

S4C CONSULTATION
SERVING CHILDREN IN THE DIGITAL FUTURE
COMMENTS BY NUT CYMRU

We are pleased to contribute to this consultation.

It was apparent in the consultation meeting held in the Millennium Stadium in June that there is an enthusiastic welcome to the suggestions made in the document. We can add that as an union, we also applaud the plans.

Question 1

We therefore believe that the children's service will improve the public service provided in Welsh for children.

Question 2

It is suggested in the document and was reiterated in the meeting that the service, in line with custom and expectation, would schedule programmes in accordance with age and school attendance periods. So, for example, programmes for pre-school children would be broadcast in the morning and early afternoon and programmes more appropriate for older children shown later, after school hours, and possibly before school hours. The suggestion that programmes for older children and teenagers would be take priority during weekends is a wise one.

The document suggests that the pattern would change during holidays. That is fair enough, but we agree - as suggested in the meeting - that ad hoc changes to scheduling would be unwise and would lead to disappointment if expected (and possibly favourite) programmes are suddenly not there at the expected time. This could lead to disillusionment and could deter future viewing, especially from younger children.

Question 3

The most important thing to bear in mind is that programmes of good quality are as important for children as they are for adults.

Question 4

It would be a great pity to lose S4C2, which broadcasts proceedings from the National Assembly. I wonder, as a compromise, whether the children's service could start off in the unused space between 6.00 and 12.30 on S4C and then on S4C2 after 18.00 while searching for a third party who would be willing to carry Assembly proceedings. Extended hours could then be provided for children. There may be technical reasons, beyond the understanding of the union, which would make this difficult or impossible.

Question 5

Others can offer better advice.

Question 6

We note that the Commission for Racial Equality is included in the list of Key Stakeholders. This body is to become part of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights, which has a much wider remit. Otherwise, we would have suggested that the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Commission for Disability Rights should also have been included.

Question 7

We wish the scheme success. It is important to have Welsh language entertainment for children, as well as educational provision.

NUT Cymru
July 2007