



House of Commons
Welsh Affairs Committee

**Work of the
Committee in 2005-06**

First Report of Session 2006–07

Report and formal minutes

*Ordered by The House of Commons
to be printed 30 January 2007*

HC 291

Published on Monday 26 February 2007
by authority of the House of Commons
London: The Stationery Office Limited
£0.00

The Welsh Affairs Committee

The Welsh Affairs Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Office of the Secretary of State for Wales (including relations with the National Assembly for Wales).

Current membership

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Mr Stephen Crabb MP (*Conservative, Preseli Pembrokeshire*)
David T.C. Davies MP (*Conservative, Monmouth*)
Nia Griffith MP (*Labour, Llanelli*)
Mrs Siân C. James MP (*Labour, Swansea East*)
Mr David Jones MP (*Conservative, Clwyd West*)
Mr Martyn Jones MP (*Labour, Clwyd South*)
Jessica Morden MP (*Labour, Newport East*)
Albert Owen MP (*Labour, Ynys Môn*)
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Powers

The committee is one of the Departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No 152. These are available on the Internet via www.parliament.uk.

Publications

The reports and evidence of the Committee are published by The Stationery Office by Order of the House. All publications of the Committee (including press notices) are on the internet at www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/welsh_affairs_committee.cfm. A list of reports of the Committee in the present Parliament is at the back of this volume.

Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee is Nick Wright (Clerk), Stephen Boyce (Committee Specialist), Christine Randall (Committee Assistant), Sarah Colebrook (Secretary), Jim Lawford (Chief Office Clerk) and Laura Kibby (Media Officer).

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Introduction

1. This report is the sixth annual report from the Welsh Affairs Committee to the House and covers the work of the Committee during 2005-06.¹

2. The Committee was reconstituted on 19 July, following the 2005 General Election, and the new Committee Members were appointed on 20 July 2005. During that year, Betty Williams MP was discharged on 21 November and Jessica Morden MP was appointed. On 6 March 2006, Madeline Moon MP was discharged and Albert Owen MP was appointed.

3. In May 2002 the House agreed a resolution setting out “illustrative tasks” for select committees. In June 2002 the Chairman of the Liaison Committee wrote to all committees setting out guidance on committee objectives and core tasks, with the intention that those core tasks be reflected in committees’ annual reports.² Since 2003, a number of committees have set out their achievements against those common objectives and core tasks in tabular form. The Liaison Committee welcomed that approach and encouraged other committees to adopt that practice.³

Core tasks of Select Committees (entries under ‘Department’ refer to Government Departments scrutinised by the Committee and are not restricted to the Wales Office)

	Government and Commission Policy Proposals	Examination of Deficiencies	Departmental Actions	Associated Public Bodies	Major Appointments	Implementation of Legislation	Draft Legislation	Expenditure	Evidence from Minister	Public Service Agreements
Government White Paper: Better Governance for Wales	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	
Proposed Restructuring of the Police Forces in Wales		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	
Energy in Wales		✓	✓						✓	
Future of RAF St Athan		✓	✓						✓	
Current Restructuring of the Police Forces in Wales		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	
NHS Dentistry in Wales		✓	✓	✓						

1 The first annual report (1st Special Report of the Welsh Affairs Committee, *The work of the Committee since devolution*, HC 81, Session 2000–01) was published on 21 December 2000. The second annual report (published as Appendix T to the 1st Report of the Liaison Committee, *Work of select committees 2001*, HC 590, Session 2001–02) was published on 7 February 2002. The third annual report (3rd Report of the Welsh Affairs Committee, *Work of the Committee in 2002*, HC 263, Session 2002–03) was published on 6 February 2003. The fourth annual report (2nd Report of the Welsh Affairs Committee, *Work of the Committee in 2003*, HC 178, Session 2003–04) was published on 17 February 2004. The fifth annual report (1st Report of the Welsh Affairs Committee, *Work of the Committee in 2004*, HC 256, Session 2006–07) was published on 27 January 2005.

2 1st Report of the Liaison Committee, *Annual Report for 2003* (HC 446, Session 2003–04), para 5

3 *ibid*, para 8

4. The Welsh Affairs Committee's role differs from that of many departmental select committees. While our role is to scrutinise the Wales Office, that Department does not carry out the functions of a traditional department. It is a 'small policy department',⁴ with few executive functions.⁵ The Wales Office Annual Report 2006 states that the primary aim of the Wales Office is to "support the Secretary of State in representing Wales in the UK Government, representing the UK Government in Wales, and improving the working of the devolution settlement in Wales".⁶ Therefore many of the core objectives set out by the Liaison Committee are not applicable to the Welsh Affairs Committee. For example, the Wales Office does not have responsibility of any public bodies or agencies, it does not oversee major appointments and its public service agreements come under the Department of Constitutional Affairs. However, the Committee does have an important role to play in providing a link between the UK Government and the National Assembly for Wales. That role is reflected in its Standing Orders which are to scrutinise the expenditure, administration and policy of the Wales Office (including relations with the National Assembly for Wales).⁷

5. That difference was acknowledged by the Liaison Committee which stated that 'For understandable reasons, not all committees' work falls neatly within the core tasks'.⁸ Where they do apply, we have followed the guidance set out by the Liaison Committee and have produced the recommended tables to reflect our activities in 2005-06.⁹

Policy Scrutiny

6. Scrutiny of Government policy is a core task. During 2005-06, the Committee was involved in eight inquiries, published five substantive reports and published one daily part of evidence.¹⁰ Those inquiries were: The Government White Paper: Better Governance for Wales; Proposed restructuring of the police forces in Wales; NHS dentistry in Wales; Energy in Wales; Future of RAF St Athan; The current restructuring of police forces in Wales; Wales Office Annual Reports 2005 and 2006; and Welsh prisoners in the prison estate. Since our last annual report¹¹ we have also published reports on Manufacturing and Trade in Wales¹² and Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Bill [HL].¹³

7. These inquiries covered the work of the Home Office, Ministry of Defence, and Department for Trade and Industry. That coverage demonstrates that our role is greater than scrutinising the Wales Office, and that we cast our net widely in scrutinising Government policy that directly affects Wales.

4 www.walesoffice.gov.uk

5 3rd Report of the Welsh Affairs Committee, *Work of the Committee in 2002* (HC 263, Session 2002–03), para 2

6 *Wales Office Annual Report 2006*, Chapter 2

7 Standing Order 152

8 3rd Report of the Welsh Affairs Committee, *Work of the Committee in 2002* (HC 263, Session 2002–03), para 9

9 See table, *Core tasks of select committees*, p 1, and Annex A

10 See Annex A

11 1st Report of the Welsh Affairs Committee, *Work of the Committee in 2004* (HC 256, Session 2004-05)

12 2nd Report of the Welsh Affairs Committee, *Manufacturing and Trade in Wales* (HC 329-I, Session 2004-05)

13 3rd Report of the Welsh Affairs Committee, *Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Bill [HL]* (HC 234, Session 2004-05)

Government White Paper: Better Governance for Wales

8. On 18 September 1997, the Welsh public voted in favour of devolution for Wales through a referendum by a margin of 6,721 votes. Subsequently, the Government of Wales Bill was introduced in November 1997 providing for the National Assembly for Wales. The Bill received Royal Assent on 31 July 1998 and the Secretary of State for Wales' powers passed to a democratically elected body of 60 members constituted as a corporate body combining both executive and scrutiny functions, after elections to the National Assembly on 6 May 1999.

9. There was a consensus within the National Assembly that although this corporate body model was sufficient it was not the most effective form of devolution for Wales. Through recommendations of the Assembly Review of Procedure, the term Welsh Assembly Government was created, to separately identify the executive and legislative functions. Following this, the Commission on the Powers and Electoral Arrangements of the National Assembly for Wales chaired by Lord Ivor Richard was appointed by the First Minister. In its report (published on 31 March 2004) it set out a series of further recommended reforms.

10. The Government acknowledged the need for a revised settlement and published the White Paper, Better Governance for Wales on 15 June 2005. The Rt Hon Peter Hain MP, Secretary of State for Wales, depicted the White Paper as putting devolution on “a road towards a better Wales with our devolved government more accountable, more participatory and more effective, giving more powers to the Assembly”.¹⁴

11. The Committee agreed to undertake an inquiry to scrutinise the Government's White Paper, Better Governance for Wales. After announcing the inquiry in July 2005, we received written evidence during the summer and commenced a programme of oral evidence sessions in October and November.

12. During the inquiry, we took evidence on four occasions both in Wales and England. Those sessions included evidence from the Rt Hon Lord Richard QC, Chair of the Commission, the Secretary of State for Wales, the Presiding Officer of the National Assembly for Wales, and the First Minister of the Welsh Assembly Government.

13. Drawing on evidence provided by the National Assembly Committee, the responses to the Wales Office consultation exercise and evidence presented directly to our Committee, we published our Report on the Government White Paper: Better Governance for Wales, on 13 December 2005.¹⁵

14. Our Report focused on the separation of the executive and the legislature, the recommendations of the National Assembly Committee, new legislative powers and electoral reform. We welcomed the proposed new Government of Wales Bill, recognising the benefits of stand-alone legislation, and supported the proposals for electoral reform. We agreed that a ‘Welsh statue book’ would prove beneficial and that the proposed formal separation of the legislature and the executive of the National Assembly of Wales was constructive.

14 www.walesoffice.gov.uk/pn_20050615.html

15 1st Report of the Welsh Affairs Committee, *Government White Paper: Better Governance for Wales* (HC 551, Session 2005–06)

15. Our Report was published in time for the debates on the Government of Wales Bill in the House of Commons on 9, 23, 24 and 30 January 2006.

16. The Bill received royal assent on 25 July 2006 and will come into effect immediately following the general election to the National Assembly for Wales in May this year. We took evidence, just before Christmas, on the procedures for transferring new areas of legislative competence to the National Assembly for Wales under the 2006 Act's provisions, and will be reporting shortly.

Proposed restructuring of the police forces in Wales

17. In the last Parliament, our predecessor Committee embarked on an inquiry into the Police Service, Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour in Wales.¹⁶ This was in response to the Government's White Paper *Building Communities, Beating Crime: a better police service for the 21st Century*,¹⁷ outlining the Government's intention to review the structure of the constabulary across England and Wales. The Committee concluded that they saw 'no case for the amalgamation of the police forces in Wales'.¹⁸

18. Since this inquiry the review by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), *Closing the Gap - a review of the 'fitness for purpose' of the current structure of policing in England and Wales*, published on 16 September 2005, concluded that the 43 forces in England and Wales should be restructured in order to provide more effective protective services.¹⁹

19. With the Government's acceptance of HMIC Review's conclusions and recommendations, the Committee decided to undertake a follow up inquiry to investigate the progress made with the proposed restructuring. During two sessions in December 2005 and January 2006 evidence was taken from the Chief Constables of Wales Police Force, the Chairs of the Police Authorities of Wales, and from the Minister of State for Policing, Security and Community Safety.

20. On 22 February 2006, our Second Report on the Proposed Restructuring of the Police Forces in Wales was published.²⁰ In it the Committee looked at the restructuring process, including the timetable of implementation, and the consultations with, and information supplied to, the Chief Constables, the Police Authorities of Wales, and the public. We considered an all-Wales strategic force, focussing on the protective services in Wales and neighbourhood policing. We investigated funding of the Welsh force both in terms of set up and post-restructuring, as well as savings for the proposed options and the re-allocation of funding within Wales. The Report covered governance in terms of a strategic police authority and the voluntary amalgamation of police authorities.

16 4th Report of the Welsh Affairs Committee, *Police service, crime and anti-social behaviour in Wales* (HC 46-I, Session 2004-05)

17 www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/wp04_complete.pdf

18 4th Report of the Welsh Affairs Committee, *Police service, crime and anti-social behaviour in Wales* (HC 46-I, Session 2004-05), p 16

19 HMIC Review, *Closing the Gap – a review of 'fitness for purpose of the current structure of policing in England and Wales'*, published on 16 September 2005. Full text available at www.inspectorates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic

20 2nd Report of the Welsh Affairs Committee, *Proposed restructuring of the police forces in Wales* (HC 751, Session 2005-06)

21. The Committee acknowledged that there was a ‘gap’ in the provision of protective services but expressed a concern that the Government had adopted a ‘one size fits all’ approach to the restructuring of the police services across England and Wales.²¹ Furthermore, we noted the tight timetable for implementation and a lack of information circulated to the relevant bodies, giving the appearance of a ‘done deal’.²² The Committee recommended that set-up costs be met by the UK Government, and called for a more flexible approach to restructuring, with further consultations with the public and professionals bodies in order to reach a consensus.

22. An uncorrected transcript of oral evidence taken during the inquiry²³ was noted on the Order Paper as being relevant to a Commons debate on police restructuring on 19 December 2005.²⁴

23. The Government accepted several of our Report’s recommendations; notably, the creation of a Strategic Police Authority for Wales with 43 members (only for the first two years), amending the Police Act 1996 in order to make provision for the existence of more than one Deputy Chief Constable, and an undertaking to meet 100% of the net costs of restructuring.²⁵

NHS dentistry in Wales

24. Matters relating to health, including dentistry, are devolved to the Welsh Assembly Government. The Committee decided to hold a one-off oral evidence session on NHS dentistry in Wales with representatives from the British Dental Association. Discussions focussed on recruitment and retention, the new general dental service contract, dental charges, historic underinvestment, and the relationship between the dental profession, the Department of Health and the Welsh Assembly Government. This evidence was published as a daily part, *NHS dentistry in Wales* on 27 April 2006.²⁶

Energy in Wales

25. In 1993-94 our predecessor Committee published a Report on wind energy.²⁷ Our major inquiry for 2005-06 took this further by looking at the energy mix in Wales in light of the current energy debate. The inquiry focussed on the cost, cleanliness, efficiency and sustainability of existing energy sources in Wales, including nuclear, wind, gas, oil and coal as well as newer forms of energy provision such as tidal and wave, solar (including photovoltaics), hydro electric, biomass and geothermal.

21 *2nd Report of the Welsh Affairs Committee, Proposed restructuring of the police forces in Wales (HC 751, Session 2005-2006)*, paras 27, 41

22 *ibid*, para 37

23 Uncorrected minutes of evidence taken before the Welsh Affairs Committee, 6 December 2005

24 HC Deb, Session 2005-06, 19 December 2005, cols 1581-1650

25 Proposed restructuring of the police forces in Wales: Government Response to the Committee’s 2nd Report of Session 2005-06 (HC 1431, Session 2005 - 06)

26 *NHS dentistry in Wales*, oral and written evidence (HC 771-I, Session 2005-06)

27 2nd Report from the Welsh Affairs Committee, *Wind energy* (HC 336-I, Session 1993-94)

26. As Wales is at the cutting edge of innovative energy production and conservation technologies in the UK, the Committee scrutinised the UK Government's policy and its approach towards the development of both traditional and innovative sustainable energy. We also looked at the relationship between the UK Government and the National Assembly for Wales in relation to Wales' current and future energy needs, including the division of powers on energy policy.

27. The Committee held nine evidence sessions from a range of witnesses including those from small and large energy production companies, academics involved in energy technologies, campaigning groups, officials and Ministers from both the UK and Welsh Assembly Governments.

28. During this inquiry, we visited a large number of companies and organisations in Wales to experience at first hand the benefits and challenges facing the energy industry. Some of the sites visited included Cefn Croes onshore wind farm, Ffestiniog (hydroelectric), Wylfa (nuclear) and Aberthaw (coal-fired) power stations, Tower Colliery and the Centre for Alternative Technology. In March 2005 the Committee visited the United States of America to see the National Renewable Energy Laboratory and Colorado School on Mines in Denver, followed by a tour of Excelon, Illinois Clean Coal Institute and Argonne National Laboratory in Chicago.

29. The Report *Energy in Wales* was published on 20 July 2006, just days after the Government published the conclusions of its second Energy Review. We are confident that it will be taken into consideration during the preparation of the White Paper, which is scheduled for publication early in 2007.²⁸

Future of RAF St Athan

30. The Ministry of Defence (MoD) announced its tender for bids for a two part contract to deliver a training academy for the Armed Forces. When the Metrix consortium, a strong contender, chose St Athan as the location for its bid, the Committee agreed to do a short inquiry into the future of RAF St Athan.

31. Over a series of three sessions, one held at the National Assembly for Wales, evidence was taken from the Wales All-Party Military Academy Group, the M4/St Athan Parliamentary Steering Group, Vale of Glamorgan Council, the Welsh Assembly Government and the MoD.

32. The Committee published its Fourth Report, *Future of RAF St Athan*, on 25 July 2006.²⁹ The Report looked at the current position of RAF St Athan, the defence training review, the Metrix bid, and the benefits of, and support for, this bid for Wales. The Report also considered the criteria, evaluation, and auditing processes of the MoD's tender exercise.

33. The future of St Athan's site and facilities has been a cause for concern since the Defence Aviation Repair Agency (DARA) relocated its activities to England. The Committee recognised this was an opportunity to maintain the site as a key defence facility

28 3rd Report of the Welsh Affairs Committee, *Energy in Wales* (HC 876-I, Session 2005-06)

29 4th Report of the Welsh Affairs Committee, *Future of RAF St Athan* (HC 1129, Session 2005-06)

and expressed its support for the Metrix bid. Furthermore, we acknowledged the benefits that a successful bid would bring to St Athan and to Wales and welcomed the assurance by the MoD of a fair and open competition.

34. On 17 January 2007 the Secretary of State for Defence confirmed that the Metrix bid had been successful.³⁰ The Committee welcomes this announcement as recognition of the value of locating and investing in Wales, and welcomes the jobs, skills and training which will follow as a result of this decision.

Current restructuring of the police forces in Wales

35. Our last Report of the 2005-06 session was derived from a brief follow up inquiry to our earlier Report, *Proposed restructuring of the police forces in Wales*. *The current restructuring of the police forces in Wales* was instigated by our concern about the proposed timetable and the financial arrangements for any new all Wales police force.

36. We invited written evidence from the Chief Constables of Wales, chairs of the police authorities in Wales, and the Secretary of State for Wales; and conducted a one-off oral evidence session with the Home Office Minister of State for policing, security and community safety.

37. Before we were able to reach a conclusion, the government announced on 12 July 2006 that the Wales police forces merger was to be halted until further consent could be reached between the parties involved. We therefore concluded that ‘an all Wales police force is no longer a credible option’, and strongly indicated that the four Welsh forces should not suffer financially.³¹

38. A paper trail on our recommendations would highlight the consistent approach that the Welsh Affairs Committee has taken on proposals to restructure the Welsh police forces. Furthermore, it would demonstrate that Welsh Affairs Committees past and present have been resolute in their determination to influence Government policy on this matter. That determination was rewarded when the Government responded to our Report with confirmation that the plans to merge were being withdrawn, and agreed to our recommendation to contribute to the costs incurred by the police forces involved in preparing for mergers.

Government Replies

39. In our previous annual reports we have set out the Government’s performance in responding to our reports within the two-month deadline. The responses to our reports on *The Government White Paper: Better Governance for Wales* and *Future of RAF St Athan* were received within the two month deadline. The responses to our reports on *Energy in Wales* and *Current restructuring of the police forces in Wales* were received only marginally outside that deadline. The response to the Committee’s reports on *Manufacturing and trade in Wales*, *Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Bill*, *Police Service*, *crime and anti-*

30 HC Deb, 17 January 2007, cols 787–802

31 5th Report of the Welsh Affairs Committee, *Current restructuring of the police forces in Wales* (HC 1418, Session 2005–06), paras 24, 25

social behaviour, Proposed restructuring of the police forces in Wales and *The current restructuring of the police forces in Wales*, were over two months late. Overall this represents a dip in performance in comparison to the previous year which is unacceptable.

40. The Welsh Assembly Government continues to respond to our reports by means of an oral statement at the National Assembly. We welcome its continued interest in our work.

Future programme

41. Our first inquiry of 2006-07, (which commenced in 2005-06) is *Welsh prisoners in the prison estate*. The Committee is looking into the experience of the Welsh remand and sentenced prisoners held within the prison estate (open and closed prisons) specifically including, young offenders, juveniles, women and prisoners from North and Mid Wales. We will also investigate other prison regimes and alternatives to custody and how they can be modified and applied in Wales, as well as considering obligations under the Human Rights Act in regards to aspects such as location, gender and language. The Committee has visited HMP Cardiff, HMP Eastwood Park and HMP Altcourse and conducted six evidence sessions (two of which took place in Session 2005-06). The report is expected to be published in early 2007.

42. Further to our Report *Energy in Wales*,³² we decided to embark on a brief follow up inquiry, which will take place in January 2007. The focus of the inquiry will be on the future of coal production in Wales, its environmental impact and local initiatives to combat climate change. Evidence will be given by the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Energy and by representatives of the Centre for Alternative Technology, the Opencast Coal Committee of Wales, Miller Argent, Unity Power Plc, Energybuild, the TGWU, PACT (Preserving and Conserving Together), and the Woodland Trust.

43. The Government of Wales Act 2006 introduced a new mechanism for enhancing the legislative powers of the National Assembly of Wales on a case-by-case basis, with Parliamentary consent. These enhanced powers are to be conferred by way of Orders in Council, or Legislative Competence Orders. The Committee decided to hold a short inquiry into the procedure proposed for such Orders in Council and held a one-off evidence session in December 2006, when oral evidence was given by the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Wales, the Presiding Officer of the National Assembly for Wales, the Chairs of the Business and Standing Orders Committees, and officials of the Wales Office and of the National Assembly. We considered this a valuable exercise and expect to issue a short report early in 2007.

44. The Committee's next major inquiry will be *Globalisation and its impact on Wales*. This will focus on four main themes: employment; broadcasting and the creative industries; food production and supply; and population and population movement. We are currently receiving written evidence and will begin taking oral evidence on employment matters in January 2007.

32 3rd Report of the Welsh Affairs Committee, *Energy in Wales* (HC 876-I, Session 2005-06)

Welsh language

45. Under certain circumstances, the Committee is entitled to conduct its proceedings in Welsh. We continue to take oral evidence in Welsh when a witness requests. During 2005-06 we took evidence twice in Welsh - once at the National Assembly with the Presiding Officer and the other at the House of Commons, with a witness from PAWB (People Against Wylfa B). Welsh may also be used during formal joint working with Committees of the National Assembly for Wales. However, that entitlement does not extend to the production of bi-lingual reports.

Examination of the expenditure and administration of the Wales Office

46. On 25 October 2006 we took evidence from the Secretary of State for Wales and senior officials on the Wales Office Annual Reports 2005 and 2006.³³ It is our practice to receive in advance of that evidence session a memorandum from the Wales Office giving detailed information on the policy, finance and administration of the Department. This gives us the opportunity to question the Secretary of State and his officials on wider issues and themes. This year, our evidence session concentrated on the proposed new procedure for Order in Council under the Government of Wales Act 2006 and Wales Office targets, objectives and expenditure.

Legislation

47. A core task of select committees identified by the Liaison Committee is ‘the scrutiny of any published draft bill within the committee’s responsibilities’.³⁴ This is a task that the Welsh Affairs Committee takes seriously. In 2005 we scrutinised *The Government White Paper: Better Governance for Wales*.

Joint working with the National Assembly for Wales

48. In 2004 the House of Commons and the National Assembly for Wales each agreed procedures to allow for formal joint working between the Committee and committees of the National Assembly on issues of mutual interest. This procedure, known as ‘reciprocal enlargement’, allows the Committee to invite Assembly Members to attend and participate in the Committee’s proceedings (but not to vote), and for the National Assembly’s committees to invite members of the Welsh Affairs Committee to do likewise. On 13 July 2005 the House amended its Standing Orders³⁵ so that joint working could be a permanent feature of our work.

49. During the 2005-06 Session the opportunity did not arise to work jointly with the National Assembly for Wales, but we look forward to continuing this beneficial working arrangement in the future. In particular, formal joint working is expected to form part of

33 *Wales Office Annual Report 2005 and 2006*, oral and written evidence (HC 1674-i, Session 2005-06)

34 1st Report of the Liaison Committee, *Annual Report 2003* (HC 446, Session 2003–04), para 6

35 Standing Order 137, Select committees: power to work with other committees

the standard scrutiny process for the examination of Orders in Council introduced under the Government of Wales Act 2006.

Other links with the National Assembly for Wales

50. Wherever possible, we consult with our colleagues at the National Assembly. We continued this practice during 2005-06. We took formal evidence from the Rt Hon Lord Elis-Thomas AM, National Assembly Presiding Officer and Rt Hon Rhodri Morgan AM, First Minister for Wales as part of our inquiry into *The Government White Paper: Better Governance for Wales*. We took evidence twice from Andrew Davies AM, Minister for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks in relation to two inquiries, *Energy in Wales* and *Future of RAF St Athan*. Evidence was also taken from Jane Hutt AM, David Melding AM and Jennifer Randerson AM in their representative capacity as the National Assembly for Wales All Party Military Academy Group as part of our inquiry into the future of RAF St Athan.

Visits to Wales

51. Three of our forty-one formal meetings were held in Wales. We also held many informal meetings with individuals and organisations in Wales.³⁶ Over the course of the last year we met with individuals and organisations in Aberystwyth, Machynlleth, Ffestiniog, Anglesey, Bangor, St. Asaph, Glamorgan, and Aberthaw. We regard these meetings as vital to our inquiries as they ensure that we can accurately gauge the views and concerns of the people of Wales.

Conclusion

52. In 2005-06 we continued to scrutinise Government policy across a number of Departments as it affects Wales, including examination of the Government White Paper, *Better Governance for Wales*. We look forward to continuing this work in 2006-07, within our terms of reference and, following the introduction of the Government of Wales Act 2006, we particularly welcome the further opportunities for working together with committees of the National Assembly for Wales in the scrutiny of Orders in Council.

Annex A

Table 1 Subjects covered by the Welsh Affairs Committee in 2005-06

Subject	Evidence Sessions held in 2005-06	Sub Committee	Outcome
Government White Paper: Better Governance for Wales	4*	No	Report, December 2005
Proposed Restructuring of the Police Forces in Wales	2	No	Report, February 2006
Energy in Wales	9*	No	Report, July 2006
Future of RAF St Athan	3*	No	Report, July 2006
Current Restructuring of the Police Forces in Wales	1	No	Report, July 2006
NHS Dentistry in Wales	1	No	Evidence published April 2006
Wales Office Annual Reports 2005 and 2006	1	No	Evidence published December 2006
Welsh Prisoners in the Prison Estate	2*	No	Inquiry ongoing

*One of these evidence sessions was held at the National Assembly for Wales.

Annex B

Table 2 Visits by the Welsh Affairs Committee in 2005-06

Location	Purpose of Visit
Denver and Chicago, USA	Inquiry into Energy in Wales
National Assembly for Wales, Cardiff	Inquiry into Government White Paper: Better Governance for Wales
North and Mid Wales	Inquiry into Energy in Wales
South Wales	Inquiry into Energy in Wales
National Assembly for Wales, Cardiff	Inquiry into The future of RAF St Athan
South Wales and South West England	Inquiry into Welsh prisoners in the prison estate

Formal minutes

Tuesday 30 January 2007

Members present:

Dr Hywel Francis, in the Chair

Mr Stephen Crabb
Nia Griffith
Mrs Siân James
Mr David Jones

Mr Albert Owen
Hywel Williams
Mark Williams

The Committee deliberated.

Draft Report (Work of the Committee in 2005-06), proposed by the Chairman, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the Chairman's draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 52 read and agreed to.

Annexes agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the First Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chairman make the Report to the House.

[Adjourned till Tuesday 6 February at 10.30 am.]

Reports from the Welsh Affairs Committee since 2005

The following reports have been produced by the Welsh Affairs Committee in the 2005 Parliament.

Session 2005–06

First Report	Government White Paper: Better Governance for Wales	HC 551
Second Report	Proposed Restructuring of the Police Forces in Wales	HC 751
Third Report	Energy in Wales	HC 876-I
Oral and Written Evidence	Energy in Wales	HC 876-II
Fourth Report	Future of RAF St Athan	HC 1129
Fifth Report	Current Restructuring of the Police Forces in Wales	HC 1418
Oral and Written Evidence	NHS Dentistry in Wales	HC 771-i
First Special Report	Government Response to the Committee's Second and Third Reports of Session 2004–05, Manufacturing and Trade in Wales and Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Bill	HC 433
Second Special Report	Government Response to the Committee's Fourth Report of Session 2004-05, Police Service, Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour in Wales	HC 514
Third Special Report	Government Response to the Committee's First Report of Session 2005-06, Government White Paper: Better Governance for Wales	HC 839
Fourth Special Report	Government Response to the Committee's Second Report of Session 2005-06, Proposed Restructuring of the Police Forces in Wales	HC 1431
Fifth Special Report	Government Response to the Committee's Third Report of Session 2005-06, Energy in Wales	HC 1656
Sixth Special Report	Government Response to the Committee's Fourth Report of Session 2005-06, Future of RAF St Athan	HC 1657
Seventh Special Report	Government Response to the Committee's Fifth Report of Session 2005-06, Current Restructuring of the Police Forces in Wales	HC 1695