

CULTURE MEDIA AND SPORT COMMITTEE

HOUSE OF COMMONS C SESSION 2003-04

26 October 2004 No 38

New Inquiry: Public Libraries

The Culture, Media and Sport Committee will inquire into the Government's policy on public libraries: the current state of the service and its future development. The inquiry will consider-

- whether the accessibility of local libraries, in terms of opening hours, location and community-wide appeal, meets the current demands of the public;
- what can be done to increase the public's use of local libraries;
- the funding of local libraries and the balance of spending between the various means of providing information (including the traditional investment in books);
- new models of provision and new policy demands (such as tackling social exclusion);
- the effectiveness of the legislative, strategic and administrative framework within which local libraries operate;
recruitment and training of library staff;
- the role of institutional and specialist libraries and their links with local libraries;
- the performance of the "People's Network" in providing universal internet access and its future development; and
- other issues that may arise in the course of gathering evidence.

Current policy is set out in the following Government publications:

1. *Framework for the Future: Libraries, Learning and Information in the Next Decade* (DCMS, February 2003);
2. *New Public Library Service Standards* (DCMS, October 2004);

Both documents are available on the DCMS website under the publications heading via www.culture.gov.uk/libraries_and_communities

Relevant Select Committee reports include:

1. Culture, Media and Sport Committee, Session 1999-2000, Sixth Report:
(www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm199900/cmselect/cmcomeds/241/24102.htm)
2. Science and Technology Committee, Session 2003-04, Tenth Report:
(www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200304/cmselect/cmsctech/399/39902.htm)
3. Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: Housing, Planning, Local Government and the Regions Committee, Session 2002-03, Twelfth Report:
(www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200203/cmselect/cmodpm/396/39602.htm)

Written submissions are invited from all interested individuals and organisations by Friday 12 November 2004. Submissions should be e-mailed, with a signed covering letter by post, to the addresses set out below. Oral evidence sessions are expected to be concluded by Christmas

Contact

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