

MINUTES

Date:	26 February 2003
Time:	9.00 – 12.30pm
Venue:	Committee Room 1, National Assembly for Wales
Attendance:	
Members	<p>Rhodri Glyn Thomas (Plaid Cymru, Carmarthen East and Dinefwr, Chair)</p> <p>Jenny Randerson (Liberal Democrat, Cardiff Central, Assembly Minister)</p> <p>Owen John Thomas (Plaid Cymru, South Wales Central)</p> <p>Lorraine Barrett (Labour, Cardiff South and Penarth)</p> <p>Delyth Evans (Labour, Mid & West Wales)</p> <p>Alison Halford (Labour, Delyn)</p> <p>Dafydd Wigley (Plaid Cymru, Caernarfon)</p> <p>Glyn Davies (Conservative, Mid & West Wales)</p> <p>Rosemary Butler (Labour, Newport West)</p>
Officials	<p>Margaret Evans (Arts, Lottery and Sport Division)</p> <p>Arthur Emyr (Arts, Lottery and Sport Division)</p> <p>Peter Harding (Arts, Lottery and Sport Division)</p> <p>Martin Rolph (Financial Planning 2)</p>
Secretariat	Marie Knox: Head of MRCS
	Lynsey Hazzard: Deputy Clerk
	Gareth Woodhead: Administrative Officer

9.00am-9.05am

Item 1: Introduction, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

0. The Chair welcomed the Committee and members of the public.
2. The Chair reminded Members of the declarations of interest requirement, in accordance with Standing Order 4.5. The following declarations were made:

Dafydd Wigley- Chair of Audit Committee and Member of the Writer's Union.

Lorraine Barrett – husband's profession is booking bands into licensed entertainment premises.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas – member of the Committee for the Cardiff European Capital of Culture 2008 bid.

Rosemary Butler – National Maritime Museum, Swansea

1.3 Dafydd Wigley expressed concern at the large amount of reading material for the meeting and suggested that briefing papers should be circulated without the supporting documents. The Chair explained that longer papers had been circulated in hard copy before recess with summaries. He felt that it would not be appropriate for the Secretariat to hold back documents which had been sent to the Committee.

9.05am to 10.00am

Item 2: National Library of Wales (NLW)

CC 04-03(p.1); CC 04-03 (p2)

Presenters: Andrew Green, Librarian, Dr Brinley Jones, President

1. The purpose of the presentation was to discuss the annual report, corporate plan and the continuing progress of NLW. The following points were made:
 - The corporate plan was now relatively old and the NLW were looking at updating it. An operational plan for 2003-04 was in preparation. An action plan had been prepared in response to the quinquennial review.
 - The two main development objectives of the NLW were the Digital Library and Open Library Initiatives. The Digital Library concentrated on wider electronic access to the NLW's collections, digitisation and "born digital" material. The Open Library Initiative encompassed the new Visitor Centre being built on the NLW site at Aberystwyth. It was hoped that the new Visitor Centre would attract more groups, such as schoolchildren, to the NLW. The new shop and restaurant had been very successful and were planned to be self-funding. Both outlets made every effort to promote Welsh produce. There was also a new Education Area to allow, amongst others, schoolchildren to work on the NLW collections.

- The National Screen and Sound Archive of Wales (NSSAW) had been running for 2 years in partnership with Sgrin. New staffing and viewing accommodation had been provided for this purpose.
- Phase 2 of the Visitor Centre included a 100-seater multimedia auditorium and a special exhibition area. It was hoped these would be completed in early January 2004.
- It was the NLW's ambition to create a new centre for family and community historians.
- The NLW were concerned about the volume of material in digital format only. It was important that NLW users were able to gain access to such material. It was hoped that the Private Member's Bill currently before the House of Commons would extend copyright to published digital material to allow the NLW to gain access via the legal deposit scheme. It was noted that the Private Member's Bill had the support of the government, which would hopefully assist its passing.

1. Problems highlighted by the NLW were:

- Inability to lend some categories of materials from the collections.
- Difficulty in determining which partnerships would be beneficial to NLW's users.
- Resources-how to raise independent funding to assist the NLW.
- Staffing – how to acquire, retain and develop staff with the required skills.

1. There followed a question and answer session during which the following points were made:

- Quinquennial review – the action plan gave NLW's response to the 70 recommendations contained in the quinquennial review. An important recommendation was that the NLW search for alternative funding. The NLW were working with an independent consultant to prepare a fundraising strategy and a report was awaited. Substantial NLW private funds had been invested in the Visitor Centre. The Minister said that she had now sent the action plan to Committee members.
- Web search engines – it was not always possible to retrieve information from all parts of the NLW website via a generalist search engine. A new service entitled "Wales on the Web" would offer a list of authoritative Welsh websites which would act as a "one stop shop" for any online enquirer interested in any aspect of Welsh life.
- Finance – The NLW had seen an increase in its budget over the past 4 years. This had enabled the NLW to create new posts with commensurate salaries, which had helped to address equal opportunity issues. They could not expect increased funding to pursue further developments. There were gaps in relation to the private financing and the private pension fund of the NLW due mainly to poor stock market returns. The Assembly paid the contributions to the pension fund at present. If the higher contributions required in the future were not fundable, the Trustees of the scheme would need to consider changes to it. The NLW was hoping to attract more sponsorship, but was aware of the challenges this involved.
- Staffing – More staff had been required due to an anticipated increase in the number of visitors. The NLW were aiming for Investor in People status and great attempts were being made to increase the level of training as a whole.
- International Links – the NLW had established many international links. The Librarian was travelling to Latvia and Estonia in the near future in the hope of establishing mutually beneficial links.
- Marketing – the NLW accepted that it had further work to do to raise awareness of the NLW. A marketing manager has been appointed during the last few months, following which considerable progress had been made.

Action Points

- NLW to provide the Committee with information concerning the types of requests received from web users as opposed to visitors.
- Members to provide comments on the NLW quinquennial review action plan by the end of March

10.00am-11.00am

Item 3: Minister's Monthly Report

CC 04-03(p.3)

3.1 The Minister provided a supplementary oral report as there had been a number of developments since the distribution of her written report:

Brecon Jazz

- The First Minister and the Minister had announced a package of funding of up to £381,000 to help secure the long-term future of the Brecon Jazz festival and to enable it to be staged in 2003.
- An immediate one-off grant of £111,000 would be given to the existing Brecon Jazz company to pay off long term outstanding debts that had threatened the existence of the festival.
- A sum of up to £270,000 over three years would be given to a new company to be set up under the aegis of Theatr Brycheiniog. The new company will organise the festival in 2003 and £80,000 had previously been made available towards that end.

The following points were raised in the subsequent discussion:

- Members welcomed the new package of funding for the Brecon Jazz Festival. It was acknowledged that the festival brought world wide attention and great income to local towns through tourism.
- The Minister explained that the intention of establishing a new company to organise the festival was to help make the festival self sustaining and to place the management on a more professional footing.

The National Botanic Gardens of Wales (NBGW)

- The Minister had announced that an additional £1m would be given to meet the essential payments that were required over the next six months.
- An audit ran by KPMG had concluded that a fall in visitor numbers had affected the NBGW income and that long term investment was needed.

The following points were raised in the subsequent discussion:

- Members welcomed the additional funding for the NBGW but had concerns about the use of public

funds to support failing visitor attractions, it was felt that the Garden's scientific role merited public support. However there was a need for a long term strategy.

- The Minister confirmed that the additional money had been allocated by the Finance Minister and would not be coming out of the Culture Fund.
- The Minister noted that the KPMG report had concluded that the NBGW were not wasting money but that there was a shortage of finance.
- In response to a question the Minister noted that the NBGW had not fully developed as a visitor attraction and that the foot and mouth crisis and poor weather over the past two years had contributed to this.
- The Minister agreed that the NBGW was more than just a tourist attraction with the development of its scientific and educational base seen as crucial.
- In response to a query the Minister explained that the NBGW houses rare Welsh species of plants.
- A Member suggested that the NBGW should consider exhibiting a compass garden by Barry Mayled following its display at the Chelsea Flower Show.
- The Chair agreed to invite the NBGW to appear before the Committee on the 26th March.

Action Point

- More detailed information to be provided by officials on the financial position and long term strategy regarding the National Botanic Garden and Secretariat to arrange for NBGW to attend on 26th March.

Licensing Bill

- The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport had replied to the Minister's letter expressing concerns about the implications of the proposed new licensing regime on cultural life in Wales.
- The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport had acknowledged that the Assembly should have been consulted on the Bill and had assured that the Minister would be kept informed from now on.
- Two helpful concessions had been made to the Bill: places of public religious worship would be made exempt from the licensing regime altogether and community halls, village halls, church halls and the like would be exempt from paying a fee although they would still need to obtain the licence.
- The Bill would also be amended to make sure that musicians are not held responsible if they perform in unlicensed premises and are not responsible either for managing the premises or organising the event.
- The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) had also set up a working group to advise on drawing up the guidance which would be issued on implementation of the new legislation. The Arts Council of Wales has accepted an invitation to sit on the group, so would be able to ensure that the Welsh perspective is reflected in the guidance.
- The Minister urged committee members to make known their views to the Secretary of State directly.

The following points were raised in the subsequent discussion:

- In response to a question the Minister explained that licensing was not a devolved power and therefore it was highly unlikely that Wales could gain exemption from the Bill or that the Assembly

be given power to vary its introduction by order.

- The Minister stated however that she would enquire with DCMS whether there was a possibility for further flexibility of the Bill.

Action Point

- The Minister to pass on further information on giving the Assembly power to vary its introduction by order; and on the administrative costs of applying for licenses and where these will fall; when obtained.

Chamber Orchestras

- The Minister had announced a three-year scheme to continue the work of developing chamber orchestras in Wales.
- £600,000 had been made available to support the scheme between 2003-06, with £200,000 available each year.
- In the first year Orchestras will be able to apply for one years' funding following developmental and outreach work, applications for further funding will be considered for future years.
- The minimum award will be £5,000 and the maximum £60,000. Guidelines and application forms can be obtained from the Assembly Government and the Arts Council of Wales (ACW).

2001 Census

- In response to a query the Minister informed Members that it was the Office of National Statistics (ONS) who provide detailed breakdown of Census figures.

Action Point

- The Minister to provide as detailed a breakdown and analysis as is possible of the Census figures on the Welsh language for 26th March meeting.

National Events Strategy

- The Minister informed Members that she would not be considering the National Events Strategy Report before the election.

National Lottery

- The Minister confirmed to Members that she would be using her meeting with the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport the following day to pose the question of greater devolution of her powers in relation to Lottery distribution in Wales.

Offices of the Arts Council for Wales

- In response to a question the Minister informed Members that the lease of the South Wales office of the ACW would not end until 2005. At present there were no firm plans for relocation until after then.

Capital of Culture

- In response to queries the Minister's officials informed Members that funding for Cardiff's bid to become European Capital of Culture had been provided to enable Cardiff to meet DCMS' and the judging panels' criteria. Additional funding was also required because the selection timetable had been elongated and an exit strategy was required should Cardiff's bid fail.

Llangollen Festival

- Some Members requested a report on the funding progress for the Llangollen festival and of its benefits. The Minister informed Members that the ACW was dealing with this issue in its review of arts festivals

Action Points

- Information on the funding of the Llangollen festival to be provided.
- The Minister to provide the Committee with an updated version of progress report based on Cymru'n Creu's schedule.
- Minister to provide the Committee with an updated version of the Creative Futures matrix.

European Exhibition of Arts and Crafts

- The Minister agreed to Members' requests to seek funding so that Wales could take up an invitation to provide an exhibition in the European Exhibition of Arts and Crafts in Brussels on behalf of the United Kingdom.

Break: 11.00am-11.15am

11.15am to 12.00pm

Item 4: Policy review on Sport: First Draft of Final Report

CC 04-03 (p4)

Presenter: Marie Knox, MRCS

1. The aim of this item was to consider the first draft of the final report

prepared by MRCS. The following points were made during discussion:

- It was generally agreed that the Members were happy with the draft report.
- An executive summary should be included.
- It was asked whether pictures could be added to the report to make it more reader-friendly.
- The role of local authorities – there was some debate as to whether money should be ringfenced to assist local authorities in providing the necessary services and whether a statutory requirement should be placed on local authorities to provide facilities to the public. However there was no consensus on these points. It was agreed that the Sports Council for Wales (SCW) should be asked for details of their audits of each local authority so that the matter could be considered further. It was suggested that an annual conference could be held as a focus for local authority developments in relation to sport.
- Co-ordinated approach – there were implications for health, education and local government which should be considered by other committees. This would be a matter for incoming committees after the elections.
- Fitness targets – there was debate as to whether setting ambitious participation targets to aim for might dissuade those unable to achieve them.
- In order to attract more people to sport, its appeal should be widened by introducing a greater range of sports.
- It was suggested that sports governing bodies should be encouraged to work more cohesively and therefore co-operate more effectively.
- Employers – employers should be encouraged to provide their staff with fitness opportunities. It was suggested that an incentive for employers could be to provide an award scheme along the lines of the Investors in People scheme to recognise their commitment.

Action Points

- MRCS asked to provide a re-draft of the report for the next meeting.
- SCW to be asked for details of their local authority audits.
- Any further ideas or suggestions in relation to the report should be passed to the Secretariat by the end of the week.

12.00pm to 12.20pm

Item 5: Scoping Study: Policy review on Anglo-Welsh Culture

CC 04-03 (p5); CC 04-03 (p6)

5.1 The purpose of the scoping study was to undertake some preliminary work for an in-depth review by the successor committee. The following points were made:

- It was suggested that the review be focused on a particular aspect of Anglo-Welsh culture to avoid becoming too wide a topic for the incoming committee. It was suggested that the focus should be on supporting Anglo-Welsh writing in terms of literature, poetry, theatre, television and film. It was noted however that encouraging reading was also important to give writers a market for their work.
- It was suggested that the incoming Committee invite the WBC to speak to them about their work at an early stage and make possible recommendations to the Committee.

- Consideration should be given to the need for an expert adviser.

12.20pm to 12.30pm

Item 6: Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW)

CC-04-03 (p7)

Presenter: Martin Rolph

1. The aim of the presentation was to provide an opportunity for Members to comment on the recommendations made as a result of stage 1 of the quinquennial review of the RCAHMW. The following points were made:

- The reviewer's report recommended that in the longer term, the advantages and disadvantages of merger of RCAHMW with CADW be reconsidered. However as the Environment Minister was at present in consultation with the Minister for Culture and others regarding the Assembly's relationship with the wider historic environment, this option could not be pursued until Ministers had concluded their consultation.
- It was suggested that greater consideration should be given to bringing the RCAHMW under the control of the Assembly, as had occurred with CyMAL.
- Ministers would soon be considering the final version of Stage 1 of the Review and any comments made by members on the draft, and would be considering whether to commission Stage 2. Stage 2 of the process would consider detailed value for money issues.

12.30pm

Item 7: Minutes of Last Meeting

CC 03-03 (min)

1. The members agreed to ratify the minutes of 5th February 2003.

Members' Research and Committee Services February 2003