

**BBC Audience Council for Wales
Cyngor Cynulleidfa Cymru y BBC**

CONFIRMED

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD
BBC BROADCASTING HOUSE, LLANDAFF, CARDIFF
FRIDAY 06 JUNE 2008**

Present:

Audience Council Members

Janet Lewis Jones (Chair and National Trustee for Wales)
Dafydd Whittall,
Arun Midha,
Roy Grant,
Nicola Branson,
Teresa Rees
Sangeet Bhullar,
Alexandra McMillan,
Carl Cooper
Andy Carter.

BBC Cymru Wales staff:

Menna Richards, Controller BBC Cymru Wales
Clare Hudson, Head of Programmes (English)
Keith Jones, Head of Programmes (Welsh) and New Media
Mark O'Callaghan, Head of News and Current Affairs
Cathryn Allen, Head of Broadcast Development
Rhodri Talfan Davies, BBC Cymru Wales Head of Marketing,
Communication and Audiences

Governance and Accountability Wales, BBC Trust, staff:

Karl Davies, Head of Governance and Accountability Cymru Wales
Siôn Brynach, Accountability Adviser, Cymru Wales
Clair Baguley, Departmental Assistant, Governance & Accountability
Cymru Wales

In attendance

Pete Clifton, BBC Head of Editorial Development, Multi-Media
Journalism (for item 42)
Kevin Blacoe, Analyst, BBC Trust Performance Team (for item 43)
Gareth Powell, Chief Operating Officer, BBC Cymru Wales (for item
44)

39. APOLOGIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dennis Gethin
Jane James

40. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND ANY MATTERS ARISING

The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Under matters arising, (**minute 33**) Council were informed that the BBC Trust work plan had been finalised and the ACW's response to the consultation on the work plan had been appreciated by the BBC Trust Unit.

Council were informed that a consortium led by *Golwg* had been awarded the grant aid to develop a Welsh language daily publication.

The Council were informed that the Annual Priorities highlighted by it would be discussed by the Trust at its meeting next week.

41. REPORTS

National Trustee

The National Trustee informed Council that the new BBC Complaints Framework had now been adopted with several of the points raised by the Council having been incorporated.

The report following the Talent Cost Review had been published the previous week and had received a significant amount of coverage.

She also informed the Council that the *bbc.co.uk* Service Review has been completed and that the relative smoothness of the review process as well as its conclusions demonstrated that the Service Review process was working.

She reported to Council that an audit of editorial standards has also been published following the publication of the Ron Neil report and demonstrated that work was progressing to ensure standards and trust were safeguarded.

Issues related to DAB were being kept under review.

The National Trustee reported that a meeting had taken place with the S4C Chairman and Chief Executive the previous day.

The Council was informed of developments relating to S4C children's services. It had now emerged that the second phase of the roll-out of this project could have an impact on BBC produced coverage of the National Assembly, currently carried on S4C2. BBC and S4C were therefore looking at ways in which this service could be delivered in future in light of this proposed development.

The National Trustee asked whether Council were content with the tabled research proposal on the portrayal of Wales on Network. The Council was content with the principle of commissioning research on this matter which would complement other research commissioned for the Trust and resolved to establish a sub-group to discuss Council research.

Controller Wales report

The Controller informed Council that the next phase of the discussion on the property strategy had been agreed and a feasibility study would now proceed.

She said that a request to the Trust for a Public Value Test on proposals to establish a BBC Local service was to be made shortly and that the market impact was likely to be different in Wales compared with England because of the nature of the regional press in each country.

A breakfast with MPs had taken place shortly after the last Council meeting. Criticisms were made about the perceived lack of coverage of north Wales. A spirited discussion had also taken place around the matter of blogs, and in particular political journalists' blogs. A great deal of support had been expressed for BBC Wales – with *Coal House* having been particularly welcomed.

She informed Council that the BBC Young Musician of the Year competition, staged at the Wales Millennium Centre and produced by BBC Wales for the first time, had been largely successful.

She informed Council that the OFCOM definition of 'out of London Network production' had recently been adopted, which was based on three criteria:

- (a) the production company must have a substantive business and production base in the Nation
- (b) at least 70% of the production budget (excluding the cost of on-screen talent, archive material and copyright costs) must be spent in the Nation
- (c) at least 50% of the production talent (i.e. not on-screen talent) by cost must have their usual place of employment in the Nation

Board Report

Head of News and Current Affairs informed Council that an edition of *Week In Week Out* broadcast earlier in the week, that had considered the issue of the levels of *Clostridium difficile* infections in Wales' hospitals had elicited a significant response, with the National Assembly Government announcing an investigation into the situation across Wales and routine testing now to be adopted in Wales' hospitals. He considered this to be a prime example of a BBC Wales programme making a real difference in people's lives in Wales.

Head of Programmes (English) informed the Council that she had recently attended a symposium organised by the University of Glamorgan for broadcasters in smaller nations and that *Coal House* had been used as a catalyst for discussion.

Head of Programmes (Welsh) and New Media informed Council that the Urdd National Eisteddfod had been a useful opportunity to develop the *Mosquito* brand with films being made with young people on the Eisteddfod site for placing on the *Mosquito* web-site. He invited Council members to look at the innovative *Doctor Who* website trail-maker.

The Council congratulated BBC Cymru Wales on its coverage from the Urdd Eisteddfod.

42. MULTIMEDIA POLITICS PORTAL PROPOSAL

BBC Head of Editorial Development Multi-Media informed Council that the Director General had made a commitment in January 2008 to increasing the coverage from the UK's democratic institutions and that work had been progressing since then. While there was already significant material available from the UK's democratic institutions on the BBC's website it was located in different places. This project was aimed at making the material that was already there more accessible and to make it far easier for audiences to be able to find, play and share it.

The Council was shown the proposed interface which would include live feeds from the political institutions. Audiences would be able to search video for issues or video material of individual elected representatives which could then be embedded in other websites.

The *Issues* section would give audiences an insight into key issues. This would also be an aggregation system, drawing material already available together to make it more easily accessible to audiences and would include a section drawing attention to the legislative differences between the UK's constituent nations.

The project would involve an interactive element with audiences being able to contribute to wide-ranging in-depth discussions hosted on serious topical issues with the aim of taking the heat out of the debate by throwing light on a given topic.

An area of the politics portal would be entitled 'Great Moments' and would show significant moments of political history, and provide an archive of the material streamed by the politics portal thus providing an important learning resource for teaching citizenship in schools as well as informing audiences of the responsibilities and scope of the individual political institutions. It was hoped that close links would be developed with the institutions being covered.

The time-table for launching the first phase was the end of 2008 with the second phase being introduced in summer 2009. Council was informed that it had been encouraging that the national institutions had thus far been very positive in discussions undertaken thus far. Other key partners included *Blinx* and *My Society*. The Council was informed that the overarching goal of the Digital Democracy/Political Portal project was to provide a world class window on the UK's political institutions.

The Council responded by saying that it considered this innovation would provide an excellent resource for pupils and students. BBC Head of Editorial Development was asked whether other countries were attempting similar approaches. He responded by saying that at present the BBC was ahead and that nothing on the same scale was being attempted anywhere else.

Council asked how the National Assembly for Wales' coverage would be handled bilingually. Head of Editorial Development responded by saying that there was a strong commitment to providing material from the National Assembly bilingually with the interface being available in Welsh as well as a choice for the content.

Council asked whether segmentation of embeddable video would be possible. Head of Editorial Development said that it would.

Council expressed its hope that this development would have a positive impact on the engagement of audiences with politics and Head of Editorial Development was asked about the level of commitment from individual politicians? He said that many politicians had expressed their enthusiasm for the project.

Council reiterated its concern at the non-appearance of a Welsh interface for iPlayer and emphasised the importance of this being introduced for the politics portal as soon as possible after launch. Council also asked whether the introduction of this portal would have an impact on bandwidth capacity along similar lines which it is alleged has occurred as a result of the introduction of the iPlayer. Head of Editorial Development responded by saying that the impact on bandwidth was expected to be minimal.

The Council asked about the extent of the historical archive which would be made available? Head of Editorial Development responded by saying that there would be a growing archive and that the individual nations would have an input into the historical clips which would be available at and soon after launch.

Council resolved to write to express its concern that thus far the iPlayer's Welsh language interface had not yet been introduced and that neither had the BBC's Welsh television and radio programming.

ACTION:HoG&A

43. BBC TRUST REVIEW OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Kevin Blacoe, Analyst BBC Trust Performance Team, informed the Council that children were a key audience for the BBC. New technology was changing the way children were consuming video material and falling advertising revenues were putting pressure on the commercial PSB channels' ability to fund children's television.

The aim of the review was to assess how well the BBC was meeting the needs of children and to consider whether BBC provision would need to change in future. The review would cover BBC provision for children aged 12 and under including *CBeebies* on television radio and on-line, *CBBC* on television and on-line, formal learning content for primary school children, and other provision for children like *Big Toe Books* and *Go4it*.

He informed the Council that the Review would be conducted using public consultation, a child friendly consultation website, a review of existing data, interviews and other audience research. A specialist children's research agency had been commissioned to conduct this work and letters would be sent to most UK

primary schools inviting them to respond through the consultation website. There would also be a discussion forum available as part of the consultation, but this would operate in English only because of the logistical difficulties of moderating a bi-lingual site.

Children would be able to respond by video file or picture as well as in writing. The site would be available in Welsh as well as in English. BBC Information would also be able to provide the questionnaire by post. The consultation's official closing date was 15th August but the children's consultation would continue beyond the closing date for the adults' consultation.

Council asked whether there were any implications to not having the discussion board in Welsh and whether organisations such as the Urdd could also be involved in the consultation because of their links with children and young people.

The Analyst agreed that the matter of the Welsh language discussion forum would be considered again and the practicalities re-assessed.

Council said that one matter to be considered by the Review might be a version of *Newsround* specifically for Wales.

Council resolved to write to Wales organisations drawing their attention to this consultation and asking them to respond to it with any comments from a Welsh perspective. Council also asked whether the Council itself could also be more proactive in eliciting comments and resolved to discuss the possibilities further later in the meeting.

Council noted that one important aspect of its response would be to highlight the different educational curriculum in Wales. Council resolved also to approach the Education and Learning Department within BBC Cymru Wales so as to take advantage of their expertise.

ACTION:HoG&A

44. BBC CYMRU WALES' PROPERTY STRATEGY

BBC Cymru Wales Chief Operating Officer said that the key goal of the property strategy was to ensure appropriate accommodation which would allow the BBC to do more and produce better material for the benefit of audiences and to be more open, collaborative and creative, through the provision of the most up to date facilities and technologies. He also said that another part of the vision involved the BBC facilities becoming a centre of excellence and a hub for the creative industries in Wales.

One of the drivers for this project was that the present Cardiff Broadcasting House was an ageing building and a split site operation which had resulted in high maintenance costs, an inefficient and inflexible layout and poor environmental performance. He observed that ways of working had changed significantly over recent years and the present building didn't easily allow for a contemporary operation.

The relocation of the National Orchestra for Wales at the end of 2008 to its new home in the Hoddinott Hall at the Wales Millennium Centre also provided opportunities.

Possible partnerships that could be developed alongside the property strategy include production facilities, arts and media activity, the independent sector, other broadcasters, academic institutions, local authorities and Creative Business Wales.

New technology was also an area which provided new opportunities and BBC Wales had many recent successes and was an exemplar of innovation in this area. The goal in using new technology was to provide simple innovative best practice solutions, with technologists working alongside content producers giving workflow improvement thus resulting in creative and economic gains.

The overall corporate strategy of the BBC was to establish 8 key production hubs UK-wide; to establish a leasehold estate; to maximise benefits of new technologies; to partner with providers – e.g. production facilities; to be as efficient as possible (cash neutral in this licence fee period, positive payback over the term). It was emphasised that Cardiff was a priority site.

In considering the options available to BBC Wales they were:

- to carry out essential maintenance only
- redevelop a HQ building on the present site
- to relocate BBC Wales' HQ
- to establish a separately located drama production centre
- to co-locate the BBC Wales HQ building and a drama production centre.

The Chief Operating Officer outlined some of the risks involved with the option of redeveloping on the current site saying that the development could result in significant disruption, cost and timescale. Relocation could bring risks due to market conditions. Technology risks included the danger of insufficient specialist resource. The key financial risk was affordability.

The Council was informed that the BBC Finance Committee had approved the progression of the project to external consultation and the production of a detailed feasibility study with a view to final recommendations being made in 6 months' time.

Timing was very difficult to establish precisely given the number of dependencies but reasonable estimates at this stage would suggest a drama production centre being in place by 2010-2011 and a HQ building in place around 2013 at the earliest.

45. AGREEING RESPONSE TO THE TRUST CONSULTATION ON THE RELEASE OF JAM ASSETS

Council noted the importance of emphasising in its response that developments relating to the production of the 'B' list should occur as quickly as possible since the principle had already been established that these kinds of material could be released.

The draft response, with this addition, was agreed.

46. PRIORITY ISSUES FOR THE BBC TRUST

Council agreed to highlight its response to the Jam consultation.

47 TRUST BUSINESS

Draft Wales Annual Review – this was agreed by the Council.

OFCOM PSB Review– The National Trustee informed the Council that the ACW paper on the Review had been fed in directly to the BBC Trust/management group formulating the BBC's response to the OFCOM PSB Review.

National Assembly for Wales Broadcasting Committee – The ACW paper on PSB had formed the basis of its written evidence to the National Assembly's Broadcasting Committee and the ACW had been invited to give oral evidence. Teresa Rees, Arun Midha and Dafydd Whittal would be giving evidence to the Committee on 30th June. The National Trustee would herself be appearing before the same Committee, with Michael Lyons and Mark Thompson on 16th June.

BBC Trust's Impartiality Review of Coverage of the Nations of the UK– The report had been received from Prof Anthony King by the Trust and would be published on 11th June. ACW members would be invited to participate in a teleconference briefing session at 18:30 on 10th June, led by Sir Michael Lyons.

The report would be on the agenda for the next meeting of the Audience Council.

Trust Forward Work Plan – this had now been released into the public domain. This was recognised as a major step forward in terms of the modus operandi of Council.

The Council's outreach activity – The Head of Governance and Accountability Wales reported on the previous evening's discussions conducted by the Council's outreach sub-group.

He informed the Council that two outreach events were in the diary for the coming months – the first being a breakfast with members of the agricultural community in Llanwnnen, on 29th July, and the second being an opinion former dinner early in September similar to last June's event at BBC Broadcasting House, Cardiff.

It was agreed that the theme for the Llanwnnen event should be the coverage afforded by the BBC of, and relevant to, the community of the participants. Other matters for discussion at this meeting included broadband availability/*Lleol i mi*, BBC programmes on S4C, News, Review of Children's Services and licence fee collection.

One area to be explored during discussions regarding future small outreach events was to invite representatives of local CAB groups and local Credit Union organisers.

Returning to the outreach event scheduled for 4th September it was proposed that different tables should discuss different themes – possibly a discussion of three of the BBC's Public Purposes and the Trust Service Review of Children's Services. The Council also commended a suggestion from a Council member that organisations relating to older members of the public should be invited (e.g. the National Commissioner for older people, Age Concern and Help the Aged) and that another theme for discussion should be the BBC's provision for older people.

It was proposed that the themes for other outreach events during 2008-09 should include (but not be limited to) the Children's Services Review, licence fee collection and the *BBC Local* Public Value Test.

Another idea proposed was that the Council or individual Council members could attend School Council meetings – in the context of the present Review Of Children's Services. The Council was informed that each school now had a statutory obligation to establish and facilitate School Councils and they might welcome an addition of this kind to their meeting agendas. It was also suggested that advice and comments should be sought from the Education And Learning Department of the BBC and also organisations in Wales involved in children's services and education so as to inform the response of the Audience Council for Wales to the Review of BBC Children's Services. As in the context of BBC Jam, the Council agreed that the differences in the educational curriculum in Wales should be emphasised.

Another area of possible cooperation which was suggested was Carmarthenshire Council. The Council was informed that the county council had recently appointed a representation officer and that it would be useful to contact that person both to learn from their experience and to explore areas of possible cooperation.

Council annual self evaluation – a paper had been circulated and Council members were invited to respond. Council observed that it would be helpful to maintain and develop contact with the other Audience Councils.

The Council recognised the vast improvement which had occurred to the Council's work programme and the impact of the Audience Council in comparison with the situation which had existed under the previous Royal Charter. The Council paid warm tribute to the Head of Governance and Accountability Wales and his two team members, praising both the volume and quality of the team's work as well as its professionalism.

The Council suggested that the pre-meeting dinner should be explored as an occasional opportunity to hold discussions with members of BBC Wales' management. It was also noted that further consideration should be given to ways in which the Council could increase its engagement with politicians and other opinion formers.

The Council suggested that it might be useful for members to attend scrutiny training to ensure they were maximising their effectiveness at meetings. Overall the consensus was that the Council was working well and the process of feeding in to

Trust processes and consultations was effective and was having a positive impact. However, there was also recognition that many of the presentation at meetings were matters upon which the Council needed to be informed.

The Council raised the possibility of arranging a half day discussion to consider the working pattern of the Council be arranged – possibly in January 2009. Council members were asked to keep the forward work plan under review and to offer feedback on the plan.

48. CONFIRMATION OF DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Council was reminded that its next meeting would be on 11th July at BBC Broadcasting House, Cardiff and a private dinner for the Council would be held on the evening of 10th July.

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