

## **SOUTH WEST WALES REGIONAL COMMITTEE**

### **REPORT TO THE ASSEMBLY 2001 - 2002**

#### **Introduction**

1. The South West Wales Regional Committee is one of the Assembly's four regional committees constituted under Standing Order 10.

2. Standing Order 10.2 provides that

“Regional committees shall advise the Assembly on matters affecting their regions, the affect of Assembly policies in those regions and the work of public bodies there.” The Committee is required to meet at least twice a year in the region.

3. There are 17 members:

Peter Black	South Wales West	Liberal Democrats
Nicholas Bourne	Mid and West Wales	Conservative
Alun Cairns	South Wales West	Conservative
Cynog Dafis	Mid and /West Wales	Plaid Cymru
Andrew Davies	Swansea West	Labour
Glyn Davies	Mid and West Wale	Conservative
Janet Davies	South Wales West	Plaid Cymru
Richard Edwards	Preseli Pembrokeshire	Labour
Delyth Evans	Mid and West Wales	Labour
Brian Gibbons	Aberavon	Labour
Christine Gwyther	Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire	Labour
Edwina Hart	Gower	Labour
Helen Mary Jones	Llanelli	Plaid Cymru
Dai Lloyd	South Wales West	Plaid Cymru
Val Lloyd	Swansea East	Labour
Gwenda Thomas	Neath	Labour
Rhodri Glyn Thomas	Carmarthen East and Dinefwr	Plaid Cymru

4. Rhodri Glyn Thomas chaired the Committee from July 2001 to May 2002.

## **Meetings**

5. The Committee has met four times formally and once informally between July 2001 and March 2002.

## **Method of working**

6. Generally, the Committee has focused on public discussion of policies being developed by the Welsh Assembly Government or reviews being carried out by subject committees. Members of the public have also raised other questions and these have been taken back and followed up with the appropriate Assembly Minister.

7. The Committee has also been keen to involve young people in its discussions, particularly in relation to the meetings on the Welsh language review in Fishguard and Ammanford, and hopes to strengthen its links with local schools.

## **Meeting Venues**

8. The Committee has continued to meet in community centres and venues that are accessible to the public. The Clerk continues to seek the advice of the constituency Assembly Member and any local disability access group in selecting venues. As well as Fishguard (July) and Ammanford (March), it has met in Swansea (October) and Aberavon in (January). The informal meeting was held in St Clears.

## **The Issues**

9. The committee has dealt with a range of substantive agenda items across the spectrum of the Assembly's responsibilities.

## Welsh Language

10. The Committee discussed the Welsh language at its meetings on 6 July 2001 and 15 March 2002. In July, discussion focused on the Culture Committee's review of the Welsh language and the National Assembly's objective of creating a bilingual Wales, while the March meeting looked at the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee's review of Welsh language in education. Both meetings gave local organisations, including local school students, the opportunity to put their views to the Committee. These discussions have been reported to the chairs of the two subject committees so that they can be taken into account.

## Waste Management

11. In July, the Committee discussed the Welsh Assembly Government's proposed Waste Management Strategy and heard from a number of local organisations and interest groups. Their views, and those of the public who contributed, were fed back to Sue Essex, the Assembly Minister for Environment, as part of the consultation exercise being undertaken on the Strategy.

## Strategy for Older People

12. At its meeting in October, the Committee looked at the Welsh Assembly Government's proposals to develop a strategic framework to help plan services to meet the changing circumstances and needs of older people in Wales. Jane Hutt, Minister for Health & Social Services, was present at the meeting and received a wide range of views from older people's groups, voluntary organisations and local authority representatives. The evidence presented to the Committee was taken into account as part of the consultation process.

## Rural Economy

13. The Committee returned to the subject of the rural economy in the autumn, following the cancellation of the May meeting due to the intensification of the outbreak of foot and mouth disease. Unfortunately, there was not a quorum for the meeting but the Chair decided to carry on with an informal meeting and the views of local organisations were discussed with those Members present and passed on to Carwyn Jones, Minister for Rural Affairs.

## National Housing Strategy for Wales

14. The National Assembly approved the National Housing Strategy as set out in "Better Homes Better Wales" in July last year. At its meeting in January, the Committee heard the views of local social landlords and residents on how some important issues in the strategy could be taken forward. Edwina Hart, Minister for Finance, Local Government & Communities, who is a member of the Regional Committee, was present and answered questions from the public on the Strategy.

## **Conclusion**

15. The Committee has tried to concentrate its activities to feed into policy development or subject committee reviews, and I should like to thank everyone who has taken part in the proceedings over the last year.

16. During the past year emphasis has been placed on engaging the public and making meetings more accessible. I hope that in the future links with local schools can be strengthened as students have a valuable contribution to make in helping to develop Assembly policy.

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas**  
**Chair**

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### SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

**July 2001 to May 2002**

Date	Venue	Agenda
6 July 2001	Fishguard High School, Fishguard	Culture Committee's Review of Welsh Language; Open Microphone; Waste Management Strategy.
26 Oct 2001	Dylan Thomas Centre, Swansea	Strategy for Older People; Open Microphone.
30 Nov 2001	Leisure Centre, St Clear's	<b>Informal meeting</b> Rural Economy; Open Microphone.
25 Jan 2002	Afan Lido, Port Talbot	National Housing Strategy; Open microphone.
15 Mar 2002	Miners' Welfare Hall, Ammanford	Education & Lifelong Learning Committee's Review of Welsh Language in Education; Open Microphone.
24 May 2002	County Hall Haverfordwest	Disability Issues; Open Microphone; Economic Development Committee's Review of Energy Policy in Wales; Election of Chair; Committee's Annual Report.