

## CULTURE COMMITTEE CC-16-02(min)

### MINUTES

**Date:** 23 October 2002

**Time:** 9.00am - 12.30pm

**Venue:** Committee Room 1, National Assembly for Wales

#### Attendance:

	<b>Members</b>	Rhodri Glyn Thomas (Plaid Cymru, Carmarthen East and Dinefwr, Chair) Jenny Randerson (Liberal Democrat, Cardiff Central, Assembly Minister) Owen John Thomas (Plaid Cymru, South Wales Central) Lorraine Barrett (Labour, Cardiff South and Penarth) Delyth Evans (Labour, Mid & West Wales) Alison Halford (Labour, Delyn) Rosemary Butler (Labour, Newport West) Dafydd Wigley (Plaid Cymru, Caernarfon) Glyn Davies (Conservative, Mid and West Wales)
	<b>Officials</b>	Margaret Evans (Arts, Lottery and Sport Division) Arthur Emyr (Arts, Lottery and Sport Division) Russell Thomas (Culture and Welsh Language Division)
	<b>Secretariat</b>	Marie Knox (Head of Members' Research and Committee Services)

#### 9.00am to 9.10am

#### Item 1: Introduction, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

1. The Chair welcomed the Committee and members of the public.

1.2 The Chair asked Members for declarations of interest, in accordance with Standing Order 4.5.

The following declarations were made:

- o Rhodri Glyn Thomas - member of the shadow board for Cardiff's bid for European Capital of Culture 2008
- o Dafydd Wigley receives funding from the Books Council and his wife is involved in the Arts in Wales.
- o Rosemary Butler is Chair of the shadow board of the National Waterfront Museum, Swansea.

## **9.10am to 10.30am**

### **Item 2: Policy Review on Sport**

#### **Papers CC-16-02(p.1, p.1a, p.1b)**

2.1 The Chair introduced the paper and invited Members' comments on the draft terms of reference for the review of participation in sport and on the outline forward work programme for the review.

2.2 Committee members agreed that the focus of the review should be on participation in sport. They agreed that it would not be possible to invite representatives of individual sports to give oral presentations given the number of such organisations and the time constraints on the review. However, organisations would be invited to submit their comments in writing. Several committee members expressed their surprise and disappointment that a written consultation had not been undertaken during recess as proposed at the last meeting in July. The Chair apologised for this and said that a consultation would be issued shortly. However members were concerned that this would not allow them sufficient time to take into account the themes emerging from written submissions when asking questions during the presentation sessions. It was agreed that a consultation list would be circulated to committee members so that members could suggest additional organisations.

2.3 On the forward work programme, members queried whether there would be sufficient time to receive presentations on all the topics suggested for the 20 November meeting. The committee agreed to consider issues relating to the Welsh premier football league at a later meeting, but that this should be dealt with outside the scope of the review on participation in sport. The Minister reminded the committee that the Football Forum had produced a report recently and that she would be issuing her response to the report later in the autumn. It was agreed that football in Wales should be considered after publication of the Minister's response.

2.4 The Chair thanked the Minister for the suggestions which had been provided by her officials in Annex B to the paper and said that the Minister had given an undertaking to provide additional information as required by committee members. It was suggested that the Sports Council for Wales should be asked for details of the organisations to which it provides financial support. The Chair asked members to provide any additional comments on the terms of reference, forward work programme, or consultation list to the secretariat.

#### **Action:**

- Secretariat to arrange consultation and circulate distribution list to members.
- Members to pass additional comments on the terms of reference and programme to the Secretariat.
- Secretariat to obtain funding information from SCW.
- Football Forum report to be considered at a future meeting, separate to the review on participation.

2.5 He then invited Huw Rees and Molly Lewis from the Audit Commission to make their presentation on the Commission's report on sport and recreation.

2.6 A copy of the presentation is attached at Annex A. The key points made during the presentation were:

- That the report was based on a small number of inspections of local authorities in Wales;
- Bearing in mind the small size of the sample, Wales compared well with England.
- There was a need to define a clear role for local authorities in providing sports facilities.
- Ways of securing broader access to sports facilities for all groups in the community needed to be developed.
- A joined up approach was beneficial in providing sports recreation facilities; and
- Local authorities should be encouraged to look at alternative delivery methods.

2.7 In response to questions from committee members, the Audit Commission clarified the following points:

- Their role was to consider whether local authorities were adopting a satisfactory approach to considering alternative delivery mechanisms. When the Audit Commission had completed its review of Flintshire they were satisfied that the approach being adopted in considering PFI was sound.
- Although overall budgets for local authorities might not be declining, where authorities had to prioritise their use of resources they may redirect resources away from sports and recreation to other services.
- On widening access, the Audit Commission looked at authorities' information systems and networks and during inspections considered whether they were sufficient to enable the authority to adopt an inclusive approach.
- The majority of inspections which provided the basis for this report had been in urban areas. There might be different findings in rural areas.

The Chair thanked the Audit Commission for their presentation.

*Welsh Local Government Association*

The Chair invited Chris Llewelyn and David Evans to make their presentation.

2.8 The following points were made in the presentation:

- Sports and recreation is a non-statutory function for local authorities. However, local authorities provide these services, as they are important to the local community.
- Local authorities provide a wide range and high number of sports facilities in Wales. Many facilities had been built in the 1970s and now required refurbishment. Local authorities also had to consider the implications of the Disability Discrimination act for their premises.
- Many local authorities provided concessionary rates for access to facilities. However, even reduced costs could still remain a barrier. The Finance Minister's announcement regarding the creation of a working party to look into free access to leisure and sports facilities for children during school holidays was welcomed.
- Sparsity created problems for local authorities in rural areas. It was suggested that a low cost transport facility would be of benefit to users.
- There was a need to build up non-users' awareness of facilities available.
- It was felt that the Sports Council for Wales should promote its role more strongly.
- There was concern regarding over-reliance on lottery funding for sports and recreation projects.
- The costs of training elite athletes were the same in Wales per athlete as they were in England. However, lottery funding for Wales was determined on a per capita basis. This meant that Wales was at a disadvantage in comparison to England in relation to funding provision.
- There were strong arguments regarding the benefits of investment in sports provision in relation to reducing youth crime levels, but better research and evidence was needed to support these arguments.
- Sports provision in Wales was very reliant on volunteers but recruitment and retention of volunteers was becoming more difficult because of the additional responsibilities now associated with it.

- It was felt that the three-way partnership approach had worked well in relation to the Commonwealth Games.

2.9 In response to questions from committee members the following points were made:

- The corporate plan of the WLGA was that of the Association and not of local authorities. As a small organisation the Association could not cover every service sector, which was why the corporate plan did not mention sports and recreation.
- It was suggested that the Audit Commission had a dogmatic view on alternative delivery methods. There were some opportunities for use of the private sector and, with the end of compulsory competitive tendering, local authorities no longer regarded the private sector as competitors but as potential partners. However there were no alternatives to public sector provision in relation to sports development.
- Australia was considered to have a successful recruitment scheme for volunteers. The Sports Council for Wales was looking at arrangements in Australia and New Zealand in relation to volunteers.
- The WLGA had responded to the consultation on the sports lottery and argued for greater funding for Wales.
- Certain sporting events were considered to be good economic drivers.
- The WLGA did not feel that a statutory requirement on local authorities in relation to sports and recreation facilities would improve the quality of services provided. Instead it was argued that a requirement on local authorities to produce a cultural strategy would be more effective.

The Committee agreed to break for 15 minutes

**10.45am to 11.30am**

**Item 3: National Museums and Galleries of Wales: Consultation on Display of Art**

**CC-16-02(p.2)**

The Chair invited Michael Tooby and Paul Loveluck to make their presentation on paper CG-16-02 (p2).

3.1 The following points were raised in presentation:

- The report on the extensive consultation exercise in relation to the display of art provided by the NMGW was a synopsis of responses received and highlighted the main themes. Many showed support for a stand alone national gallery in the capital city. There was also some support for a stand-alone gallery outside Cardiff. The two options were not seen as mutually exclusive.
- The consultation showed a strong desire to see better, focused and longer-term investment in display.
- The NMGW at present had no position regarding a new national gallery, its location and its composition. NGMW was already committed to a range of short to medium term actions. A new gallery was a longer-term issue which would require further consultations.

3.2 The following points were raised in the subsequent question and answer session:

- Some concern was expressed about the consultation process and whether it had favoured Cardiff.
- Many Members agreed, however, that a national contemporary art gallery should be located in Cardiff as Wales' capital city. Members were also concerned that enabling exhibits to be displayed in other locations should be a priority. Members saw the need to extend the concept of "Sharing the Treasures".
- The Minister explained that at present there was no budgetary provision for an ambitious plan for a separate national gallery or an extension of what already exists.
- NGMW confirmed that regional venues did exist but there was lack of infrastructure for them to display NGMW

collections. There was a need for joint working to address these problems.

- There was a concern that there might be a tension between NGMW's curatorial and exhibition roles.

## 11.30am to 11.55am

### **Item 4: Budget: Final Proposals**

#### **Paper CC 16-02 (p.3)**

4.1 The Minister presented her paper and noted that it remained a draft budget which could be subject to change until the 6 November plenary debate on the final budget. The paper reflected the Minister's priorities, the views of the ASPBs and also the Committee's priorities. She highlighted the following points:

- The cash increase of 16.5% in the culture budget for next year with larger increases for the following years (£46.8m for 2003-04 and £62.3m for 2005-06).
- the running costs of ASPBs had been shown separately from the "Creative Futures" budget.
- the Minister's priorities were as follows:
  - - the Welsh language - which will receive an additional £16m from the Culture Fund over 3 years. Members welcomed this substantial allocation and asked for a more detailed report on how it would be allocated.
  - sports and
  - the arts.
- her recent announcement on the "Response to Resource" and the creation of new advisory unit within the Assembly, to be located outside Cardiff with up to 25 members of staff providing an increased service to local museums, libraries and archives from 1 April 2004. A total of £2m per year (i.e an increase from £750750,000) would be allocated for the new unit from 2004-05. It would not be an ASPB. Members welcomed this announcement and asked for a more detailed report.
- a number of projects not covered in the budget were covered by new or existing EYF. e.g These include the capital costs for the construction for of the Wales Millennium Centre and the a grant for the Swansea Waterfront Museum. There were interim arrangements in place for the National Botanic Gardens and the funding issues for Cardiff's bid for European Capital of Culture 2008 would become known in a few weeks and plans for the refurbishment of the Welsh Institute of Sport. Funding for the Ryder Cup would be channelled through the WDA. The Finance Minister said that, depending on developments, she would return to these in the final budget or the supplementary budget next spring.

4.2 The Chair welcomed the overall increase and praised the Minister for taking the Committee's comments on board. The following points were raised in the subsequent question and answer session:

- Members also welcomed: the Events Strategy for Wales; the support given to the performing arts profession and it was suggested that traditional music should be supported; community commemorative projects (e.g provision of plaques to be erected in communities) and subsidy for admission charges to schools visiting privately owned cultural facilities in Wales, such as Rhondda Heritage Museum. The Chair clarified that these were only recommendations to the Minister and that their inclusion in that part of her budget paper did no imply support.
- the committee queried how EYF would be used and asked for clear information on what the total budget/ expenditure would be.

- the committee queried the financial position of the National Botanic Garden and asked for a report.
- it was suggested that traditional music should be supported.
- the Chair confirmed that the Assembly had contributed £500,000 to Cardiff's bid for European Capital of Culture 2008. The Minister added that the Assembly could contribute up to a further £1.1m if necessary to support the process subject to making the shortlist.
- the Minister undertook to provide information on funding of the Swansea Waterfront Museum.
- the Minister explained that funding of the Wales Millennium Centre was £2m per year running costs and an additional £2m throughout Wales. The private sectors shortfall in the capital budget was £9.6m.
- The Committee welcomed the success of the recent Festival of Musical Theatre held in Cardiff.

### **11.55am to 12.25pm**

#### **Item 5: Minister's Report**

##### **CC-16-02(p.4)**

5.1 Concerns were raised regarding the Public and Commercial Services Union/Sports Council for Wales issue. In response, the Minister stated that she could not comment on the matter in light of the imminent employment tribunal but would write in due course.

5.2 Members welcomed the launch of "Gathering the Jewels" website.

5.3 Reservations were expressed regarding the costs of appointment of KPMG to carry out a management review of the National Botanic Garden.

5.4 Concern was also expressed regarding the lack of public transport arrangements for visitors to the the Wales Millennium Centre.

5.5 With regard to the question put to the Minister on the medieval ship recently uncovered at Newport, the additional money had been allocated by the Finance Minister and had not come from the culture budget.

### **12.25pm to 12.30pm**

#### **Item 6: Minutes of previous meeting:**

##### **CC-15-02(min)**

1. The Committee approved the minutes of the previous meeting.

### **Committee Secretariat October 2002**