

# Social Justice and Regeneration Committee

## Policy Review on Substance Misuse: Update

### Background

1. Member's Research Service have prepared an analysis of the responses to the Committee's policy review into substance and alcohol misuse. The analysis is at Annex 1.

### Issue

2. In particular, Members attention is drawn to the highlighted paragraph on how the aims of the Committee's current policy review relate to other work in the field of substance misuse.

### Recommendation

3. In order to maximize the effectiveness and impact of the policy review, it is suggested that:
4. Members' Research and Committee Services staff examine current and recent work undertaken within the substance misuse field and produce a report for the next Committee meeting that will identify:
  - Areas in which a significant amount of review work has already been undertaken
  - Previous recommendations made at local and national levels
  - Current Welsh Assembly Government policy development work
  - Areas of cross cutting policy which may have been subject to significant review and policy development work driven by policy drivers outside the social justice remit, for example, health or education.
  - Areas which have not been recently reviewed in Wales and in which less policy development work is being undertaken
1. In addition to identifying areas for possible focussed examination, the report would also demonstrate work that has already taken place at policy and strategic level, as well as the

contributions made by a range of organisations over the past few years.

## **Possible Action**

2. On the basis of this report, the Committee decide whether they wish to undertake:
  - Scrutiny of existing policy and the implementation of previous review recommendations; **or**
  - An investigation into a less developed area of policy with the aim of contributing towards policy development.
1. If the Committee agree, the report on current and recent will highlight subject areas more suitable for a scrutiny approach (i.e. developed areas, recently and/or currently reviewed and subject to previous recommendations) and those more suitable for an exploratory and developmental approach (i.e. emerging or less developed policy areas which have not been reviewed for some time
2. From the broad range of potential topics identified by respondents to the consultation exercise, the Committee may wish to select **one or two subjects** for focused and in-depth review.
3. The Committee is also invited to consider the establishment of an informal policy review reference group who can offer advice and guidance on evidence taking sessions and areas for particular investigation. It is suggested that the composition of the group should reflect the range of consultation respondents and the subjects chosen for review. Any factions that are not represented amongst the consultation respondents could also be considered for involvement in such a reference group. If the Committee agrees, a list of potential members will be included in the report referred to in paragraph 4.

## **Timing**

1. The consultation process has been completed and it is perceived that the evidence gathering process will continue until the spring term 2005.