

## **Paper 2 – The All-Wales Convention: its Work and Conclusions**

### ***Establishment and Activities***

In June 2007 the Labour-Plaid Cymru Coalition Government committed itself to:

- campaign for a successful outcome in a referendum on primary legislative powers for the National Assembly based on Part 4 of the Government of Wales Act 2006;
- establish an All-Wales Convention to prepare the ground for this.

The Terms of Reference given to the Convention were to:

- *raise awareness and improve understanding of the current arrangements for devolved government in Wales and of the provisions of the Government of Wales Act 2006, and their future implications for the governance of Wales*
- *facilitate and stimulate a widespread, thorough and participative consultation at all levels of Welsh society on the issue of primary law-making powers;*
- *prepare an analysis of the views expressed and the evidence presented through this process;*
- *assess the level of public support for giving the National Assembly for Wales primary law-making powers;*
- *report to the One-Wales Government on its findings, with recommendations relevant to the holding of a referendum.*

Sir Emyr Jones Parry was appointed Chair of the Convention, and an Executive Committee of 18 to plan and implement the programme of activities. Following a broad and varied evidence-gathering process, the Convention published its report in November 2009. (You can find details of the Convention's activities in Appendices C-H of the Report).

### ***Some Key Conclusions***

- That the process of bringing Part 4 of the Government of Wales Act into force should begin
- That the financial effect of doing so would be neutral
- That the public has 'scant knowledge' of the way in which the Assembly legislates and that this needs to be explained in 'clear and accessible language'

- That 72% of the people of Wales are in favour of the Assembly having the power to legislate, either through the current arrangements or 'somewhat increased devolution'
- According to Convention research 47% would vote in favour of implementing Part 4 in a referendum with 37% against.

### ***Quotations***

**“We are convinced that Part 4 offers substantial advantages over the present arrangements in Part 3. It would offer greater efficiency, permit a strategic approach to the drafting of legislation, provide a greater clarity, be more consistent with the rule of law and democratic tradition, and reflect the emerging maturity of the National Assembly for Wales”**  
(Convention Report para 6.2.2)

**“The people of Wales have accepted devolution...There appears to be a substantial appetite for increased devolution, with solid support for primary law-making powers”** (para 5.6.1)

### ***Cost of Implementing Part 4***

According to the evidence received by the Convention:

- removing the current process (Part 3) of conferring the power to legislate upon the Assembly **would save £1.98m a year;**
- between ten and twelve Assembly Measures a year could be passed, along with obtaining additional legal expertise, for no more than these savings;
- there would be some additional savings in Whitehall and Westminster (See paras 3.2.5 – 3.2.8).

Note: The Report of the All-Wales Convention is available from [www.allwalesconvention.org](http://www.allwalesconvention.org).