

# Health and Social Care Committee

## Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Bill Consideration of appointing an expert adviser HSC(4)–33–12 (Paper 4): 5 December 2012

### Expert advisers

#### Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to provide advice on the possible appointment of an expert adviser to the Health and Social Care Committee in its Stage 1 scrutiny of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Bill.

#### Background

2. The basis for the appointment of advisers, contained in Standing Order 17.55, is that ‘Committees may appoint advisers in accordance with guidelines issued by the Commission for the purposes of providing expert advice’.

3. We anticipate the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Bill to be introduced in the Assembly on 28 January 2013. As the Committee could be scrutinising three Bills during the spring term, it may be helpful for Committee to discuss, at an early stage, whether it wishes to appoint an expert adviser to enable a shortlist of suitable candidates to be prepared and presented to Committee.

#### Discussion

##### *Role of an adviser*

4. The purpose of expert advice is to:

- complement the in-house expertise of the National Assembly for Wales's Research Service; and
- add value to a Committee's consideration of any particular subject area.

5. This is achieved by providing an additional source of information, advice and analytical capacity to a committee from an external party with a specific and proven specialism in the subject area under committee consideration.

6. As Members will be aware from the factual briefing received on the draft Social Services Bill in May 2012 this is a very detailed Bill. Members may find it helpful to receive additional briefings on each of the main areas contained in the Bill together with suggested lines of inquiry. These briefing papers would, of course, supplement the papers routinely received from the Research Service.

7. Suggested terms of reference for the adviser could be to provide expert advice to the Health and Social Care Committee in its Stage 1 scrutiny of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Bill. This work could involve providing, to the Clerk of the committee and to agreed deadlines:

- written briefings;
- summaries of each section contained in the Bill;
- suggested lines of inquiry based on consultation responses received;
- suggested areas of questioning for the Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services based on written and oral evidence of witnesses;
- key issues arising from all evidence submitted;
- commenting on a first draft of the committee's report.

8. The Committee is likely to be working to a very tight deadline and as a result, the adviser could be required to produce written briefs at very short notice. The adviser may also be expected to attend some or all of the committee's meetings.

## **Next steps**

9. Should the committee agree to appoint an adviser, the Clerking team will prepare a paper with a list of potential advisers for Members to consider at an early meeting in the spring term

## **Recommendation**

10. The Committee is asked to agree:

- whether they wish to appoint an expert adviser for the Stage 1 scrutiny of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Bill;
- to note that a further paper with a list of potential witnesses will be prepared for consideration at an early meeting in January 2013.

**Legislation Office**  
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