices established during its first two years of operation. In particular, it has operated as a single committee covering the whole region, with a 'themed' approach to meetings. The Committee continues to give prominence to public participation at meetings. Meetings begin with an 'open mike' session as the first item on the agenda, and members of the public are able to ask questions during the rest of the meeting. Whenever appropriate, the Chair ensures that members of the public receive a written reply to their questions from the relevant Assembly Minister.

6. During the year, the Committee has met at Bridgend, Usk, Aberdare, Ystrad Rhondda, Rhoose and Blackwood. Public attendance continue to rise from an average of 50 in 2000-2001 to over 70 this year

7. The Committee has continued to develop its links with key partners throughout the statutory, voluntary and private sectors in the region. The main bodies invited to meet the Committee during the year are shown in the table below.

Summary of meetings held

8. A summary of Committee meetings in 2000-01 is set out below:

Date	Venue	Topic
2 November 2001	Bridgend	The Committee considered the Welsh Assembly Government's strategy for Older People in Wales. It heard presentations from the deputy Minister for Health and Social Services and a number of local organisations with an interest in the subject. Over 120 members of the public attended
7 December 2001	Usk	The Committee considered the Culture Committee's Review of the Welsh Language. It received presentations from business, education and the media interest and noted the views of members of the public. Minutes of the meeting were forwarded to the Culture Committee as part of their consultation on the review
1 February 2002	Aberdare	The theme of this meeting was Regional Economic Development. Presentations were received from the Welsh Development Agency, the Wales Tourist Board, ELWa, the S E Wales Economic Forum and the Welsh European Funding Office
8 March 2002	Ystrad Rhondda	The Committee considered the report of the Disability Rights Commission, and also received contributions from Disability Wales, Arts Disability, and local representatives from MENCAP, SCOVA, the Wales Council for the Blind and the Rhondda Cynon Taff Coalition for

		Disabled People. In addition, the Committee heard a number of contributions from the audience.
17 May 2002	Rhoose	The meeting considered Cardiff International Airport and Regional Transportation. Presentations were received on behalf of the CIA Steering Group under the chairmanship of the WDA and the Vale of Glamorgan Council. On the more general transport issues, contributions were made by, the South East Wales Traffic Forum, the Strategic Rail Authority and the Confederation of Passenger Transport. Both topics engineered lively debate and audience participation
21 June 2002	Blackwood	An additional meeting of the Committee was arranged to enable consultation and feedback on the Economical Development Committee's Policy review of renewable energy. Dr. Phil Williams AM introduced the report on behalf on the Committee. Other committee members also contributed to the discussion. Representatives of the wind power and bio-mass industries, FoE, RSPB and other individuals and organisations also made their views known. Minutes of the committee's meeting were referred to the Chair of the Economic Development Committee to be considered with the other responses to the Consultation.

Forward work programme

9 The new Chair, in consultation with Members, will be developing the work programme to ensure that the Committee continues to provide a link between the National Assembly and local communities in the region.