

**Menter Iaith Sir y Fflint
General Annual Meeting
Thursday September 10th 2009
Daniel Owen Centre, Mold**

Present: Iwan Jones, Carys Gwyn, Darren Morris, Elwyn Roberts, Gwenno Jones, Lisa Orhan, Carl Renshaw, Nesta Davies, Huw Alun Roberts, Neil Wyn Jones, Nia Lynn Jones, Rhian Davies, Ellie Pritchard, Gwawr Cordiner, Harri Bryn Jones, Frances Jones, Dylan Jones a Nia Wyn Jones.

Apologies: Sion Edwards, Iddon Edwards, Sian Rogers, Fred Bonham, Ffion Williams, Dafydd Griffiths, Meri Griffiths, Aled Lloyd Davies.

1. Bryn welcomed everybody to the meeting, confirming that everybody had received a copy of the annual report. Bryn thanked Gwawr for leading the Menter's staff and thanked Rhian and Ellie for their work throughout the year, noting examples of current projects as depicted on the projection screen. He went on to note staffing changes as Rebecca Davies had been appointed Language and Heritage Office and Hannah Philip had left her post after a year of service, with Gwilym Jeffs moving into the post of Children and Young Person's Officer.

2. Acceptance of Minutes for General Meeting June 12th 2008.

The minutes were accepted as accurate at Iwan Jones's suggestion and seconded by Carys Gwyn. There were no matters arising from the minutes.

3. Acceptance of Minutes for Extraordinary General Meeting December 8th 2008.

The minutes were accepted as accurate following the inclusion of Ken Jones and Lisa Orhan to those who were present at the meeting, at the suggestion of Gwenno Jones, seconded by Lisa Orhan. No matters arising from the minutes.

4. Acceptance of the Managing Director's Report.

Gwawr thanked everybody for attending the meeting, and thanked the staff who have had a very busy year. She noted that the Menter was fortunate to have an energetic and enthusiastic staff who had supported her as manager, and the sheer volume of work achieved showed their commitment and imagination.

4.1 Organisations and partners

The Menter could not have achieved all it has without the cooperation and ready support from a number of key partners, enabling our scarce resources to go further. Members of the County Forum supported the Language and Heritage Project which has attracted substantial investment in order to raise community awareness and has paid for a feasibility study for the proposed Welsh Centre in Mold. Positive responses have been received and the next stage is to establish a

Working Committee to discuss the type of building needed and the uses that would be made by it, whilst designs are created and sources of funding are secured for the building work. The Menter has supported and facilitated groups such as Tegeingl and Cadi Ha, the Dafydd ap Llywelyn Committee in Bagillt and Gwyl Y Ffin, a music festival which was held for the first time this year. It is hoped to build on its success in the future.

4.2 Young Parents

A number of activities for families were held in order to inform young parents of the importance of bilingualism. Clwb Gwawr was launched last week, and will provide new opportunities to socialise through Welsh.

4.3 Children

The Menter continues to work with schools and the Urdd on the Theatr Ffm programme. A display of puppets made by children on the theme of Welsh heroes went on show at Clwyd Theatr Cymru, and the Oakenholt Community Mual, created with guidance from Cefyn Burgess, is to be seen on display at Ysgol Croes Atti.

4.4 Learners / Linguistic Confidence

It was noted that the Menter no longer provides activities specifically for learners. However, support is extended to Eisteddfod y Dysgwyr, which was held in Ruthin. Rebecca will conduct a story-telling session at Halloween in Nercwys Tower under the Language and Heritage Project which will be suitable for learners.

4.5 Young People

The Menter held activities to encourage young people to make more use of Welsh and to give them a taste of Welsh culture. A fashion show based on Saint Dwynwen was held for 95 high school and college pupils. Hannah, supported by an excellent team, organised an event which succeeded in getting press and media attention. There has been positive feedback from Y Ffin Festival also. Gwawr ended by thanking the Board of Directors for their support during the year.

4.6 Comments and discussion on working with learners.

Disappointment was expressed that the Menter no longer employed a Learners Officer. The reason for this is that the Northern Language Centre has been given responsibility and funding for providing extracurricular activities for learners. The WLB no longer funds the Menter's work with learners, and Flintshire County Council funding had been used towards core costs and maintenance of the office. The Menter promotes C3 for experienced learners and CD for learners who are not yet fluent.

4.7 Comments and discussion on communication

Doubt was expressed over the impact the Menter's activities are having on the status of the Welsh language within Flintshire communities. The Focus Group in Mold which met to discuss the Welsh Language Centre was presented as an example of poor communication, where key people had felt they not been invited or included in the consultation process. It was agreed that there is always room for improvement and that the Menter has to be like a business in being open to

changes and in trying to strengthen its core message; especially in a situation where there will be fewer resources available to the Public Sector.

It was agreed that perhaps Mold is no longer as central to the Menter's work as it once was, and that we had been working in areas which were new to us, for example, Gronant, and have been working with other community organisations such as Deeside College, the Urdd and Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin as well as running projects within Welsh Schools.

4.8 Comments and discussion on the provision of Welsh education

It was noted that the demand for Welsh medium education increases and that there is no longer the capacity within Welsh schools. Pressure needs to be put on the local Authority to increase provision. According to a recent survey, approximately 30% of Flintshire parents would wish their children to have a Welsh education, if there was a school nearby. In Lixum it is possible that the village school will be closed when there is potential to develop a Welsh school, should the Authority show the will to do so. It is noted that a deficiency of Welsh speakers among the Education Authority officials is part of the problem. Despite an increase in other areas, there has been no development with provision in Flintshire.

4.9 Comments and discussion on the development of a Welsh language centre in Mold

In response to a request for more information than given out during the Focus Group, it was explained that the County Forum under the Menter's leadership are the partners involved in the project. There is a measured need for the building which could offer facilities for providers of Welsh education for adults, including MYM and the Urdd to provide services and hold meetings, and a secure business plan would be put in place to ensure that the centre is financially viable and sustainable in the long term. As part of the research four focus groups were conducted, one for young people, one for young parents, one for learners and a general group, and on the whole the feedback was positive. The final report has been received and will be a basis for further discussion and research based on financial predictions and specific buildings. Gwawr noted that the report was available from the Menter's Office and she is happy to conduct a presentation to any local organisations. There were calls to hold a general meeting to raise awareness among the non-Welsh speakers, but it was also noted that expectations must be managed as it will be a lengthy process with significant financial implications.

5. Acceptance of accounts up to 31st March 2000

The accounts have been prepared by Hill and Roberts and have been verified by Lisa, our accountant. We have succeeded in attracting more income via a grant and this has made a significant difference. Costs are higher this year as we are paying rent for the office space. The balance sheet was received, along with the recommendation that we file financial records online.

5 Election of the Board of Directors

Dylan has been out treasurer and a keen member of the Board of Directors for a number of years, and Bryn thanked him for his hard work on behalf of the Menter. Lisa, our current treasurer, and Gwenno are relatively new members of the Board of Directors. It was suggested that we should re-elect the present directors. Two other names were put forward, namely Nesta Davies and Carl Renshaw, who have expressed an interest in joining Board of Directors and who have been attending meetings for some time. Their names were accepted. It was also suggested that we should search for a member under 25 to represent the interests of young people. Bryn agreed to continue as Chairman, and it was agreed to elect the other offices at the next meeting.

6. Bryn thanked everybody for their support before presenting Dr Kathryn Jones, language consultant from Cwmni Iaith Cyf, who gave an interesting presentation on offering linguistic choices to customers in different situations.