

WELSH BOOKS COUNCIL

HALF YEARLY MEETING

VENUE: Castell Brychan, Aberystwyth
DATE: 23 June 2006
PRESENT: Professor M. Wynn Thomas (Chairman)

Local Authorities

Councillor Morfudd M. Jones (Denbighshire)
Councillor Lynda Williams (Neath Port Talbot)
Councillor Margaret Davies (Rhondda Cynon Taf)
Councillor Liz Hackett Pain (Monmouthshire)
Councillor B. Towyn Evans (Ceredigion)
Councillor Arwel Pierce (Gwynedd)

Vice-Chair

Mr Gareth Davies Jones

Welsh Assembly Government

Dr Hywel B. Owen (representing Mr Mark Williams)

Chief Librarians

Mr Lawrence Rawsthorne
Mrs Siân E. Jones
Ms Gill John
Mr Robert Arwyn Jones
Mr Lloyd Ellis

Honorary Treasurer

Mr W. Gwyn Jones

Co-opted Members

Mrs Catrin Puw Davies
Mr W. Gwyn Williams
Mr Ioan Kidd

Staff

Miss Gwerfyl Pierce Jones (Director)
Mr Elwyn Jones (Head of Administration and Public Relations)
Mr Elgan Davies (Head of the Design Department)
Mr Dewi Morris Jones (Head of the Editorial Department)
Mr D. Philip Davies (Information Services Coordinator)
Miss Menna Lloyd Williams (Head of the Children's Books Department)
Mr Arwyn Roderick (Head of Finance, Business and Information Technology)
Mr Dafydd Charles Jones (Distribution Centre Manager)
Ms Helgard Krause (Head of Sales and Marketing)
Mr Dyfed Evans
Mrs Eleri Huws
Mrs Delyth Humphreys
Ms Lila Piette
Miss Emma Lloyd Davies
Mr Richard Owen

Ms Kasia Stefanowicz
Mr Sion Ilar
Miss Tanwen Haf

APOLOGIES: Councillors Christopher Bithell; Keith Morgan; Gill Clark; John M. Griffiths; Mrs Dorothy M. J. James; Ray Davies; Jonathan Austin; John Meirion Davies; A. D. Hampton; Eirwyn Williams; Messrs. Milwyn Jarman; P. Mark Williams; Iolo M. Ll. Walters; John Valentine Williams; Alun P. Thomas; Rhys Bebb Jones; T. Hywel James; Dr Rhidian Griffiths; Dr Huw Meirion Edwards; Ms Tudfil Adams; Mrs Ann Keane; Ms Wendy Morris.

1 CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

- 1.1 The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting and extended a special welcome to those attending their first meeting: Dr Hywel Owen from the Welsh Assembly Government, representing Mr Mark Williams, and Councillors Margaret E. Davies (Rhondda Cynon Taf) and Lynda G. Williams (Neath/Port Talbot).
- 1.2 A welcome was also extended to members of staff attending their first meeting: Miss Emma Lloyd Davies and Ms Kasia Stefanowicz, both from the Grants Department, and Helgard Krause who had recently been appointed Head of Sales and Marketing.
- 1.3 Members extended their sympathy to staff members, Elinor Edwards and Robert Dobson, on their respective bereavements.
- 1.4 Best wishes were conveyed to Heather Bastow and her family, following her recent second operation at Morriston Hospital, Swansea. Mr Dafydd Charles Jones was also welcomed on his return after a period of illness.
- 1.5 Members congratulated Eleri Huws and Sion Ilar on their recent promotion, and Kirsti Bohata on the birth of her daughter, Ula.
- 1.6 Good wishes were extended to Elgan Davies and Dewi Morris Jones, who were to retire at the end of the month after more than thirty years' sterling service to the Council. The Chairman thanked them warmly and presented each with a volume published by Gregynog Press.

2 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the Annual Meeting, held on 2 December 2005, were ratified with one correction, viz. to record that Mr Dewi Thomas was present.

3 MATTERS ARISING

- 3.1 Grants 2006/07
A paper had been circulated, outlining the latest situation regarding grants for 2006/07 (See Appendix 1). It was noted that the Welsh Assembly Government had agreed to add £50,000 to the budget, although this sum had been reduced to £45,000 (a reduction based on a formula which affected all Welsh Assembly Government clients).
- 3.2 Culturenet Cymru: Books from the Past
There was nothing further to report at this stage.

3.3 Friends of the Welsh Books Council

Mr Elwyn Jones reported that the latest information pack for members contained an issue of the newsletter, *Y Cyfaill*, which carried a tribute to the late Mr Alun Creunant Davies. He added that the next pack was in preparation and would be distributed early in July.

All members paying by banker's order had been informed of the Annual Meeting's decision to raise the membership fee from £10 to £15. A number had already responded and new forms were being processed. Membership currently stood at 309.

4 CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION

4.1 Changes to the Constitution

The Chairman reported that the Executive Committee, at its meeting that morning, had approved the following amendments to the Constitution for presentation to the Council. They were formally presented to the Council and approved.

IV(d) MEMBERSHIP: Representatives

DELETE

The Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales

Amend current clause

VIII(1) DELETE 'subject to the control of the Council'

The Executive Committee shall exercise on behalf of and subject to the control of the Council such functions as may be delegated to it from time to time by the Council.

Revised clause to read:

The Executive Committee shall exercise on behalf of the Council such functions as may be delegated to it from time to time by the Council.

Amendment to current heading

XI TRUSTEES

The revised heading to read:

CUSTODIAN TRUSTEES

4.2 The Charities Commission: Report of the Review Visit

The Chairman stated that the Executive Committee had considered a number of matters arising from the report of the review visit and summarised the discussion and decisions with regard to:

- the charity's legal position
- policy regarding reserves
- training for new trustees

Members approved the measures taken.

5 NEW SCHEMES

5.1 Library of Wales

Ms Kasia Stefanowicz presented a report on the *Library of Wales* series, published by Parthian and supported by the Welsh Assembly Government and the Books Council. The purpose of the series was to bring back to print classics of Welsh writing in English.

Following the National Assembly Culture Committee's Review of Welsh Writing in English, the Books Council had received £250,000 towards realising the chief recommendations and approximately £50,000 would be allocated in each year to establish the *Library of Wales* series.

Professor Dai Smith had been appointed editor of the series and the first five titles were successfully launched at the Millennium Centre on 17 January this year in the presence of Mr Alun Pugh, Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport. Since then, the series had been widely promoted and had attracted press and media attention across Britain. A promotional event had also been organised in New York.

16,000 copies of the first titles had been printed and four further volumes would appear in October.

5.2 *Quick Reads/Stori Sydyn*

Delyth Humphreys presented a report on the background and success of the *Quick Reads* scheme, which targeted emergent readers with short, punchy stories. She noted that the Basic Skills Agency had identified some 750,000 people in Wales who lacked confidence in reading. The Agency was keen to cooperate with the Books Council in publishing suitable materials for this group.

Although the timetable had been tight, two Welsh-language titles were published by World Book Day in March this year, compared with the dozen English titles which constituted the British campaign. In all, four titles have now appeared from Wales, two in Welsh and two in English, with plans already underway for further publications before the end of the financial year.

These titles had received considerable exposure in the press and media. With the distribution of several thousand £1-off vouchers, the initiative has proved a success and is an important investment in nurturing new readers for the future.

6 ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Menna Lloyd Williams referred to the success of the Welsh-language Book Competitions in Aberystwyth, in which more than 35 schools from all over Wales competed.

She also reported on the increase in the number of counties taking part this year in the English-language Book Competitions.

She referred to the Tir na n-Og award ceremony, held this year as part of the Celtic Connections Conference under the auspices of CILIP Wales. She thanked CILIP Wales for its sponsorship of prizes and promotional material and also for its cooperation in organising the ceremony.

7 DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FIELD OF INFORMATION

In presenting his report on the latest developments in the field of information, Mr Phil Davies noted that members would already be familiar with *gwales* – www.gwales.com – which had been developed for use by members of the public, and that some would also be aware of the special module for shops, viz. *gwales/shop*. On this occasion, he wished to concentrate on the latest module to be developed, for the use of libraries.

He noted that this website had originated in a comprehensive report prepared last year by Professor D. Hywel E. Roberts on purchase systems for Welsh libraries. With the financial support of CyMAL, it had been possible to implement the chief recommendation which was concerned with the establishment of a website.

A working group of librarians had been established, comprising Rhian Williams, Conwy, Liz Roberts, Caerphilly, and Siân Jones, Vale of Glamorgan, under the chairmanship of Hywel Roberts, to take the lead in these developments. The technical work had been undertaken by Ateb in Aberystwyth.

Phil Davies introduced the website, showing how it would enable librarians to gain easy access to information about books from Wales. As the site had been tailored precisely to their needs, it was possible to include lists of the inspection copies sent to each library on sale-or-return terms. A pilot project was in progress with Conwy Libraries to test electronic ordering.

He noted that training sessions had been arranged so that the potential of these developments could be demonstrated to the librarians.

The Chairman thanked staff for their presentations and expressed members' appreciation of recent developments at the Books Council.

CYNGOR LLYFRAU CYMRU / *WELSH BOOKS COUNCIL***GRANTIAU / GRANTS 2006 / 2007**

	2005/06	2006/07	Cynnydd/ Increase
	£	£	£
Llywodraeth y Cynulliad / Welsh Assembly Government			
Grant cynnal / <i>Grant-in-aid</i> (yn cynnwys rhaglen weithgarwch graidd / <i>including core programme activity</i>)	1,108,000	1,159,000	+ 4.6%
Grantiau i'w dosbarthu / <i>Grants for distribution</i> Grant Cyhoeddi / <i>Publishing Grant</i>	2,274,000	2,268,000	- 0.26%
	3,382,000	3,427,000	1.3%

	2005/06	2006/07
	£	£
Grantiau Prosiect Eraill / Additional Project Funding		
Llywodraeth y Cynulliad: Yr Adran Addysg, Dysgu Gydol Oes a Sgiliau / <i>Welsh Assembly Government: Department for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills</i>		
Diwrnod y Llyfr / <i>World Book Day</i>	75,000	75,000
Catalog Llyfrau Plant / <i>Children's Books Catalogue</i>	12,000	12,000
Llywodraeth y Cynulliad / <i>Welsh Assembly Government: CyMAL</i> <i>gwales/llyfrgell / gwales/libraries</i>		
	80,000	—
Asiantaeth Sgiliau Sylfaenol / <i>Basic Skills Agency</i> Cynllun Stori Sydyn / <i>Quick Reads Project</i>		
	43,128	I'w gadarnhau/ <i>To be confirmed</i>