

Minutes of the sixth meeting of the Implementation Committee of the Newsplan (Wales) Project held at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, at 11.00am on Friday 14th June 1996

PRESENT:

Dr Lionel Madden (Chairman), Mr John Cosslett, Dr Rhidian Griffiths, Mr Paul Reynolds, Mr Geoffrey Smith, Mr John Turner, Mr Gareth Haulfryn Williams, Mr John Woods, Mr Iwan Jones (Secretary)

Apologies had been received from Mrs Elspeth Mitcheson and Ms Linda Tomos. The Chairman welcomed to his first meeting Mr Paul Reynolds, substituting for Mr Andrew Green.

## 1. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

i. The minutes of the meeting held on 31st October 1995 had been circulated and were approved.

ii. The Index to the Western Mail

Mr John Cosslett had written to the National Library confirming that the Western Mail was happy for the Library to sell microfilm copies of the Index to the newspaper. The Library had not yet proceeded because of uncertainties regarding the number of copies that might be ordered and the capacity of the Library's microfilm unit to process orders in-house. Dr Rhidian Griffiths would contact potential customers to identify how many copies were likely to be sold.

iii. Western Mail on CD-ROM

John Cosslett said that the Western Mail, South Wales Echo and Wales on Sunday were now available on CD-ROM discs issued quarterly through Televisual Data Ltd. At present they contained only the newspapers' own stories but it was hoped eventually to include advertisements, photographs and more text, and to provide access to the data on Internet. There were about 50 subscribers at present and it was hoped this figure would rise to 100 within the year.

iv. Free Newspapers

Geoff Smith said that although there were no new developments on free newspapers a paper on legal deposit in general was being prepared.

v. Mellon Funding

The Chairman reported that the Mellon Committee intended to continue in future as a steering committee for preservation surrogates, and that it was likely that the master negatives produced under the Mellon Microfilming Projects would be stored together at the National Library of Wales.

## 2. Report on the LINC Newsplan Panel meetings

i LINC Newsplan Panel

Iwan Jones reported on the LINC Newsplan Panel meeting of 25 April 1995. The reorganisation of local government had overshadowed the meeting with those regions that had already undergone reorganisation, such as Wales and Scotland, fearing that its effect was even worse than expected. The London and South East Region had launched its LASER Report that evening. All Newsplan regions had now completed the Report Stage and moved to the Implementation Stage.

Geoff Smith added that the meeting had also discussed summaries of regional progress, the central storage of master negatives and the importance of entering records of master negatives on the national register.

### 3. MINUTES OF THE WORKING PARTY MEETING OF 30 APRIL 1996

The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting had been circulated. Good progress had been made by the Working Party in 1995-96 and cooperative filming had been arranged with most of the old local county authorities. However, from April 1996 the Working Party had to start again with the new authorities. A list of the new local authority responses and representatives was distributed. The Working Party felt its first priority was to identify contacts within the new authorities before pressing for five-year plans.

### 4. IMPLICATIONS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

The new situation meant that there were more individual authorities with smaller budgets; there was more reason for cooperative filming but the funds available for filming within individual authorities might be so small that a great deal of effort was required to initiate a joint venture. Gareth Haulfryn Williams and John Woods felt it might be possible for some individuals to represent regions including several authorities. Geoff Smith said experience in other regions indicated the importance of having a contact in each authority: even if that person were unable to attend every meeting he or she would have responsibility for the work and make sure the chief librarian would bear the issue in mind.

Rhidian Griffiths said that experience with The Cambrian News indicated that it would be far more difficult to find partners for cooperative filming with the new authorities.

The Chairman said that it would take time before it became clear whether the new authorities could identify sufficient funding for filming. He would take measures to remind librarians in authorities that had not yet responded, and drew attention to the list of library chiefs within the new authorities prepared by Glyn Collins for the WLA.

### 5. OTHER FUNDING POSSIBILITIES

Geoff Smith reported on the proposed bid for Heritage Lottery funding. The Heritage Fund had explained to the Mellon Committee that it could not accept a bid from a 'third party', but could accept a bid from a group of collection-holding bodies acting as a consortium with one lead body. The initial proposal for the British Library Newspaper Library to act as the lead body in a joint bid with the National Libraries of Scotland and Wales had been welcomed by the Newsplan Panel of LINC. The intention was to define categories of priority material (probable all 19th century material and rare or vulnerable titles from the 20th century), and draw up a list of titles from each Newsplan region. The bid would be for the filming of these priority titles and might be for a sum of about five to ten million pounds. The bid could accommodate a Welsh requirement for capital for additional filming facilities. Partnership funding might

be arranged by obtaining commitments in principle from Newsplan regions to purchase copy prints at cost price (about £15-£20 per film) of the titles filmed, representing a substantial saving on the cost of new cooperative filming.

The Chairman said that the proposals seemed eminently reasonable and the Committee agreed to give them its full support. Although it was felt best to submit one major proposal to the Lottery Heritage Fund this did not prevent regions from submitting their own bids. Copies of the Heritage Lottery Fund guidelines for the microfilming of newspapers, published in Issue 7 of Lottery Update, were distributed.

It was agreed the National Library of Wales would prepare lists of titles of Welsh newspapers for submission as required for the bid, together with estimates for the capital requirement to provide additional preservation filming capacity. Geoff Smith hoped it would be possible to meet the November deadline for applications, and intended to call an extraordinary meeting of the LINC Newsplan Panel in order to obtain their support for the bid, which might be for a sum between £5 million and £10 million.

## 6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

### i Accounting procedures

Gareth Haulfryn Davies noted that while it had not been possible for Gwynedd to enter into cooperative microfilming of The Cambrian News, because it had not been possible to commit the sum of £6000 within the current year, it might be possible for local authorities to commit themselves to spend such a sum of money over a period of years. It would help if the work could be 'stretched out' with the National Library acting as a sort of 'banker'. Iwan Jones noted that it was difficult for the National Library always to complete filming projects within the end of the financial year, and it was understood that in general accounting procedures in local authorities allowed for payment in advance for future filming. Iwan Jones agreed to enquire regarding accounting procedures in order to help the scheduling of microfilming at the National Library.

### ii History behind the Headlines

Mr John Cosslett presented Dr Rhidian Griffiths with a copy of History behind the Headlines, his new book on the history of The Western Mail and its associated newspapers, which had been published on 13 June 1996.

### iii UC&R Group Meeting

Iwan Jones had given a talk about Newsplan at the meeting of the WLA University, College and Research Group at DILS, the University of Wales Aberystwyth, on 13th February 1996. There had been discussion regarding the role of academic libraries in Newsplan, but there was still considerable reluctance among university libraries to become involved in Newsplan.

## 7. DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held at the National Library of Wales, probably in November, at a date to be arranged by the officers.