

# Culture, Welsh Language and Sport Committee

## CWLS2 14-04 (p2)

**Date: 8 December 2004**

**Time : 9:00 am – 12:00 pm**

**Venue: Committee Room 2**

### REPORT OF THE MINISTER FOR CULTURE, WELSH LANGUAGE AND SPORT

#### 1. SPORT

##### 1. Active Lifestyles

###### Climbing Higher

I will be formally launching my Sports Strategy for Wales, Climbing Higher early in the New Year when I will announce a series of key actions which will help deliver the strategy.

##### 2. Sporting Success

###### Wrexham AFC and the Racecourse

I met with representatives from Wrexham County Borough Council, the Sports Council for Wales, Ian Lucas MP and Karen Sinclair AM to discuss the issues surrounding Wrexham AFC and the Racecourse. I understand that a land transfer took place in 2002 without the consent of the Sports Council for Wales and we are now closely examining the legal position on this matter. The Sports Council for Wales has written to Mr. Hamilton informing him of this.

##### 1. IAITH PAWB

###### Network of European Language Planning Boards

I attended a dinner with the Network of European Language Boards – the dinner was part of a

two day meeting of the Network in Cardiff which included reports of the working groups and the project's involvement with the European Commission.

The European Network of Language Planning Boards was set up in October 2001 to promote regional and minority languages on a European level and the Welsh Language Board was pre-eminent in setting it up. The Network provides a means for increasing co-operation, especially in the fields of language transmission in the family, marketing, IT, and in training language planners. Four sub-groups were established to discuss each one of these matters.

### Arian Byw/Live Culture

The launch of Arian Byw / Live Culture booklet was organised by Y Ffwrwm at the Assembly in Cardiff Bay. Y Ffwrwm is a Policy and Research Group which aims to offer constructive answers to the problems facing communities which are peripheral in terms of culture in general, particularly Welsh language communities.

The volume is the product of the contributions of the Arian Byw/Live Culture conference organised by Y Ffwrwm in October 2003. The articles are wide-ranging and stimulating and I was pleased to have been invited to write the introduction.

### Urdd Centre, Wales Millennium Centre

Bryn Terfel opened the Urdd Centre at the Wales Millennium Centre on Saturday 27 November. The presence of the Urdd will offer a unique opportunity for groups of up to 153 to stay in modern en-suite accommodation. Numerous specialised cultural courses will be offered, for example interactive lessons with members of the Welsh National Opera and opportunities to utilise the centre's state of the art recording studio.

Due to its excellent location, the Urdd's residential visitors will also be able to visit other attractions of interest in Cardiff Bay and the City centre, such as the National Assembly for Wales, Techniquest and the Millennium Stadium.

### Microsoft

Microsoft has launched Welsh language versions of Windows XP and Office 2003. One of the main objectives of Iaith Pawb is to provide as many opportunities as possible for using the Welsh language and this new facility is an excellent boost for the Welsh language.

The project is another example of the Welsh Language Board building fruitful partnerships with the private sector.

The software is available free of charge and can be downloaded from the Welsh Language Board/

Microsoft websites. It is also available from the Board on CD-ROM. The software was translated by Cymen who worked alongside technical experts Draig Technology and the work also benefited from the translation style and terminology of Canolfan Bedwyr, University of Wales, Bangor.

## 2. CYMRU GREADIGOL – CREATIVE FUTURE

### Wales Millennium Centre (WMC)

What a fantastic opening weekend! This wonderful building really is a huge step forward for the culture and art of the whole of Wales. It has lived up to every expectation. The two concerts demonstrated superbly the range and scale of performance the stage can show, and the acoustics are just about perfect. Thousands of people enjoyed a fitting start to what I am sure will be an illustrious and glittering career for the Centre. My thanks go to all those who helped to bring this great project to fruition, and especially to Sir David Rowe-Beddoe, and Judith Isherwood and her team who have worked so hard to deliver the centre, the opening, and a world class programme.

### Proposed In-Year Additions to the Culture, Welsh Language and Sport MEG 2004-05

The Finance Minister will shortly be making a statement on the planned MEG to MEG motion on 8 December about in-year resources for 2004-05. I am pleased to inform you that subject to agreement in plenary I will be receiving an additional £12.8m to my Departmental Spending Limit (DSL) for a number of major initiatives such as the Wales Millennium Centre, National Botanic Garden of Wales, National Waterfront Museum, support for Welsh Writing in English, the Royal Commission's new SWISH IT system and to fund the additional cost of Cultural ASPBs' pay remits. This represents an increase of 12.5% in the overall DSL Culture Budget for 2004/5;

A summary of the changes at the Sub Expenditure Group (SEG) level are listed in the following table.

### Proposed Adjustments to 2004-05 Budgets

Culture, Welsh Language and Sport MEG			
SEG Title	£000s		
	Current Provision	Proposed Change	Proposed Revised Provision
National Museums & Galleries of Wales (incl. AME)	37,711	876	38,587
National Library for Wales (incl. AME)	18,643	150	18,793
Arts Council of Wales	2,154	241	2,395
Sports Council for Wales	2,720	202	2,922

Welsh Language Board	3,439	0	3,439
Other Arts	1,019	0	1,019
Culture Fund	49,612	6,950	56,562
Royal Commission for the Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales	1,614	378	1,992
Cadw	7,748	0	7,748
Wales Millennium Centre (WMC)	0	4,000	4,000
TOTAL MEG	124,660	12,797	137,457

## National Waterfront Museum, Swansea

The construction phase of the National Waterfront Museum, Swansea is complete. This iconic new building is highly impressive and will tell the story of Wales' industry and innovation since the Industrial Revolution. The Museum will be fitted out with the latest interactive computer displays and will open to the public in summer 2005.

## Launch of NMGW Visual Arts Partnership

Tomorrow (9 December) I will launch the National Museums and Galleries of Wales' Visual Arts Partnership at Ruthin Craft Centre. NMGW has developed a network of galleries across Wales to show items from the national collections. Ten exhibitions will be developed over the next 3 years and will feature a number of pieces that have never before been displayed outside Cardiff. The total cost of the programme will be £185,000, with NMGW contributing £30,000, the Arts Council of Wales £5,000 and the venues £30,000 between them. The balance of £120,000 will be met by a very generous award from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.

In addition to the Craft Centre the other partners are; Oriel Mostyn in Llandudno; Oriel Davies in Newtown; the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery in Swansea and Bodelwyddan Castle.

The Visual Arts Partnership builds on the highly successful "Sharing Treasures - Cyfoeth Cymru Gyfan" scheme which has seen objects from NMGW collections on display at Oriel Ynys Môn in Llangefni, Wrexham County Museum and Brecknock Museum.

## National Lottery Bill

The Queen's speech on 23 November announced that legislation will be introduced to consolidate the distribution of Lottery money to good causes. The main feature of the National Lottery Bill will be the formal establishment of the Big Lottery Fund. Members of the Culture Committee will know that an administrative merger of the Community Fund and NOF was launched in the summer.

I have successfully negotiated with Tessa Jowell, provisions in the Bill that will enable the Welsh Assembly Government to:

- set the outcomes and priorities that are to be addressed by the Big Lottery Fund's programmes in Wales (within an overall UK framework);
- issue policy directions to the Big Lottery Fund, in respect of Wales;
- agree the appointment of a Wales member to the UK Board; and
- agree the appointment of members to the Wales committee.

These provisions offer a significant amount of leverage in determining the shape and direction of the Big Lottery Fund's activities in Wales. The Committee will have the opportunity to consider the Bill in due course.

## National Botanic Garden of Wales

The visitor numbers for the NBGW are encouraging for the current financial year. For the period April to October, the Garden has attracted 105,945 visitors compared with its target of 97,160. It should be noted that these visitors are not all paid entry visitors and the total includes people visiting for functions, events and for educational purposes. That said it is a positive trend.

Another positive aspect to note in relation to visitor numbers is that for the months of September and October (which are off peak) the NBGW attracted numbers in excess of the monthly targets.

The NBGW are implementing short term marketing plans to ensure that they maximise the number of visitors during the off-peak season before next spring. They are also developing a more detailed marketing plan for the 2005/06 season. They are engaging with the Wales Tourist Board and the SouthWest Wales Regional Tourism Partnership to take advantage of expertise and also to make the most of wider marketing opportunities.

As the Committee may be aware, one of the major tasks for the Garden is to improve overall governance and management. One of the first challenges is to refresh the Board of Trustees. The Garden are currently in the process of an appointments exercise and have a shortlist of potential appointees. We understand that these will be interviewed on 6 and 13 December, with appointments to follow shortly thereafter.

### 1. Wales in the World

#### CyMAL Annog Addysg: Inspiring Learning Grant Scheme 2004-05

I joined the naturalist and broadcaster Iolo Williams to launch the Annog Addysg: Inspiring Learning framework at Bodelwyddan Castle. The framework aims to develop learning opportunities and encourage innovative approaches to delivering services in local museums, archives and libraries. It

offers guidance to these organisations so that they can become accessible to as wide an audience as possible. Under the CyMAL Annog Addysg: Inspiring Learning Grant Scheme 15 projects will benefit from a total pot of £230,000 this year.

## 1. MEDIA

### Ofcom's Public Services Broadcasting (PSB) Review

In my substantive response to Phase 2 of Ofcom's review of Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) I am highlighting my concerns about the future of PSB in and for Wales, and emphasising the need to maintain or improve upon current services. Amongst the particular points I am making are my serious concerns about ITV changes; the need to maintain plurality of PSB in Wales; the difficult position of S4C in an all-digital broadcasting world and my support for a separate Public Service Publisher for Wales.

## 2. Other Visits and Meetings

- West Glamorgan Branch of European Movement, Swansea
- Coach of the Year Awards, Sophia Gardens
- RNID Conference, Cardiff Bay
- Attended Welsh Association of Local Sports Councils Conference, Llandrindod Wells
- Digital Switchover Reception, Cutting Edge
- Meeting with Scottish Culture Minister at Scottish Assembly building
- UK Sporting Achievement event, London
- Sports Coach UK coaching awards, London
- Cantemus Concert Bachs Music for Christmas Day, Penarth
  
- Welsh Sports person of the year awards, St Davids Hall