

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT  
BBC BROADCASTING HOUSE, LLANDAFF, CARDIFF  
FRIDAY 5 DECEMBER 2008**

Present:

*Audience Council Members*

Janet Lewis Jones (Chair and National Trustee for Wales)  
Andy Carter  
Dafydd Whittall  
Alex McMillan  
Nicola Branson  
Carl Cooper  
Arun Midha  
Roy Grant

*BBC Cymru Wales staff:*

Menna Richards, Controller BBC Cymru Wales  
Mark O'Callaghan, Head of News and Current Affairs  
Clare Hudson, Head of Programmes, English  
Keith Jones, Head of Programmes, Welsh and New Media  
Cath Allen, Head of Broadcast Development  
Rhodri Talfan Davies, Head of Marketing, Communications and  
Audiences,  
Eleri Wyn Williams, Head of Education and Learning (for item 92)

*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

*BBC Trust Unit staff:*

Michael Fadda  
Lucy Tristram

**85. APOLOGIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Jane James  
Teresa Rees  
Dennis Gethin  
Sangeet Bhullar

**86. TRUST BUSINESS (IN PRIVATE)**

Thanks were recorded to all those who had participated in outreach events linked to the review on young people's services, including the most recent one hosted in Bangor on 1<sup>st</sup> December

The National Trustee expressed her gratitude to all those who had been involved in the Trust's meeting in Wales during November. At that time, she had attended a constructive meeting with the Chair and Chief Executive of S4C alongside the BBC Trust Chairman.

She informed Council that she had met with the First Minister and the National Assembly Government Culture Minister during the previous month with both encounters having been constructive.

After the last meeting of the BBC Trust, there had been announcements regarding the Ross-Brand affair, the Local Video PVT and the fact that members of the BBC Executive had announced that they would not be accepting any bonuses offered to them this year.

Making reference to the release of material produced as part of the BBC Jam project, she said that the Trust had agreed to the release of this material in Welsh, but the freeze on expenditure on *bbc.co.uk* had resulted in confusion which had resulted in this work not being progressed. However, this misunderstanding had now been resolved and work should proceed forthwith on the release of this educational material.

There had also been developments in relation to DAB and issues relating to the medium were now being addressed seriously by the Government, Ofcom, the independent Radio companies and the BBC. Consequently there was some prospect of progress, though the future for the medium was by no means clear. The National Trustee said that the particular difficulties of Wales in relation to DAB were well known, and the ACW had been instrumental in raising the profile of Wales' issues. The Council asked for Controller Distribution to be invited to a future meeting, when possible options regarding the future of DAB were emerging and for Controller Wales to be asked to provide a verbal report at the Council's meeting in January on her understanding of the direction of travel on this matter. Council also resolved to highlight DAB as a priority issue for the Trust arising from this meeting.

**ACTION: Controller Wales and HoG&AW**

The National Trustee made reference to Woolworths' recent financial and trading difficulties and the involvement of BBC Worldwide in their joint venture – 2|entertain.

Reference was also made to the National Assembly Government's Advisory Group which had recently reported. Copies of the full report would be distributed to members shortly. The National Trustee asked for this matter to be placed on the agenda for January's meeting of the ACW so that it could be discussed more fully.

Also distributed shortly to members will be the BBC / BBC Trust joint response to the Scottish Broadcast Commission.

HOG&AW said that he would be informing Council the following week of the arrangements for monitoring progress following the Impartiality Review on Network News coverage of post-devolution UK.

**ACTION: HoG&AW**

The Council were also informed that their opinions had contributed to the Trust's consultation on iPlayer pre-booking.

*Management joined the meeting*

## **87. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

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

Under matters arising HoG&AW informed the Council that BBC Head of Sport had agreed to attend a forthcoming meeting of the Council and would be making reference both to his present role as Head of Sport and future role in charge of all matters relating to 2012 including the Olympic Games and the Queen's Golden Jubilee.

The Council asked for future presentations by BBC Senior Management to be structured with specific reference to the BBC's Public Purposes and how they were being fulfilled. It was also suggested that placing an agenda item during the meeting prior to their visits so as to be able to focus the future discussion with the particular senior manager.

The Council again raised the possibility of a half day 'awayday' to focus afresh, with BBC Wales' management, on the delivery of the Purposes. Controller Wales responded saying that in the past there has been a difficulty in determining an exact structure by which to determine how the Purposes were being fulfilled. However, she expressed her willingness to engage with Council in this way and the Council determined that this should be an agenda item at the next meeting.

## **88. REPORTS**

### **National Trustee**

She again made reference to the Ross/Brand affair, the BBC Local Video PVT and developments with the release of the material formerly prepared as part of the BBC Jam project.

She also reiterated her thanks to BBC Cymru Wales management for all they had done to make the Trust's visit to Wales such an outstanding success.

### **Controller Wales**

She thanked the National Trustee for her kind words regarding the Trust visit and she in turn thanked her staff for the immense amount of work which had gone into that visit. She highlighted in particular the showcase which had been arranged to draw attention to some of the work being undertaken by BBC Cymru Wales.

Council expressed its disappointment that it had now been invited to attend this showcase session nor given any opportunity to engage with the BBC Trust during its visit.

Controller Wales said that the *Coal House at War* event as part of the Trust visit had also been a successful event with the Trust Chairman's comments having been purposeful. She also paid tribute to him for his responses at the staff meeting, where he had been asked some searching questions.

She made reference also to the National Assembly Government's Advisory Committee report, and to the National Assembly's Broadcasting Sub-Committee response to the Ofcom phase 2 PSB review, whose conclusions had both been broadly the same.

### **Board Report**

The Council asked Head of Programmes Welsh whether there were any plans afoot to determine the response of the audiences to the changes in the Radio Cymru schedules? He responded saying that this kind of research was being conducted regularly. He also said that the pattern being made manifest in RAJAR's figures would only be clear after a period of about a year. Radio Cymru's Editor would be returning to her role after a period of maternity leave at the end of March. It was agreed that this would be placed on the agenda at the ACW's meeting in either May or June.

Head of Programmes Welsh also made reference to the *O Flaen dy Lygaid* strand which had recently prepared a well received programme on a green environmental theme called 'Dyfroedd Dyfnion'. He also made reference to an experiment the previous evening, where there had been a special broadcast of *Pawb a'i Farn* on S4C and a parallel broadcast of *Taro'r Post* on Radio Cymru, during which at various points during the evening, the programmes had been simulcast. While technically difficult this had been a huge success.

Head of Broadcast Development made reference to some of the highlights from her report, including the *BBC Wales Sports Personality of the Year* and the events' team's presence at the recent Royal Welsh Winter fair. The Council praised the contribution of BBC Wales to the *BBC Children in Need* programme and to the coverage of Remembrance Sunday.

Head of Marketing Communication and Audiences BBC Cymru Wales informed Council of the new BBC Cymru Wales brand identity which would be launched shortly. The purpose was to raise brand awareness of BBC Cymru Wales' productions, not just on S4C but also on the BBC's networks. There would now be consistent visual identities across all BBC Cymru Wales' services on every platform.

Head of Programmes English said that 2W would be discontinued as a separate service in January 2009, thus making the BBC2 Wales service more coherent.

BBC THREE had recently awarded a commission to the BBC Wales Factual team to produce a series called *Clever Stupid*. She also said that she was glad to present copies of the book *Hidden Histories* to the members of the Audience Council for Wales and the National Trustee. This book had been one of the products of a partnership between the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales and the BBC/independent producers Element on a TV series.

#### **89. PRESENTATION ON THE PERFORMANCE OF BBC PROGRAMMING ON S4C 2008/09 TO BBC TRUST**

Head of Programmes Welsh introduced his presentation by showing the Council a showreel of some of the programmes produced by the BBC for S4C, including children's programmes, drama, current affairs, news and sport.

Head of Programmes Welsh then outlined the way in which the BBC's contributed programmes to S4C fulfilled the BBC's purposes. News was central and this was to be extended to be a service rather than just a programme, with more bulletins during the day. This included programmes such as *Ffeil* for children that illustrated the level and range of skills within its production team. He said that Current Affairs was also a key BBC provision for S4C with *Taro Naw* having established a reputation for first class research and story telling. *Mosgito*, the magazine programme for teenagers, had now been broadcast for a year and was winning an audience.

*Pobol y Cwm* remained a key part of the BBC's contribution to the Purpose of Stimulating Creativity and Excellence as did the BBC's coverage of the National Eisteddfod which was so pivotal to the nation's cultural life.

Rugby was important and the BBC provided S4C with coverage of the Magners league. *Y Clwb Rygbi*'s coverage delivered some of S4C's highest audiences. The Council expressed its disappointment that S4C had partnered other broadcasters in gaining the rights to cover international and domestic football, which it considered was to the detriment of audiences in Wales.

The Council expressed its appreciation of the contribution of the BBC to the Welsh language audience in Wales and also made the point that in comparison with Welsh language publications, the audiences for the BBC's programmes were very significant. The Council raised the question of scheduling and were reminded that this was a matter entirely for S4C with the BBC having no significant influence on this matter.

While providing under 20% of S4C's total output, BBC Cymru Wales nevertheless delivered over 40% of S4C's total hours of viewing. However, a key concern expressed by the BBC Trust remained recognition by audiences of the BBC's contribution to the channel. Head of Programmes Welsh said that in order to properly assess the performance of BBC programming on S4C in context, the BBC Trust had requested information from S4C on

- average AI by genre
- average cost per viewer hour by genre and average cost per viewer hour for the non-BBC output
- any qualitative information relating to channel content or approval.

## **90. ACW RESPONSE TO TRUST CONSULTATION ON BBC LOCAL VIDEO PVT PROVISIONAL CONCLUSIONS**

The Council expressed the view that this was a situation where the ACW was at significant odds with the Trust. There was a strong feeling that the particular circumstances of Wales had not been recognised in the BBC's proposals, in Ofcom's Market Impact Assessment or in the BBC Trust's provisional conclusions and that the Trust's rejection of the proposals could undermine the BBC's ability to deliver the Purpose of Sustaining Citizenship and Civil Society in Wales. Controller Wales said that the Trust's suggestion that further local opt-outs on TV should be introduced was simply not possible in Wales because of topographic and technical difficulties which would make this prohibitively expensive.

The Council agreed that it should feed its response both to the Trust and to BBC management who were at present considering alternative proposals to bring back to the Trust – possibly with a view to introducing a more limited local video service in Wales. The Council also asked whether it would be possible for there to be a joint approach from the Audience Councils to management on its alternative proposals for addressing this Purpose gap, and this would be explored.

**ACTION: HoG&AW**

It was agreed that a draft response would be circulated shortly with the addition of the views expressed by Council members. They were asked to respond promptly to the draft response so that it could be sent to the Trust as quickly as possible.

## **91. ACW RESPONSE TO TRUST CONSULTATION ON REVIEW OF SERVICES FOR YOUNGER AUDIENCES**

The Council noted that there was no significant brand loyalty to the BBC amongst some young people but that the iPlayer was a key means of accessing the BBC's content, particularly amongst teenage years.

There was a clear appreciation of the Wales produced output but I XTRA was not on anyone's radar.

Some members of Council said that they had found a strong appreciation of the BBC's Natural History programming.

There was strong brand recognition and strong levels of trust and appreciation of the BBC's content. It was seen as a key source of information for assisting with academic work.

There remained however a key question surrounding the extent to which the Purposes were reinforced.

The difficult nature of the consultation – and the huge age range encompassed within it – should be reflected in the Council's response. The first draft response, based on the Council's discussion, would be circulated shortly and suggestions for changes were invited as quickly as possible once that draft had been circulated.

## **92. PRESENTATION ON THE WORK OF BBC WALES EDUCATION AND LEARNING DEPARTMENT**

Head of BBC Cymru Wales Education and Learning said that the focus of the Department's work had changed significantly during the previous eighteen months. The Department now concentrated on providing education and learning provision for children and young people, but doing so with high quality material on a variety of platforms. She made reference to four projects to illustrate the Department's work.

*Tellytales* was a project for 3-6 year olds which was presently in production. It had initially come about as a result of discussions in Wales, but was now a co-commission between Wales and Network in both English and Welsh. The core of the project was the presentation of tales, and was described as a TV 'pop-up' book. The project had involved over 500 children cooperating with a professional artist who had visited schools around Wales. The programmes weave together actors (including children) and the animated backgrounds prepared by the children in schools. The stories are based on tales from around the world.

*Mosquito* was targeted at older children (12-15 year old children) and had recently celebrated its first birthday. It remained an ambitious project which did not avoid sophisticated issues including the USA Presidential elections. It was a live programme broadcast twice a week with an interactive element from the 'gwegang' (webgang) who were based across Wales and contributed to the programme via webcams and also contributed to the programme's website.

*Youth Politics* was another project which addressed the curriculum for those between 14-19 year olds and encompassed local, national, UK and European politics. A difficulty identified by teachers and students was that much of the politics coverage was for older people rather than tailored for this age group. Consequently, as part of this project, collaborative work was being undertaken with groups of young people from the Bridgend area looking at and exploring issues important to them. There was also cooperation with the University of Glamorgan's Atrium centre with students there preparing some of the interactive content. Another element of the project was a conference for teachers being hosted in cooperation with the National Assembly's education service, to show them innovative ways of presenting information to their pupils.

Head of Education made reference also to the *Blast* project – an arts programme for young people through which they learn new creative skills, in areas such as writing scripts, animation, costumes, dance and music.

*The Big Welsh Challenge* had once again this year been a successful project. The on-line course to learn Welsh was now complete and had been undertaken in cooperation with the language centres across Wales and was therefore a nationally recognised course.

In production also was *Bitesize* for TGAU / GCSE students with more subjects in preparation in Welsh.

The Council was also informed that a significant amount of work had gone into the production of the *Coal House at War* school packs which had proved very popular with schools. The Council were informed that requests were being received thick and fast from schools asking for additional copies.

Council praised the imaginative material being prepared by the Department and said that schools appreciated the provision – particularly in Welsh - which would not otherwise be there were it not provided by the BBC.

### **93. PRIORITY ISSUES FOR BBC TRUST**

The Council highlighted the following matter as Priority Issues for the BBC Trust

- DAB – The Council expressed its concern at the on-going uncertainty surrounding DAB, particularly the coverage of BBC Cymru Wales' national radio stations.

### **94. CONFIRMATION OF DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Council was reminded that its next meeting would be on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2009 at BBC Broadcasting House, Cardiff and a private dinner for the Council would be held on the evening of 8<sup>th</sup> January.

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