



CYNGOR LLYFRAU CYMRU WELSH BOOKS COUNCIL

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

VENUE: Castell Brychan, Aberystwyth

DATE: 1 December 2011

PRESENT: Professor M. Wynn Thomas (Chair)

Local Authorities

Councillor Alwyn Gruffydd (Gwynedd)

Councillor Jim B. Criddle (Caerphilly)

Councillor Paul Williams (Torfaen)

Councillor Eirwyn Williams (Carmarthenshire)

Councillor Peter H. C. Davies (Newport)

Welsh County Librarians

Mr T. Hywel James

Welsh Government

Dr Hywel Owen

CILIP Cymru/Wales

Mrs Carol M. Edwards

Literature Wales

Mr Dafydd John Pritchard

Friends of the Welsh Books Council

Mr Tegwyn Jones

Ms Marian Delyth

The Council's Panels

Mr David Barker (Chair of the Children's Books Panel)

Vice-Chair

Mr Gareth Davies Jones

Honorary Secretary

Mr D. Geraint Lewis

Honorary Counsel

Mr Gwydion Hughes

Co-opted Member

Mr Ioan Kidd

Mrs Rona Aldrich

Mr W. Gwyn Williams

Staff

Mr Elwyn Jones (Chief Executive)

Mr Arwyn Roderick (Director of Finance and Business)

Mrs Moelwen Gwyndaf (Director of Administration and Services)

Mr D. Philip Davies (Director of Information and Promotion)
 Mrs Marian Beech Hughes (Head of the Editorial Department)
 Mr Neville Evans (Distribution Centre Manager)
 Mr Richard Owen (Head of the Publishing Grants Department)
 Mr Sion Ilar (Head of the Design Department)
 Mr Tom Ferris (Sales and Marketing Manager)

APOLOGIES: Councillors Eurfryn Davies; Gwilym Fychan; Nigel Steele-Mortimer;
 B. Towyn Evans; David W. M. Rees; Ron Page; Messrs W. Gwyn Jones;
 Alun P. Thomas; Wil T. Phillips; Alun Treharne; R. Arwel Jones

1 CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. He extended a special welcome to Mr T. Hywel James (Chief Librarian, Gwynedd), Mrs Rona Aldrich (co-opted member), Ms Marian Delyth (on behalf of the Friends) and Ms Anwen Pierce, Editorial Officer, all of whom were attending their first meeting. Mr Gwydion Hughes, the Council's Honorary Counsellor, was also welcomed to the meeting and thanked for his sound advice at all times.
- 1.2 Mr Ioan Kidd was congratulated on the publication of his latest novel, *Un o Ble Wyt Ti?*
- 1.3 Copies of a press release were distributed, giving details of Cymdeithas Lyfrau Ceredigion's financial contribution to the Council.

2 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the Half Yearly Meeting, held on 1 July 2011, were confirmed.

3 MATTERS ARISING

- 3.1 Operational Plan 2011/12
 The Chief Executive explained that the Minister had accepted the draft plan presented at the previous meeting. The Council was now in discussion with the Welsh Government regarding the 2012/13 plan.
- 3.2 Children's Books Panel / World Book Day Steering Committee
 The Chief Executive explained that the Children's Books Panel and the World Book Day Steering Committee had been amalgamated; it was felt that much of the work was being duplicated, and that a single panel would be more effective and efficient.
- 3.3 Friends of the Welsh Books Council
 Tegwyn Jones, Chair of the Friends, presented a report of the year's activities, referring especially to the Annual Meeting held recently at Bala in the company of author Bethan Gwanas. The Friends will continue to consider holding their meetings at venues other than Aberystwyth.

He also referred to the information pack recently distributed. Membership continued to be approximately 350, and a new committee had recently been formed, to include the following members:

Vice-chair: Bethan Gwanas
 Treasurer: William Howells
 Members: Marian Delyth, Meinir Pierce Jones and Ian Lloyd Hughes.

It was noted that the post of Secretary is vacant at present; the Chair of the Friends thanked Lyn Léwis Dafis for his work over the past few years and wished him well in the future.

The Chair referred to the sum of £400 which would be presented to the Department of Children's Books and Reading Promotion in support of the Mary Vaughan Jones Award. The Friends were also considering co-operating with the Urdd to sponsor a young person to attend a course at Tŷ Newydd writers' centre. They had already contributed the sum of £1,000 to promote reading amongst boys through sponsoring two exciting events.

A copy of the Friends' balance sheet was distributed, showing that the financial position is satisfactory.

The Chair of the Friends warmly thanked Council staff and members of the Committee for their support.

3.4 Developments in the field of e-publishing

The Chief Executive reported that the Council had commissioned Canolfan Bedwyr, Bangor University, to draw up a report on the above, and to prepare technical guidelines to be used by publishers in the production of e-books.

The Council is also in the process of preparing to sell e-books on Gwales. An application for funding had been presented to the Welsh Government, and publishers and the grants panels informed of the latest developments.

3.5 Cymdeithas Lyfrau Ceredigion

The Chief Executive explained that Cymdeithas Lyfrau Ceredigion had wound up its activities; the assets would be transferred to the Books Council to be invested, with the interest being used to promote books and reading amongst children, and to sponsor the Tir na n-Og Awards in respect of Welsh-language books.

3.6 Department for Education and Skills (DfES)

The Chief Executive explained that this Department funded several of the Council's projects as well as the production of subject catalogues for schools. A meeting had been held recently with the Department to seek a financial settlement lasting longer than 6 months, and to extend the contract for producing the catalogues.

The Chair and the Chief Executive would meet with the Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage, and the Minister for Education, during December.

4 BUILDING ON FIRM FOUNDATIONS

The Chief Executive presented the above document which listed the Council's priorities for the next three years.

5 THE WELSH BOOKS COUNCIL'S 50 YEAR CELEBRATIONS

The Chief Executive presented a paper noting the ways in which the Council will be celebrating its half centenary. He referred especially to the press release which had already attracted considerable interest, to the logo designed by Sion Ilar, Head of the Design Department, and to the forthcoming volume edited by the Chair, Professor M. Wynn Thomas.

6 GRANTS 2012/13

The Director of Finance and Business presented a paper noting the projected situation regarding grants in 2012/13.

7 MEMBERSHIP OF THE COUNCIL, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND PANELS

In accordance with the Constitution, the Director of Administration presented a list of the members of the Council, the Executive Committee and the various Panels. It was explained that all representatives of the Local Authorities were members of the Council and that they were represented in rotation on the Executive Committee. The Chair thanked the Councillors for their support.

The Director of Administration also presented a paper outlining the latest situation regarding membership of the panels, and she drew attention to the decision to amalgamate the Children's Books Panel and the World Book Day Steering Committee. The paper was approved.

Everyone present was asked to complete the Register of Interests.

8 PRESENTATION OF THE FINANCIAL REPORT 2010/11

In the unavoidable absence of the Honorary Treasurer, Mr W. Gwyn Jones, the accounts for 2010/11 were presented to the members by the Director of Finance and Business. The Chair thanked Mr Arwyn Roderick and the staff for their work in preparing the accounts, and Llŷr James and company for auditing them.

9 PROBABLE FINANCIAL POSITION 2011/12 AND ESTIMATES 2012/13

The Director of Finance and Business presented papers noting the projected financial position, and referred also to the reduction in funding received from the Welsh Government.

10 APPOINT AUDITORS TO AUDIT THE ACCOUNTS FOR 2011/12 AND 2012/13

At the recommendation of the Executive Committee, Llŷr James and company were reappointed to audit the Council's accounts for a further two years at a cost of £6,250 per annum. The recommendation was approved.

11 PRESENTATION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT 2010/11

In presenting the Annual Report, the Chief Executive noted that this meeting was a particularly significant one, as it marked 50 years of service provided by the Books Council to the publishing industry in Wales.

He noted some of the main developments over this period, referring specifically to the developments in the grants system, establishing the Distribution Centre, ensuring an increase in the Council's financial support from the Welsh Government, and the extensive technological developments realised, including establishing the Gwales website.

He also noted that the Council is looking to the future, referring to the recent investment in creative editors for Welsh-language material, the need for further investment in English Writing from Wales, and the current exciting developments in the field of e-books.

The Chief Executive thanked the Council staff for their sterling work during the year; he also thanked all members of the Council for their support.

Mr T. Hywel James paid thanks to the Chief Executive and the staff for their work.