

S4C Authority Bulletin - June 2004

Minutes of the Meeting of the Audit and Risk Management Committee

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Management Committee drew the Authority's attention to the matters discussed at the meeting held on 27/28 May 2004.

Secretary to the Authority

The Secretary, John Howells, was congratulated on his appointment as Head of Higher Education at the Assembly. This would, of course, be a great loss to the Authority and to S4C in general but Members extended their best wishes to him in his new post. He would be taking up his appointment at the beginning of September.

Director of Corporate Affairs

It was noted that interviews would be held for this post on 9 July 2004.

Meeting with Ofcom

It was reported that the Chair, Chief Executive and Secretary had held a meeting with Sue Balsom, Rhodri Williams and Hywel Wiliam from Ofcom earlier in the week. The aim of the meeting was to brief Ofcom representatives in Wales on a number of aspects of S4C's present position. It was intended to hold similar meetings in the future.

Meeting with the DCMS

It was noted that the Chair had made arrangements to meet Lord McIntosh, the Minister for Broadcasting, to discuss the Government's response to the Roger Laughton Report.

Urdd Eisteddfod

Congratulations were extended to all members of staff involved with S4C activities at the Urdd Eisteddfod. The S4C stand had been one of the main attractions on the site and the sound levels generated by the children present was testimony to the corresponding levels of enjoyment.

Royal Welsh Show

It was noted that S4C would be holding a lunch time reception on Tuesday at the Royal Welsh.

S4C Charity Appeal

The Chair said that it was her intention to write to Angharad Mair and to Tinopolis to thank them for their commitment to this year's charity appeal. Thanks were also due to S4C staff for all their hard work in organising the various activities.

Culture Select Committee

The Chair reported on her appearance and that of the Chief Executive before the Culture Select Committee on 22 June to submit evidence relating to the review of the BBC Charter. It was felt that it had been a successful exercise in terms of conveying the messages that S4C wished to voice and in terms of highlighting the importance of BBC services in Wales.

Parliamentary Reception

It was noted that S4C would be holding a reception at the House of Commons on 28 June.

Annual Report and Accounts 2003

It was confirmed that the report would be published on 30 June. The primary message within it was that 2003 had been a year dominated by looking ahead to the future, as the work on the reviews and strategy preparation continued.

Clywch Report

It was noted that it was expected that this report would be published on 1 July. S4C was naturally awaiting to see what, if anything, the Children's Commissioner in Wales would have to say in relation to S4C's involvement with John Owen through the series *Pam fi Duw*.

Ten Year Financial Projections

Members discussed the draft ten year budget that outlined some of the financial pressures facing the Channel over the next decade. The presuppositions made in preparing the budget were noted. This was a starting point and discussion in this area would continue in coming months, with the requirement to agree the budget for 2005 in November.

Roger Laughton Review

S4C was still waiting to hear from the DCMS when the Roger Laughton Report would be published. Once the report has been published S4C would need to consider its response to it. The next corporate plan would give the Channel an opportunity to make a statement about the way ahead over the next period.

Programme Strategy

The Director of Programmes presented to the Authority the draft programme strategy for the next five years. Reference was made to the fact that this was a step by step strategy, partly because of the financial situation and partly in order to bring the audience along the path with the Channel. The new strategy, therefore, would not be implemented overnight. The strategy would initially be presented to the BBC and to TAC members.

Compliance: Monitoring Service

Members considered a paper produced by the Secretary asking the Authority to extend the monitoring contract with the Thomson Foundation/University of Wales Aberystwyth for a further year, but at a reduced scale (with a corresponding reduction in the cost of the service to reflect this). It would in due course be necessary to further review the nature of the monitoring service when any knock on effects emanating from factors such as the Lord Hutton report in relation to the BBC became more apparent. The Authority agreed that the monitoring contract should be extended until September 2005 along the lines set out in the Secretary's report.

Presentation by Jon Priest, SPA

The Authority received a presentation by Jon Priest from SPA who have been undertaking qualitative research work on behalf of S4C over a period of ten years. This work now focuses on two projects, namely Triawd (ongoing qualitative research on viewers' attitudes and opinions about S4C programmes) and CAT (ongoing tracking research on viewers' perceptions of S4C programmes, image and remit in comparison to other broadcasters). He went on to explain the details of the work undertaken on both projects, outlining some of the main conclusions arising from them.

It was agreed that the presentation had been highly interesting and that it had placed several issues before Authority Members for further consideration. Elements of the qualitative research would form part of the reports on performance to be presented to Members in future.

Other Matters

The following matters were also discussed/noted:

- Report of the Chief Executive – matters for information
- Financial Report
- Report of the Managing Director of S4C Masnachol
- Complaints Report
- Report and Minutes of the meeting of the Compliance Group held on 9 June 2004
- Report on the Viewers Hotline
- Research Report