

**Minutes of the tenth meeting of the Newsplan (Wales)  
Implementation Committee, held at the National Library of Wales,  
Aberystwyth, at 11.00am on Thursday 14 October 1999**

**Present: John Cosslett, Andrew Green, Rhidian Griffiths, Edmund King, John Turner, John Woods, Iwan Jones (Secretary)**

**1. Election of Newsplan (Wales) Chairman**

Rhidian Griffiths proposed and John Turner seconded that the Chair of Newsplan (Wales) should be taken by Andrew Green. This was agreed unanimously.

**2. Apologies and personal matters**

Andrew Green took the Chair and recorded his thanks to the former Chairman, Lionel Madden, for the work which he had done in establishing Newsplan (Wales). Ed King, the new British Library Newspaper Librarian, was welcomed to his first meeting. Apologies had been received from Linda Tomos, Gareth Haulfryn Williams and John Rees Thomas. It was agreed that the Committee should include a representative from an academic library and Andrew Green agreed to invite Nigel Soane of the University of Wales Bangor to join.

**3. Minutes of the meeting of 3 December 1997**

**3.1** The minutes had been circulated and were accepted as a correct record subject to correcting the spelling of LASAR to LASER (London And South East Region) (2iii).

**3.2 Western Mail web site (www.totalwales.com) (para. 2iv)**

John Cosslett reported that the Western Mail web site was now well-established under the direction of Peter Jones. Publication of the associated CD-ROM had now ceased.

**3.3 Newsplan (Wales) Report on-line (para. 2iii)**

Rhidian Griffiths said that the Library had acquired the ISYS:web software which would enable the Newsplan (Wales) Report to be transferred to the web, although sophisticated searching methods would not be possible. Ed King said the LASER and North-west reports were now on the web and the South-west and Irish reports would soon be available.

**3.4 `Second paper copy' (para. 2ii)**

John Woods said that limited funding meant that there was little chance of public libraries in Wales being able to take on the work of preserving 'second copies' of Welsh newspapers. Rhidian Griffiths said that local library copies were valuable in filling gaps in the National Library set, and that there would be greater need for the Library to keep the original paper copy now that there was less 'back-up' within the collecting system. (see also item 3.6 below)

### **3.5 Newspaper indexes (para. 3ii)**

Newspaper indexes remained a live issue. Ed King said the Yorkshire and Humberside region had prepared a list of indexes of newspapers. John Woods said that the work of abstracting and indexing newspapers was often carried out in a haphazard way by public relations agencies. John Turner agreed to see whether Welsh newspaper indexes could be addressed in a postgraduate dissertation at DILS. It was also suggested that the Head of the National Assembly Information Services might be interested since indexing and cuttings services were expensive when contracted to private agencies.

### **3.6 Implications of the Smethurst Report (para. 3iv)**

The British Library had accepted the recommendation of the Smethurst review of its collecting policy that it should not retain paper copies of Welsh and Scottish newspapers. Ed King said the British Library had a firm intention to purchase microfilm of current Welsh newspapers from the National Library of Wales rather than collect the original papers, and he was in touch with Non Jenkins. The change of policy laid a greater responsibility on the National Library of Wales to collect comprehensively and build up its microfilming programme. John Woods asked about the future of the existing paper copies of Welsh newspapers at Colindale and Ed King agreed that the issue might represent a possible next step in developing British Library policy.

### **3.7 Third Newsplan Conference (para. 5i)**

The Third Newsplan Conference, which taken place at Durham on 16-17 March 1998, had been attended by Rhidian Griffiths and Iwan Jones. It had been most successful and had focused on the Newsplan HLF Bid and on digital developments.

### **3.8 Letter to the Welsh Office (para. 5ii)**

It was believed that the Welsh Office had not replied to Ann Matheson's letter as Chair of the Newsplan LINC Panel asking for support in principle for Newsplan. It was agreed that there was a need to raise support in general and especially among funding bodies. Andrew Green agreed to check with Ann Matheson whether a reply had been received and to raise the issue with the Welsh Assembly.

## **4. Heritage Lottery Funding and the Newsplan Programme**

Ed King outlined progress. The Heritage Lottery Fund had agreed in April 1999 to award £5 million to support phase one of the Newsplan programme, lasting three years. Ann Matheson and John Byford were dealing with the HLF which had raised difficulties in regard to the conditions of grant. The third meeting with the HLF in 1999 had been held on 7 October and it had been agreed to advertise the post of Newsplan Director which it was hoped would be filled by the spring of 2000. A Newsplan Company would be established and would retain rights to film produced by the programme. Each region would be invited to nominate a representative on the Board of Trustees and an Executive Committee would also be selected.

Shared funding would be raised from the newspaper industry to provide public libraries with about 800 microfilm readers and about 40 reader printers. John Cosslett was confident that Dennis Griffiths and the London Press Club had adopted the correct approach in contacting newspaper proprietors at the highest level. He asked

whether there was any way to improve microfilm readers, and it was understood that the programme would look at scanning of film as a means to improve access.

Microfilming would be put out to tender and advertised in the EEC Journal after the Director had been appointed. This would take six months, so filming was unlikely to start before the autumn of 2000. John Woods asked about the cost of providing copies of the film, especially when a library provided original newspapers for filming. This was not included in HLF funding but it was understood the cost of further copies would be addressed in the tender document.

Within Wales HLF support had generated new interest in Newsplan, and the Working Party now included representatives of almost all local libraries. Details of the newspapers in the original bid had been circulated to them and to others. Comments had been invited regarding newspaper titles which deserved priority for filming (about 40% of the original list would be filmed in the first phase) and some responses had been received by the National Library. Once the work was under way about £1 million would be spent on microfilming annually, so the work would need to be carried out at a great pace. In Wales the National Library of Wales had agreed to bear the cost of organisation and transporting newspapers.

## **5. Minutes of the Newsplan (Wales) Working Party, 24 June 1999**

### **5.1 Cost to 'digitise first' (para. 3.1)**

It was noted that the original Newsplan Bid had proposed microfilming newspapers at the cost of £2 million per annum; if the work were done on a 'digitise first' basis it was estimated that copying the same newspapers would cost £43 million per annum.

### **5.2 Newsplan Seminar (para. 6.2)**

A Newsplan (Wales) Seminar had been held in 1994. It was felt that it would be premature to arrange another Seminar in Wales before there was something firm to say, and that the date of the next Newsplan Conference, which was being planned for 2001, should also be borne in mind.

### **5.3 Role of Archives (para. 2.2)**

It was noted that while newspapers were not within the collecting remit of local archives some archives had retained newspapers and saw value in preserving them. Archives had not generally accepted the invitations to take part in the work of Newsplan.

### **5.4 Co-operation to microfilm newspapers to preservation standard (para. 4)**

John Woods noted that six South Wales authorities were co-operating to film the Western Mail. Each library acquired a viewing print and the master negative was kept at Cardiff Central Library. Although this did not attain full preservation standards it represented a step towards those standards. Ed King noted that the Mellon Microfilming Manual was being revised by the NPO and that the Newsplan tender document would refer to the revised standards.

## **6. Any other business**

### **6.1 Publicity**

It was agreed that it was important to draw attention to Newsplan in Wales, especially with a view to attracting the support of the Welsh Assembly. The Newsplan Newsletter and related press stories could be sent to Assembly members, and John Cosslett was thanked for arranging the timely story in the Western Mail.

## **6.2 Newsplan Development Plan, 1999-2004**

Details of the Newsplan Development Plan drawn up by Ed King were circulated. The paper addressed the wider issues of Newsplan which were not covered by Newsplan funding. They included standards for the indexing of newspapers, surveys of newspaper use (based on the LASER survey), the use of the internet in listing and cataloguing newspapers, the storage of master negatives produced by Newsplan (possibly at the National Library of Wales), further educational initiatives, and co-operation with the newspaper industry and with museums and archives.

The paper was welcomed by the meeting. It was felt these wider issues should be addressed by the committee in future. John Cosslett emphasised the value of local studies librarians. Libraries needed knowledgeable staff whose involvement with local studies developed their expertise. The meeting felt that local studies librarians were the key to the wider dimension of Newsplan, although the position of local studies was threatened in authorities which had been badly affected by reorganisation.

## **7. Date and place of next meeting**

11.00am on Thursday 25 May 2000, provisionally at the Western Mail offices, Cardiff.