

Minutes of the meeting of the Newsplan (Cymru) Working Party held at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, 18 April 2002

Present: Brynmor Jones (Chairman), Rheinallt Llwyd, Anita Thomas, Joy Thomas, Gillian Fraser, Janet C Karn, Annette Jones, Kay Warren-Morgan, Beti Jones, Rhidian Griffiths, Brian Dafis, Marilyn Jones, Norman Armes, Iwan Jones (Secretary)

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Non Jenkins, John Rees Thomas, Ann Rhydderch, Simon Kellas and Susan Mends. The Chairman welcomed Rheinallt Llwyd who was attending in place of Susan Mends.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 18 October 2001 and matters arising

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

2.2 Price of film (para 3.2)

It had been foreseen in the minutes that the price of film would remain low throughout the period of the project. Brian Dafis noted that this was unlikely to be the case. Although Newsplan 2000 had now agreed that film ordered at least one month before filming would be available directly from Newsplan 2000 at the special price of £17.00 per reel (rising at 3% per year) plus vat and packaging, once filmed the price was likely to rise substantially - possibly to £40 per reel. It was therefore very important to be aware of the filming schedule and to order in time before the filming.

2.3 Newsplan (Cymru) on the web

It was noted that the Newsplan (Wales) Report could not be put on the web in its present form.

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

It was a condition of HLF funding that surveys of newspaper use should be carried out in each Newsplan region before and after the project. Members of the Working Party had been invited to contribute and fifteen Welsh library authorities had agreed to take part. They had been asked to carry out the survey for a period of at least one week and by the closing date of 28 March, 246 completed questionnaires had been received from the following ten library authorities: Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy, Flint, Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, the Vale of Glamorgan, Cardiff, Torfaen and the National Library of Wales. The participating libraries were thanked for their work.

Iwan Jones reported on the survey and distributed a summary of the survey returns with a commentary. The Welsh returns were broadly consistent with results in other Newsplan regions and the main findings included:

- 77% of users travelled less than 20 miles to read newspapers.
- 74% read local newspapers.
- 88% of people found newspapers easy or fairly easy to use.
- 87% found what they wanted, at least to some extent.
- 78% reported no problems in using newspapers

4. Report on the Fourth Newsplan Conference, 8 April 2002

Beti Jones reported on the one-day conference, which had been held at the British Library Conference Centre. She summarised the talks given by the ten speakers and focussed especially on the three who had spoken on developments in other countries. Dennis Schouten had explained that newspaper microfilming in the Netherlands was a major feature of the Metamorfoze national preservation

programme. In Nordic countries there was a similar programme called TIDEN, and Majken Bremer-Laamanen had described how the microfilming of newspapers there was linked to subsequent digitisation of the film as elements of a hybrid reformatting programme. Both programmes were well-established but were dwarfed by the USA programmes described by Bob Harriman, where the federal government aided the newspaper microfilming projects of the state authorities. Beti Jones felt the meeting had given a world-wide perspective to the work of Newsplan.

5. Report on progress on Newsplan 2000

Rhidian Griffiths reported that the Trustees had, after some difficulty and with the aid of the Newspaper Society, secured payment of the first phase of matching funding from the newspaper industry, and that this had enabled the HLF formally to authorise the start of filming. Preparations for the filming of the first batch of Welsh films at Rochester were now well under way. Copies of an update report on the Newsplan 2000 Project from John Lauder and Simon Kellas were distributed.

Brian Dafis reported on a meeting of project officers (from the BL and NLS) at the British Library and subsequently at the Microformat microfilming unit at Rochester, where there would be 24 new microfilming cameras working a double-shift production-line. Newsplan microfilming had started recently and the first batch of Welsh newspapers would be despatched to Rochester shortly. NLW would prepare the newspapers for filming, borrowing newspapers where necessary and arranging their transport and return. When NLW felt that a volume would not film successfully without disbinding they would seek the permission of the library which owned the volume, and it would be that library that decided whether or not to disbind.

Brian Dafis emphasised that libraries that wished to take advantage of the special price of £17.00 (plus vat plus packaging) per reel had to be aware of the filming schedule and order directly from Newsplan 2000 at least one month before filming was scheduled. The schedule of titles had been circulated and was always available for viewing on the web site www.newsplan2000.org.

6. Any other business

6.1 Microfilm reader

Janet Karn asked when the readers and reader-printers would be distributed. It was explained that all funding from the newspaper industry would be used to buy readers and reader-printers, which would be purchased towards the end of the project when all the funding that could be raised had been secured.

6.2 Digitisation

Rhidian Griffiths explained that the present phase of Newsplan 2000 included a small element of experimental digitisation. If Newsplan 2000 continued future phases would probably include more digitisation as well as microfilming.

7. Date and place of next meeting

Thursday 24 October 2002 at the National Library of Wales.