

Health, Social Care and Sport Committee

Meeting date: 14 July 2016

Paper 1

Committee responsibilities and short term forward work programme

Purpose

1. This paper:
 - sets out the main responsibilities of the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee ('the Committee') for the Fifth Assembly, and
 - invites the Committee to agree its short term forward work programme.

Establishment and remit of committees

2. Standing Order 16.1 requires the Assembly to establish committees with power within their remit to:
 - (i) examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the government and associated public bodies;
 - (ii) examine legislation;
 - (iii) undertake other functions specified in Standing Orders; and
 - (iv) consider any matter affecting Wales.
3. In doing this, the Business Committee has to ensure that every area of responsibility of the government and associated public bodies, and all matters relating to the legislative competence of the Assembly and functions of the Welsh Ministers and of the Counsel General, are subject to the scrutiny of a committee or committees.
4. On 28 June 2016, the Assembly established six subject-specific committees¹ to carry out the functions described above, as well as a

¹ Children, Young People and Education Committee; Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee; Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee; Economy, Infrastructure and

reserve policy and legislation committee. A further six committees² have also been established to undertake functions specified in Standing Orders, including the Finance and Public Accounts Committees.

The Committee's role and responsibilities

5. The Health, Social Care and Sport Committee was established with a remit "to examine legislation and hold the Welsh Government to account by scrutinising expenditure, administration and policy matters, encompassing (but not restricted to) the physical, mental and public health and well-being of the people of Wales, including the social care system".

6. A more detailed list of the committee's remit is attached at Annexe 1. More detail on the wider roles and responsibilities of Assembly Committees is set out in the Business Committee's report '[Committees in the Fifth Assembly](#)' laid before the Assembly on 23 June 2016.

Role and responsibilities of the Chair

7. The Presiding Officer has written to all Chairs following their election, outlining the Assembly's expectations of Chairs and Committees, as well as the support available to them. A copy of the letter is attached at Annexe 2.

Operation of the Committee

8. The operation of Committees is governed by the rules set out in Standing Order 17. Advice on any aspect of SO17 is available from Clerks. Some of the key elements of SO17 are set out below:

- Declaration of Interests (SO17.24A) – Before taking part in Committee proceedings, a Member must declare any interest, financial or otherwise, that they, or to their knowledge, a family member, has or is expecting to have which is relevant to those

Skills Committee; Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee; Health, Social Care and Sport Committee

² Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee; Finance Committee; Petitions Committee; Public Accounts Committee; Scrutiny of the First Minister Committee; Standards of Conduct Committee

proceedings, and might reasonably be thought by others to influence their contribution.

- Quorum (SO17.31) - A committee meeting must be declared inquorate if there are fewer than three Members, or less than one-third of the committee's members, whichever is the greater, present. A committee meeting must be declared inquorate if, at the beginning of the meeting, the Members present represent only one political group.
- Openness (SO17.40) - Committees must meet in public and broadcasting access for public meetings must be permitted in accordance with such arrangements as the Commission agrees. Committee meetings are broadcast on Senedd TV and transcripts of committee meetings are made available in draft form within three to five working days, with a final version published within 10 working days.
- Meeting in Private (SO17.42) - A committee may resolve to exclude the public from a formal meeting or any part of a formal meeting for a specified purpose. These Standing Orders do not apply to informal meetings.
- Substitution (SO17.48) - A committee member who has given advance notice to the chair may be represented at a meeting, or a part of a meeting, by another Member from the same political group who has been identified in advance.

Support for the Committee

9. The Committee will be supported in all aspects of its work by a dedicated integrated team. The integrated team is made up of Commission staff from the following areas:

- Committee Clerking Team
- Research Service
- Legal Services
- Communications (Outreach and Youth Engagement)
- Translation and Reporting Service

Committee Forward Work Programme

10. A list of suggested early inquiries is attached at Annexe 3. This is based on the Committee's informal discussions last week. The Committee will have the opportunity to discuss its longer term work programme in the autumn term.

11. In addition, the Committee may wish to consider putting time aside early in the autumn term to discuss strategic planning and preferred ways of working.

Other issues

12. There are a number of other specific matters that will need to be incorporated into the Committee's Forward Work Programme, including:

Legislation

13. The First Minister made a statement in plenary on Tuesday 28 June outlining the Welsh Government's Legislative Programme for the first year of the Fifth Assembly. The programme includes a commitment to re-introduce the Public Health Bill, without the restrictions on the use of e-cigarettes in enclosed public spaces.

14. The First Minister's statement does not include a specific timetable for introduction of the individual Bills. Subject to the Business Committee agreeing to refer specific Bills to the Committee, it may need to be flexible when planning the forward work programme in order to be able to respond to the demands of legislative scrutiny.

Budget Scrutiny

15. Scrutiny of the Welsh Government's budget will remain a routine part of the Committee's work programme. Once the timetable for the forthcoming budget has been agreed, the clerking team will arrange scrutiny sessions with relevant Cabinet Secretaries.

Action

16. The Committee is invited to—

- note its role and responsibilities (paragraphs 5 and 6);

- agree its short term forward work programme (paragraph 10 and annexe 3);
- agree in principle to put time aside early in the autumn term for strategic planning (paragraph 11);
- note the other specific matters to be incorporated into the forward work programme (paragraphs 12-14).