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CaSE PR 06/07

Strong science report from Welsh Assembly needs strong action from Government

The Campaign for Science & Engineering (CaSE) today warmly welcomed the Welsh Assembly's review of science policy, and urged the Welsh Government to act quickly to implement the key recommendations.

"This is a really thorough report," said Dr Hefin Jones of CaSE's executive committee, speaking at the launch of the report in Cardiff, "and it shows how Wales could strengthen its policies to make the most of an innovative population.

"We at CaSE are particularly pleased to see that the Assembly Members have recommended that Wales should have a full-time Chief Scientist, which is something we argued for very strongly when we gave evidence to the inquiry. Unless you put someone in charge of pushing through changes, and of coordinating efforts in universities, schools, businesses and Government departments, important things will always fall between the cracks."

CaSE has shown how investment in science in Wales is much lower than in England and less than half of that in Scotland, potentially damaging Wales's ability to compete in a modern economy.

CaSE was also pleased to see the Assembly recognising the global nature of research and innovation, recommending the creation of an Advisory Council with business leaders from inside and outside Wales.

"This is not an inward looking report, focusing on Wales in isolation; this is about Wales being confident of its place in the world by strengthening its economy through science, engineering and innovation," said Dr Peter Cotgreave, Director of CaSE, "and it recognises that without a world-class education system, that will be impossible to deliver".

CaSE believes that if the Welsh Assembly Government puts the recommendations in today's report into action, it has the chance to strengthen Welsh science, and to enhance the economic, social, environmental and social benefits that science and engineering can bring to the people of Wales.

CaSE gave written and oral evidence to the review of Welsh science policy by the Enterprise, Innovation & Networks Committee of the Welsh Assembly. More about CaSE's activities in Wales is available at

<http://www.sciencecampaign.org.uk/activities/wales.htm>

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