

Europe Matters

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Cynulliad National
Cenedlaethol Assembly for
Cymru Wales

Issue 6 – February 2007

Introduction

Welcome to the sixth edition of the Europe Matters. We have a packed agenda for our final meeting of this mandate of the European and External Affairs Committee.

We are very pleased to have Commissioner Wallström joining us via video link. Improving citizens' understanding of Europe through better communication and education has been a recurring theme in the Committee over the past year. We look forward to discussing this with her, what plans she has for the next steps of the EU's communication strategy and her thoughts on the future of the EU's Constitutional Treaty.

We are also honoured to have the American Ambassador joining us at the Committee. His Excellency, Robert Holmes Tuttle, will deliver an address on relations between Wales and the United States of America.

The Green Paper on an EU Maritime policy will be in the spotlight on the 8 March as the EIN and EPC Committees hold a joint session on it. The Head of the Commission's EU Maritime Taskforce will be on the video link, to discuss with Members how the EU can support the sustainable development of our coastal areas and the result of the Committees' Wales consultation. It is a very broad ranging policy area with interest from a wide variety of stakeholders in Wales.

This is the final issue of Europe Matters for a while as the Second Assembly's Mandate is at an end. There should be a successor European and External Affairs Committee in the Third Assembly, but there will be changes to ways of working at the Assembly in light of the Government of Wales Act – an exciting new stage for devolution in Wales. The Assembly may therefore have to consider again how best to keep you informed of what European issues we are discussing here. We hope you've found the

current format useful and thank you for your interest in our work.

Sandy Mewies
Chair of the European and External Affairs Committee

Forthcoming EU business in the Assembly's Committees

European and External Affairs Committee

28 February 2007

- ◆ **Commissioner Margot Wallström** – the Commissioner will have an exchange of views with the committee on the EU's communication strategy, institutional relations and the constitutional treaty.
- ◆ **The UK's US Ambassador** – His Excellency Robert Holmes Tuttle, Ambassador of the United States of America to the Court of St James will address the Committee on relations between Wales and the United States of America.
- ◆ **Policy Review Report** – Members will discuss the report and recommendations of their review of European and global citizenship education in Wales.
- ◆ **Annual Report, Legacy Paper and EC Work Programme 2007** – the Committee will discuss the annual report; the Commission's Work Programme 2007; and legacy paper which summarises the work of the Committee over the current mandate and makes suggestions for the successor Committee.

Enterprise Innovation and Networks Committee

8 March 2007

- ◆ **EU Maritime Strategy** – the EIN and EPC Committees will hold a joint session to consider their response to the Commission's Green Paper, taking into account Welsh stakeholders' responses to the Committees' joint consultation. John Richardson, the Head of the EU Maritime Task Force in the Commission will present the Green Paper.
- ◆ **Clean Coal Technologies** – the Committee will consider the Commission's recent communication on sustainable fossil fuel and the Welsh Assembly Government's actions in relation to supporting clean coal.

21 March 2007

- ◆ **WEFO Quarterly Report** – WEFO will provide an update on the

progress of the current structural funds programmes.

Related items

- ◆ **First Minister – Science Policy** – the Committee will discuss the Welsh Assembly Government's response to the Committee's review with the First Minister, in his capacity as Minister for Science.

[Environment, Planning and Countryside Committee](#)

1 March 2007

Related items

- ◆ **Dairy Strategy Consultation** – Following the evidence gathering session on 7 February concerning the Welsh Assembly Government's Dairy Strategy Consultation, the Committee will hear more views on the topic from the Farmers Union of Wales (FUW) and the National Farmers Union of Wales (NFU Cymru).

8 March 2007

- ◆ **EU Maritime Policy Green Paper** – The Committee will hold a session on the EU's Maritime Policy Green Paper jointly with the Enterprise, Innovation and Networks Committee. Members will be joined via video link by the head of the European Commission's Maritime Policy Taskforce, John Richardson.

14 March 2007

- ◆ **EU Green Paper on Adaptation to Climate Change** – The Committee will be briefed on the forthcoming Green Paper on Adaptation to Climate Change by an official from the European Commission.

[Social Justice and Regeneration](#)

22 March 2007

- ◆ **European legislation** – the Committee will receive an update on recent developments in relation to EU issues of interest which they have identified.

Look Back: EU related topics discussed or noted in the Assembly's Committees

[European and External Affairs Committee](#)

[24 January 2007](#)

- ◆ **EU Competitiveness and Convergence programmes** – the Committee agreed a response to the WAG's consultation on the regional competitiveness and employment programme for East Wales.
- ◆ **EU Funding for environmental projects** – the RSPB briefed the Committee on their views on EU funding opportunities for environmental projects in the new round of programmes for 2007-2013.

[Enterprise Innovation and Networks Committee](#)

[14 February 2007](#)

- ◆ **Minister's report** – includes an update on the structural funds programmes and negotiations on the new programmes.

[17 January 2007](#)

- ◆ **Minister's report** – includes an update on the structural funds programmes and negotiations on the new programmes.
- ◆ **EU Competitiveness programme** – the Committee agreed a response to the WAG's consultation on the regional competitiveness and employment programme for East Wales.
- ◆ **EU legislative and policy priorities for 2007** – the Committee noted the relevant issues from the European Commission's work programme for 2007. They included the Strategic Energy Review and the accompanying package of proposals; the 4th cohesion report (EU regional policy); the development of an EU maritime policy; Green Paper on urban transport; and the future of the European Research Area.

[Local Government and Public Services Committee](#)

[18 January 2007](#)

- ◆ **EU legislative and policy priorities for 2007** – the Committee noted the relevant issues from the European Commission's work programme for 2007. They included a European strategy for social services; a directive on the award of concessions; and green public procurement strategies.

[Social Justice and Regeneration](#)

[1 February 2007](#)

- ◆ **EU legislative and policy priorities for 2007** – the Committee noted

the relevant issues from the European Commission's work programme for 2007. They included the European Year of Combating poverty and Social Exclusion 2010; the common European Asylum System; and the social reality stocktaking exercise.

[15 February 2007](#)

Related items

- ◆ **Postal Services** – the Committee received a presentation on the Future of Post Offices in Wales by the Communication Workers Union which looks at the impact of the UK Government proposals for the post office network.

[Environment, Planning and Countryside Committee](#)

[25 January 2007](#)

- ◆ **EU legislative and policy priorities for 2007** – Members identified several items of significance to the Committee's remit from the European Commission's work programme for 2007. These include a white paper on climate change; the follow up to the maritime policy green paper; a communication presenting the Community Animal Health Policy (CAHP) 2007-2013, and a regulation on animal by-products.
- ◆ **Minister's Report** – The Minister updated the Committee on the Single Payment Scheme 2006, reporting that 85% of Welsh farmers had received a payment by 9 January 2007.

Related items

- ◆ **Climate Change Bill** – The Committee had a session on the UK Climate Change Bill. Members discussed the possibilities of Wales gaining framework powers from Westminster on certain aspects of the Bill.
- ◆ **Waste Management** – the Committee heard evidence from the Environment Agency on Waste Management. The Agency stated that on current trends Wales was unlikely to reach the 2013 EU target on the landfilling of biodegradable waste and could incur infraction penalties.

[7 February 2007](#)

Related

- ◆ **Dairy Strategy Consultation** – Members spoke to key stakeholders in the dairy industry to discuss the Welsh Assembly Government's Dairy Strategy Consultation (a further session will take place on 1 March

2007).

[Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee](#)

[17 January 2007](#)

- ◆ **Minister's Report** – The minister reported that the Welsh Assembly Government's bid with other EU partners to test the alignment of national qualifications frameworks with the European Qualifications Framework under the EU's Leonardo Programme had been successful.
- ◆ **East Wales Regional Competitiveness and Employment Programmes Consultation** – The Committee considered a WAG consultation on the Programme, in particularly the economic inactivity aspects, which falls under this Committee's remit.

[1 February 2007](#)

- ◆ **Paper to note on EU legislative and policy priorities for 2007** – The Committee paper identified several items of significance to the Committee's remit from the European Commission's work programme for 2007. Key items include the Erasmus Mundus II Programme, the establishment of a European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET), and a Communication on modernising school education in Europe.

[Culture, Welsh Language and Sport Committee](#)

[7 February 2007](#)

- ◆ **EU legislative and policy priorities for 2007** – Members identified several items of significance to the Committee's remit from the European Commission's work programme for 2007. These include the forthcoming Communication on Culture and the White Paper on Sport.

[Equality of Opportunity Committee](#)

[24 January 2007](#)

- ◆ **EU legislative and policy priorities for 2007** – The Committee received a paper to note identifying items of significance to the Committee's remit from the European Commission's work programme 2007.

Links



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We welcome communication in either English or Welsh.

Ymddiheurwn bod y cylchlythyr ar gael yn Saesneg yn unig. Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

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