

Minutes of the meeting of the Newsplan (Cymru) Working Party held at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, 29 April 2004

Present: Brynmor Jones (Chairman), Brian Dafis, Annette Jones, Janet C Karn, Lyn Francis, Non Jenkins, Gillian Fraser, Joy Thomas, Marilyn Jones, Steve Hardman, Steve Kines, Kay Warren-Morgan, Iwan Jones (Secretary)

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from John Rees Thomas.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 30 October 2003 and matters arising

2.1 The minutes had been circulated and were accepted as a correct record.

2.2 Publicity (3.4)

Marilyn Jones drew attention to two stories about Newsplan published in the *South Wales Evening Post*. Brian Dafis had sent copies to the Newsplan 2000 Office for inclusion on the web site. He asked members to send him details of all publicity about Newsplan.

2.3 Web-sites

Most regions of Newsplan now had web-sites, some of which included a database of newspapers. The Implementation Committee was seeking to establish a Newsplan (Wales) web-site which would eventually include a searchable and updated version of the Newsplan (Wales) Report. There were various possibilities for funding the work, including possible help from the Kathleen Cooks Foundation, the British Library Full Disclosure Programme, and the support of CyMAL. In many of the English regions the Newsplan web-site was hosted by the regional MLAC.

3. Report on the Newsplan (Wales) survey of newspaper use

A report on the Newsplan (Wales) survey of newspaper use, carried out during February and March 2004, was distributed. This was the second survey, carried out to comply with the conditions of HLF funding. By the closing date 254 completed questionnaires had been received from 13 authorities. The report compared the findings with those of the 2002 survey and those provisionally submitted by other Newsplan regions. Some of the more significant findings included:

- Many more users travel over 100 miles to read newspapers in Wales than in any other region.
- Use of the Internet to trace newspaper is still low (4%)
- Local newspapers are the most heavily used. Wales has the highest usage of 'regional' newspapers
- There has been a 50% increase in the use of newspapers over 100 year old
- There has been a considerable change in the formats of newspapers used: a 50% increase in the use of microfilm, a slight reduction in the use of paper copies, and an increase in the use of newspapers on-line and on CD-ROM

Members of the Working Party were thanked for their efforts in promoting the survey within their libraries.

4. Report of progress on Newsplan 2000

4.1 Newsplan 2000

Iwan Jones reported on meetings of the Newsplan 2000 Trustees and the Newsplan Panel which had been held at the British Library on 22 April. Microfilming production was now consistently over 1000 reels per month. Quality was very good, although some obscured gutters were inevitable when permission to disbind newspapers was not granted. Phase 1 of the Newsplan 2000 Project would be extended until about November 2004 in order to complete production and distribution of film and equipment. Securing partnership funding from the newspaper industry was now less of a problem than

it had been in the autumn of 2003. The purchase of equipment depended on receiving as much shared funding as possible. The tender for the equipment had now been prepared, and would be advertised shortly according to European rules, with distribution of the equipment following in the autumn of 2004. The HLF had agreed to provide Phase 1 with up to £5 million of the £16 millions originally applied for, and had given in principle approval to a continuation of the Project up to the £16 million maximum. It had been agreed that Newsplan 2000 would now plan for Phase 2 of the Project. Shared funding was needed in order to release this money, and it had been agreed to prepare proposals likely to attract shared funding, probably a mixed programme involving digitisation as well as microfilming.

4.2 Newsplan in Wales

Brian Dafis reviewed progress in Wales. Over 4000 'free' reels of film had now been received and distributed, and over 3000 of these had been received in the current year. Of the original target of 5060 reels of Welsh newspapers, the 1000 reels remaining were mostly of titles held in the British Library, including some unique newspapers not previously available. In addition, a further 3500 copy reels of 'purchased' films had been processed by the National Library's Newsplan Unit, including 2600 in the current year. Invoicing by the Unit was up to date but depended on Microformat and the British Library. Because there had been a shortfall in the newspapers submitted for filming by the English regions it was possible that more newspapers from Wales could be filmed, so long as these were easily available and could be readily prepared for filming. Members of the Working Party were urged to keep checking the Newsplan 2000 web site for the schedule of newspapers to be filmed, so that they could spot titles they needed and order film at the lowest possible cost. Brian Dafis estimated that the Project had now completed about 80% of the work originally identified and was on target for the production of 5060 reels of Welsh newspapers, although the final total might reach 6000 reels.

It was reported that about 16,000 of the Newsplan master negatives had now arrived at the National Library of Wales for long-term storage.

5. Future work of the Newsplan (Wales) Working Party

The Newsplan (Wales) Implementation Committee had asked the Working Party to consider how it should continue its work when Phase 1 of the Newsplan 2000 Project comes to an end. The matter was discussed and the following points made:

- Of the 22 library authorities in Wales the number actively supporting the Working Party had increased to about 15. Chief Librarians of the other authorities were kept informed of developments and invited to attend meetings. The Society of Chief Librarians was the only other body that coordinated work in Welsh libraries, although in future CyMAL might become active.
- Steve Hardman explained that Newsplan made considerable demands on the limited resources available in a small authority such as Blaenau Gwent, and that the Working Party was his main source of information .
- Members of the Working Party were involved with newspapers and often also dealt with local studies. If Newsplan 2000 continued into Phase 2 there would be a continued need for libraries to coordinate efforts concerning newspapers or, possibly, other local studies materials.
- If the Working Party did not continue, the Implementation Committee should consider co-opting more people actively involved with newspapers in local libraries, as was the case in other Newsplan regions, and ensure that information reached authorities and interested parties, perhaps through an expanded email list.

6. Any other business

Brynmor Jones explained that he had recently retired from Cardiff Central Library and was therefore resigning as Chairman of the Working Party. The members thanked him warmly for his Chairmanship of the group.

7. Date and place of next meeting

It was agreed not to set a date for the next meeting until the future of Newsplan 2000 was clearer.