

Agenda – Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 3 – Senedd

Meeting date: 28 February 2024

Meeting time: 09.30

For further information contact:

Lleu Williams

Committee Clerk

0300 200 6565

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Hybrid

Pre-meeting registration

(09.15 – 09.30)

1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

(09.30)

2 Culture and the new relationship with the European Union: evidence session with trade unions (3)

(09:30 – 10:15)

(Pages 1 – 23)

Simon Curtis, National and Regional Official for Wales and South West England, Equity
Andy Warnock, Regional Organiser for Wales & South West England Region, Musicians'
Union

Carwyn Donovan, Wales Negotiations Officer, Broadcasting, Entertainment,
Communications and Theatre Union (BECTU)

Attached Documents:

Research brief

Equity consultation response

Musicians' Union consultation response

Break

(10.15– 10.25)



3 Culture and the new relationship with the European Union: evidence session with practitioners (4)

(10:25 – 11:10)

(Pages 24 – 33)

Alison Woods, Executive Director, NoFit State
Stephanie Bradley, Executive Director, Welsh National Opera
Bill Hamblett, Creative Director, Small World Theatre

Attached Documents:

NoFit State consultation response

Welsh National Opera written evidence

Small World Theatre consultation response

Break

(11.10–11.20)

4 Culture and the new relationship with the European Union: evidence session with practitioners (5)

(11:20 – 12:10)

(Pages 34 – 42)

Luke Hinton, Co-Chairperson, Association of Independent Promoters
Dyfrig Davies, Chair, Teledwyr Annibynnol Cymru (TAC)
Dr Eriqur Uribe Jongbloed, Research Associate, Media Cymru

Attached Documents:

TAC consultation response

Media Cymru written evidence

5 Paper(s) to note

(12.05)

5.1 Welsh Government international relations

(Page 43)

Attached Documents:

Ministerial International Engagement – January 2024

5.2 Redundancies at Reach

(Pages 44 – 46)

Attached Documents:

Letter from Steffan Rhys, Editor, WalesOnline: Challenges facing the commercial media – 1 February 2024

5.3 Local Government Finance (Wales) Bill

(Pages 47 – 48)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair of the Local Government and Housing Committee: Local Government Finance (Wales) Bill: section 20 – 2 February 2024

5.4 Allegations concerning bullying at S4C

(Pages 49 – 50)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport: Allegations concerning bullying at S4C

5.5 Culture and Creative Industries Inter-Ministerial Group

(Page 51)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Deputy Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism to the Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee: Culture and Creative Industries Inter-Ministerial Group – 5 February 2023

5.6 Inter-Ministerial Standing Committee

(Page 52)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution to the Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee: Inter-Institutional Relations Agreement: Inter-Ministerial Standing Committee – 16 February 2024

5.7 Welsh Government Draft Budget 2024–25

(Pages 53 – 64)

Attached Documents:

Amgueddfa Cymru Statement: Impact of Welsh Government 24/25 Draft

Budget – 8 February 2024

Letter to Deputy Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism: Impact of budget reductions on arms-length bodies – 19 February 2024

Letter from Books Council of Wales: Potential budget cuts to the publishing sector – 7 February 2024

Letter from Cwlwm Cyhoeddwy Cymru: Potential budget cuts to the publishing sector – 22 February 2024 (Welsh only) (Translated internally)

5.8 Six Nations rugby broadcasting rights

(Pages 65 – 66)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Deputy Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism: Six Nations rugby broadcasting rights– 8 February 2024

5.9 The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

(Pages 67 – 70)

Attached Documents:

Letter to the First Minister: The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage – 9 February 2024

Letter to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport: The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage – 9 February 2024

5.10 Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union

(Pages 71 – 74)

Attached Documents:

Letter to the Wales Rugby Union: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union – Independent Review Report progress update – 9 February 2024

Correspondence from the Wales Rugby Union: Sexual assault allegations from former employee – 20 February 2024

5.11 Year of Wales and India

(Pages 75 – 76)

Attached Documents:

Letter to the Welsh Government: Year of Wales and India – 9 February 2024

5.12 Legislative Consent: Data Protection and Digital

(Pages 77 – 80)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the First Minister to the Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee: Data Protection and Digital Information Bill (the Bill) – 12 February 2024

Letter to Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology: National Underground Asset Register – 19 February 2024

5.13 Arts Council of Wales: Investment Review

(Pages 81 – 83)

Attached Documents:

Letter to Arts Council of Wales: Investment Review transition support – 19 February 2024

Letter to National Theatre Wales: Outcome of Investment Review – 19 February 2024

6 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the remainder of this meeting and for items 1 and 2 of the next meeting scheduled on 14 March 2024

(12:05)

7 Culture and the new relationship with the European Union: consideration of evidence

(12:05 – 12:20)

8 Six Nations rugby broadcasting rights: Consideration of key issues (2)

(12:20 – 12:25)

(Pages 84 – 88)

Attached Documents:

Key issues

9 Public Service Broadcasting in Wales: Consideration of draft report

(12.25 – 12.30)

(Pages 89 – 146)

Attached Documents:

Draft report

Document is Restricted

CEU 13

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y Gymraeg, Chwaraeon, a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol | Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee

Diwylliant a'r berthynas newydd â'r UE | Culture and the new relationship with the EU

Ymateb gan: Equity | Evidence from: Equity

Equity welcomes the opportunity afforded by the committee to respond to this inquiry.

This submission has been prepared by Equity, the leading trade union and representative stakeholder for performers and creative practitioners in the entertainment industry. We represent over 47,000 performers and creative practitioners across the UK including actors, directors, designers, choreographers, dancers, singers, entertainers, comedians, stage management and audio artists. Our members work on stage, on TV sets, on the catwalk, in film studios, in recording studios, in night clubs, in pubs, in community settings and in circus tents.

In Wales Equity represents almost 1,700 creative workers across the sector, and through its democratic structure provides the industry body for the creative worker and its collective voice.

Following the UK's departure from the EU, our members no longer enjoy the freedom to tour and work seamlessly across the EU. The absence of explicit provisions in the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) necessitates UK performers to adhere to regulations in each of the 27 EU Member States, which often vary. To illustrate, a UK performer must obtain a work permit to perform in Croatia, whereas no such requirement exists in France for participation in cultural events lasting less than 90 days.

The transportation of tour equipment, including musical instruments, props, and stage lighting, must align with the customs regulations outlined in the TCA. The movement of such goods may be subject to restrictions on road haulage as stipulated by the agreement.

As a consequence of exiting the EU Customs Union and the single market for services, UK touring artists are confronted with increased administrative obligations and associated costs.

What our members tell us

- 43% of Equity members report that Brexit has negatively affected their confidence in being able to find work in the arts and entertainment industry
- 31% have seen job advertisements and/or casting breakdowns asking for EU passport holders only to apply, with this number rising since the end of the pandemic restrictions on travel.
- 14% have been asked by their agent to confirm if they are an EU passport holder for the purpose of finding work.

In 2021, Equity, along with various unions, industry bodies, and MPs spanning the political spectrum, urged the UK Government to address the post-Brexit challenges. The ongoing inability of the UK Government to resolve issues faced by members working in the EU, coupled with misleading statements on progress, prompted this call.

Responding to sector requests, in August 2021, the UK Government announced that nineteen EU member states would allow visa and work permit-free short-term touring work, expanding on previous visa provisions. However, ambiguity surrounded the permission to work, with Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden's mention of work permits.

The latest update indicates that 24 out of 27 EU Member States now offer some easements for touring, including Spain. While EU artists face new administrative requirements in the UK, the asymmetrical impact of touring arrangements is evident, with UK artists encountering more challenges due to differing immigration rules.

Despite the positive trajectory in the UK-EU relationship since the Windsor Framework in February 2023, the House of Lords European Affairs Committee expressed disappointment in the lack of progress for creative professionals. In response, the UK Government claimed engagement with EU member states on bilateral terms, confirming no need for visas or work permits for short-term touring in most member states.

However, challenges persist, highlighted by the 90/180 day rule affecting UK citizens looking to work in the Schengen area. The story of Sir Bryn Terfel in January 2022 illustrates these obstacles, emphasizing restrictions on viable contracts, extra journeys, and added bureaucracy for UK workers.

<https://nation.cymru/culture/post-brexit-rules-force-bryn-terfel-into-mad-visa-dash-for-vienna-opera-performance/>

To explain, even when working on shorter contracts and/or in countries where a visa is not required, the 90/180 day rule can mean a restriction on how many of these contracts are viable within a given period, and/or necessitate extra journeys to keep within the allowed limits or to renew visas. It can also cause difficulties in traveling for holidays or visiting family for those who work in Europe on a regular basis. Even when interpreted and dealt with correctly by all parties, it presents an additional cause of bureaucracy and expense for UK workers, and in particular contributes significantly to the barriers facing those workers with the least financial resources.

The Big Freelancers Report 2023 reveals that 77.9% of respondents see Brexit as a source of uncertainty <https://freelancersmakeheatrework.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/FMTW-Big-Freelancers-Report-2023.pdf>

The difficulty with the UK Governments position and claim that this is some sort of positive move, is their reference to “some short-term touring” as opposed to the position prior to Brexit of unincumbered touring without the need for any visa or restriction. The narrative of the mobility of workers is not a priority as freedom of movement is at odds with the UK Governments narrative about immigration, but we simply do not accept that they either have or are moving “at pace” to seek a resolution.

There have been a numerous continued calls for action, including from their own chief negotiator Lord Frost giving evidence on two occasions that:

“...we should take another look at mobility issues.” Churchill Lecture, Zurich March 2022

“I do not see why we could not agree a narrow visa waiver arrangement covering defined categories such as musicians and actors and so on..”
Evidence to European Affairs Committee October 2022

The DCMS Select Committee's Report *Promoting Britain Abroad* published in October 2022 called for a negotiation of a similar waiver, stating that:

The [UK] Government's strategy of agreeing bilateral agreements with EU member states for performers touring the EU is failing to address the industry's needs. The [UK] Government should negotiate an agreement

with the EU to provide a single-entry document for performers to submit to any EU Country they wish to visit.”

Since then, there have been recent reports from the Lords' European Affairs Committee, referenced above, and the UK Trade & Business Commission calling for UK Government action to resolve the barriers to touring created by the TCA.

Despite all this, very little has changed for the creative industries since the UK left the EU. The barriers to work remain and the fact that the UK Government has time and time again chosen not to act on the issues facing such an economically important sector in the UK, and most importantly in Wales, is quite simply disgraceful.

With a General Election approaching, Equity urges the next UK government to urgently resolve issues for creative practitioners touring in Europe. This includes introducing 'arts exemption' provisions in the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement. Additionally, Equity calls for a roadmap to reach the European average of spending 0.5% of GDP on the arts and entertainment industry, compensating for the £170m lost in European cultural funding post-Brexit. This could result in an additional £6bn in UK spending on the creative sector, with the request for the Welsh Government to pass on the subsequent Barnett consequential to support the arts in Wales through Arts Council of Wales and Creative Wales.

Equity would be more than willing to give further oral evidence to expand on any of the above should the opportunity arise during your inquiry.

Simon Curtis
National Official for Wales
27th October 2023

Introduction

The Musicians' Union (MU) is the trade union for musicians in the UK, with over 33,000 members working across the UK in all sectors of the music business.

Evidence

This document is an extension of the UK Music submission to this consultation, which the MU fully supports as a UK Music member, and includes further information based on our experience of helping members to navigate the new trading arrangements between the UK and the EU.

Firstly, it is very clear that the new post-Brexit system is much more complex for everyone involved in the music industry to navigate. Members almost never sought guidance from us on performing in the EU before Brexit except in relation to specific contracts, terms, and fees, but we now have many pages of advice for members on our website,¹ as well as resources like webinars² and interactive flow charts.³ We also regularly receive queries from members seeking advice on performing in the EU in addition to this guidance, and have now appointed a Head of International to fully support members in this area.

Part of the reason for this complexity is the need to navigate the caveats and complex details in the arrangements and guidance for working in the EU. Examples of this include the specific requirements for working in the EU (e.g. in relation to work permits and documentation), which are different in certain countries; the carnet system, which is complex and expensive; the guidance around travelling with "portable music instruments";⁴ the procedures for using "splitter vans" to transport instruments;⁵ and the advice on transporting merchandise.⁶ We also know that members have experienced unexpected issues when travelling, including at Holyhead port, that seem to be the result of the interpretation or understanding of relevant guidance varying between officials.

These issues add significant uncertainty and costs to the process of working in the EU, particularly for grassroots, independent, and publicly funded artists and organisations that make up the majority of the Welsh music industry. It is much

¹ <https://musiciansunion.org.uk/working-performing/working-overseas/working-in-the-eu>

² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TaBJudK-aLQ>

³ <https://musiciansunion.org.uk/working-performing/working-overseas/working-in-the-eu/flowchart-guide-to-working-in-europe>

⁴ <https://musiciansunion.org.uk/working-performing/working-overseas/working-in-the-eu/travelling-with-portable-musical-instruments>

⁵ <https://musiciansunion.org.uk/working-performing/working-overseas/working-in-the-eu/splitter-vans-to-transport-instruments>

⁶ <https://musiciansunion.org.uk/working-performing/working-overseas/working-in-the-eu/transporting-merchandise>

harder for independent musicians living and working in Wales, as well as Wales-based labels, managers, and venues, to work in the EU and with EU-based artists and companies than it was. However, major labels and large companies that tend to be based in London will usually find these problems easier to navigate and afford. These issues relating to the UK's new relationship with the EU therefore make it harder to sustain a thriving music industry in Wales, and there must be improvements to the UK's trading arrangements with the UK over time, to enable music and the broader creative industries to thrive in Wales. It's also important to note, in relation to these challenges and the Committee's recent report on the creative industries workforce, that musicians, especially in the grassroots or "commercial" areas of the industry, are often even more independent and isolated than workers in other areas of the creative industries, such as those working on film and TV productions. This can make the stress, costs, and work of problems such as complying with the requirements to work in the EU even more difficult to manage.

We endorse the recommendations in the UK Music submission and look forward to supporting the Committee's ongoing work in this area.

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[Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y Gymraeg, Chwaraeon, a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol](#) | Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee

[Diwylliant a'r berthynas newydd â'r UE](#) | Culture and the new relationship with the EU

Ymateb gan: NoFit State Community Circus | Evidence from: NoFit State Community Circus

The Committee is considering the impact of the UK's exit from the EU on the culture sector and would like to understand your views on the following:

Introduction and context

NoFit State is a touring company that brings artists from all over the world to come and work in Wales, and we tour work created in Wales all over the world. Our experience is confined to live performance.

Prior to Brexit and Covid we made the strategic decision that we would not tour to countries on the other side of the world, (the Americas, Australasia), because the environmental impact of such work could no longer be justified. In 2023 we undertook our first international tour (France, Belgium, Czech Republic) since Brexit and Covid.

1. The impact of the new relationship on artists and creative workers touring and working cross-border (including touring and working in Wales).

This has become a very significant issue – both for artists from EU countries coming into Wales to work – and for Welsh companies touring internationally.

- a) EU nationals coming into Wales. NoFit State will typically invite up to 20 artists a year to come into Wales to work. Contracts may range from a week or two to take part in creative exchanges or creative development projects to up to 6 or 7 months for a full tour. Prior to Brexit we were a registered sponsor (with a Tier 5 Creative and Sporting license) to enable us to employ non-EU artists. The same system now applies to EU citizens as well. Prior to

Brexit we might issue 2 or 3 certificates of sponsorship a year. We are now issuing approximately 20 certificates a year.

In addition to visa costs, we also have to pay the NHS surcharge for all artists for whom we issue a certificate of sponsorship. A few years ago this cost was £200 a year for non-EU citizens (EU citizens were covered under an EU wide reciprocal health insurance scheme). The cost is now £1,035 per person a year and we are required to take out a full year cover even if the contract is only for a short period.

Further, we should not underestimate the reputational damage that Brexit has done and the impression that has been created that people from other countries are not welcome here. It is difficult to quantify the impact of this both on people's willingness to come here and the willingness of partners from other countries to invite Welsh artists and companies to perform in their programme.

- b) International touring – although still possible – has become extremely challenging.

By leaving the EU the UK is no longer covered by a variety of international bilateral treaties signed between the EU and external countries or by internal EU co-operation agreements. These include double taxation and cultural exchange treaties in addition to the many benefits created by the single market. The Westminster government has shown little if any interest in resolving these challenges.

For example, we had to sign a contract with our French presenting partner saying that we would be liable for French with-holding tax if the French Festival was unable to persuade the French tax authorities that we shouldn't be charged.

In order to be allowed to perform in Prague in 2023 we and the Festival that had invited us needed to produce letters from both the Czech Ministry of Culture and DCMS officials saying that the performances were taking place under the auspices of a Treaty signed between the UK government and the government of the 'Czechoslovak Federal Republic' signed in 1990. Fortunately, our MP, Jo Stevens, was both active and effective in helping us to get the necessary letters. The fact that a politician needed to become

directly involved in helping to facilitate performances in Europe reveals the scale of the challenges now faced.

In addition, because of the '90 day rule' (a UK citizen can only spend a maximum of 90 out of every 180 days in the EU without visas and work permits) we were forced to turn down bookings for summer 2023 with an estimated loss of income of circa £120,000 and a reduced gross profit on the tour of circa £40,000.

It is now necessary to have a 'carnet' to transport items into and out of the EU. A carnet is in effect a passport for goods not designed for resale – such as set, costumes, technical equipment. Each item needs to be logged with an individual code per item, where and when it was purchased, and the purchase price. For NoFit State building this list requires a specific resource management system and takes 6 people 3 weeks work to compile. The direct cost of securing the necessary paperwork and insurance (insurance against providing false information and indemnifying ferry companies etc) is circa £17,000. The total cost of a carnet for NFSC is therefore circa £28,000.

A wide range of outstanding systemic issues remain, particularly around the lack of robust and integrated IT systems at UK ports, the absence of a central source of accurate and up to date information, lack of knowledge of new systems and regulations amongst Customs and Excise and Border Force staff, and gross both over and understaffing of facilities and offices in the UK.

Three of our trailers were held for 2 weeks each at the Tilbury Docks when they returned to the UK. It took one member of NFSC staff about three weeks of liaison between different officials in different offices to get the three trailers released. It is still not clear why they were held and officials on the ground were equally unclear at the time as to what the problem was – simply computer says 'no'. In the end we think that an official simply decided to over-ride the computer system.

2. The impact of new trading arrangements relating to cultural activity.

3. The availability of guidance and support for the sector relating to the new relationship between the UK and EU

This is extremely poor. Information provided on the Government website is frequently out of date or inaccurate and fails to provide detailed information about the different rules as they apply to each EU country.

One member of staff spent a very considerable proportion of their time trying to get clarity about the different rules as they apply in different countries for many months prior to our 2023 tour.

As a result, a smaller company with limited resources or experience of international touring would probably decide it was no longer worth it and it is now virtually impossible for anyone to respond rapidly to opportunities as they arise.

4. The impact on access to funding programmes and networks

Isn't really relevant to us.

5. Any changes to the UK-EU relationship that might improve cross-border working for the culture sector

Creating a single market for cultural and educational activities and events with free movement for people and items involved in the cultural and educational sectors.

Revoking the '90 day rule' for cultural workers and companies.

Any other views

Dear Members,

Further to our Written Evidence submitted in October 2023, and ahead of our session with you on 28 February, I enclose additional written evidence.

In our initial submission, we included some examples of issues that had arisen as a result of the UK leaving the EU. Since this submission, we have experienced issues that may provide further context to illustrate the ongoing cost and operational impact on our sector.

1. Co-productions

We are currently working with National Theatre Brno (Czech Republic) to co-produce a new production of Smetana's opera *Dalibor*, which opened in Brno on 2 February. The co-production contract means that once the run in Brno has finished, we need to make plans to transport the production (set, costumes, etc) to the UK. Prior to Brexit, this would have been relatively straightforward, but we now need to work on an import. This involves additional administration work and costs for us.

On average, at least another 40 hours spread across the department are spent per load and carnet for temporary imports to the EU. In costs, the bond guarantees need to be purchased as well as the carnet, which is usually around £750 per document. Far more severe, however, is the fact that we become unattractive as a partner to European houses as these costs need to be passed on to the client.

As an example of how we worked prior to Brexit, between 2018 and 2020 we co-produced a trilogy of Verdi operas with Theater Bonn (Germany). This partnership enabled us to create three new productions but with the cost split between us and our producing partner. Due to the productions opening at various points at each opera house over the three years, the sets were constantly travelling back and forth across borders, with no issues around carnets or import/export fees. Following Brexit, it wouldn't be feasible for us to enter into a similar arrangement with a European opera house due to the additional costs and administration we are now subject to.

Co-productions have historically been a creative and cost-effective way of us producing new operas as well as brokering connections with other opera houses. Although we also co-produce successfully with UK opera houses, there are limitations in this due to there being fewer companies within the UK. We are finding ever-increasing challenges with co-producing alongside European opera houses, and the barriers to free and easy transaction mean that our European partners recognise that it is more difficult to work with opera houses in the UK.

2. Importing equipment

For our current season, we are staging Britten's *Death in Venice*; a new production which has been produced by WNO's scenery building workshop, Cardiff Theatrical Services (CTS). We are collaborating with NoFit State on this production, who are providing aerial performers, and these artists are based in the EU. For their

performances, they use specialist equipment including harnesses. Due to their work prior to joining us taking place in continental Europe, we had to pay customs fees to release their specialist equipment from Germany into the UK. This incurred 2 hours of additional administration time and paperwork, and an extra customs and handling charge of around 30% of the overall value was levied.

Prior to Brexit, there would have been no charges or paperwork needed for their equipment to be transported into the UK from the EU.

3. Commercial Clients

Cardiff Theatrical Services (CTS) is a world-renowned scenery builder and wholly owned by WNO. Recently we have found that clients based in the EU are hesitant to award us contracts due to fears surrounding import duties. A recent client for whom we furnished a large event in London's O2 Arena has now decided to get the same production costed more locally and the likelihood of us getting the EU equivalent of the production is now low. The overall income in London was £500k; equivalent to the same production in The Netherlands that may now go to a European set builder.

In general, it appears to be easier and more straightforward for us to now deal with the US market as they are more used to trading with the UK than most European states.

4. Visa rules

Musicians are currently listed as a skilled worker on the UK Government's [Shortage Occupation list](#) (Number 3415). We have recently recruited a cellist from Italy to join our Orchestra. As well as having to pay visa charges for this recruitment through a Skilled Worker visa, we also have to pay an annual NHS surcharge, which has increased (6 February 2024) by 66% to £1,035; a significant amount.

Under new visa rules due to come in from 4 April 2024 which will raise the minimum salary threshold for a Skilled Worker visa from £26,200 to £38,700 per year, we wouldn't have been able to make this recruitment due to this being above our Company salary threshold for this role. In fact, all our musician salaries would fall below this threshold, except for Section Principals.

Under proposals announced by the UK Government in December 2023, the Shortage Occupation list is to be replaced in April 2024 with a new Immigration Salary List in an attempt to reduce net migration. This concerns us because if musicians are removed from the shortage occupation list, this will further limit our ability to recruit internationally and potentially limit the quality of our ensembles.

Prior to Brexit, we wouldn't have had to go through the Visa process at all to recruit artists from the EU. These additional pressures are a combination of Brexit and changes to existing UK legislation.

Welsh National Opera

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Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y Gymraeg, Chwaraeon, a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol | Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee

Diwylliant a'r berthynas newydd â'r UE | Culture and the new relationship with the EU

Ymateb gan: Theatr Byd Bach | Evidence from: Small World Theatre

Small World Theatre

The impact of the new relationship on artists and creative workers touring and working cross border (including touring and working in Wales).

Brexit makes everything complicated, costly and time consuming.

Touring has become more expensive on many fronts: with increased ferry costs, ATA Carnet charges, fuel consumption and our impact on the planet.

Using an ATA Carnet creates more work for the team (an additional 2-3 days for an administrator or tour manager to navigate the system and complete the overly complicated paperwork). Customs and Excise advice available in the UK is geared towards commercial companies.

The impact of the new trading arrangements relating to cultural activity.

With all the disadvantages of this change it is as if a 'Cultural Iron Curtain' has fallen. It is impacting on creative thought, ambition, innovation, and aspiration. The desire to share and learn, to exchange and prosper, to make meaningful links and to bridge divides has been squashed and tempered.

Wales is lumped in with the whole Brexit ethos. This schism creates yet more obstacles for Welsh artists to deal with in accessing EU audiences. This may limit how we showcase our unique culture and perspective on Global matters.

Trading arrangements are not just financial; the exchange of ideas is crucial to a viable future where artists, musicians and theatre makers develop concepts and visions with EU partners to create a world worth living in.

The availability of guidance and support for the sector relating to the new relationship between the UK and EU.

Searching for guidance, arranging a multi-country tour and administrating the paperwork is a large amount of time and extra expenses which makes touring too daunting to contemplate for a small arts organisation or individual artists. Cultural exchanges will be too complicated and too expensive to even contemplate. We just won't see the quality and variety of EU or world artists in our country.

Using an ATA Carnet

We struggled to find an organisation or advisor that would help. Information online is geared towards commercial companies and not-for-profit companies like ours seemed to be at a disadvantage. We were given several bits of wrong information at the beginning, and Customs and Excise staff seemed reluctant to give us advice in case it was wrong.

We began by enquiring about Duplicate Lists to save cost, but after several days of enquiries, we took the advice of Wales Arts international and applied for a carnet. (Duplicate Lists were suggested by the UK but they are not recognised at an international border).

Fortunately, we discovered the name and number of the International Documentation Manager in Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, who was incredibly helpful. We were able to pay the lowest cost and complete the transaction in time to receive the paperwork by post and performance in a cross-cultural exchange in Ireland.

Notes:

The Arts Council of Wales were able to support us by referring us to Wales Arts International. Katie took a genuine interest in our case and shared industry knowledge with us. This set us off on the right track.

It was more helpful speaking to Customs and Excise in Ireland than in the UK - they seemed more aware of the process and more willing to share information.

We were asked by Customs and Excise UK staff to report back once we had worked out what to do. Often people said things off the record. Staff are angry that their workloads have increased, and they wonder where the extra revenue is going.

The impact on access to funding programmes and networks

It can feel that Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are competing for funding that replaces EU funds. We also feel that we are disadvantaged by England-based artists.

EU funding criteria was focussed and impactful. As a company based in Cardigan, we saw our local work benefitting some of the communities in the most deprived areas in Wales. The competition is now so great when applying to charitable organisations and trusts, that many excellent projects fail to happen.

Any changes to the UK-EU relationship that might improve cross border working for the cultural sector.

It would make things better if Wales could re-join the EU.

Agenda Item 4



**Response to
Senedd Culture, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations
Committee inquiry into
Culture and the new relationship with the EU**

October 2023

CEU 11

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

**Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y Gymraeg, Chwaraeon, a Chysylltiadau
Rhyngwladol | Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and
International Relations Committee**

**Diwylliant a'r berthynas newydd â'r UE | Culture and the new relationship
with the EU**

Ymateb gan: Teledwyr Annibynnol Cymru (TAC) | Evidence from: Welsh
Independent Producers (TAC)

About TAC

1. TAC (Teledwyr Annibynnol Cymru) represents the independent television production sector in Wales. Our sector is a substantial component of the creative industries, in Wales and in the UK overall, with Cardiff alone having the third largest film and TV cluster in the UK¹. Our sector provides economic, social and cultural benefits through supplying creative content. There are around 50 companies in the sector in Wales, ranging from sole traders to some of the leading players in the UK production industry. They produce content for the BBC, ITV, Channel 4, Channel 5 and Sky as well as other commercial broadcasters and platforms. Our member companies produce almost all the original television and online media content for Welsh-language broadcaster S4C, and a variety of radio productions for the BBC.

¹ <https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/news/view/2510538-cardiff-has-third-largest-film-and-tv-cluster-in-uk,-study-shows>

Responses to Committee areas of interest

- **The impact of the new relationship on artists and creative workers touring and working cross-border (including touring and working in Wales)**
2. In general it has become more difficult for those working in the creative industries to travel to and from the EU, with aspects such as the new visa requirements entailing greater time lengths and greater cost. This in turn effectively makes it prohibitive in some circumstances to look to hire talent from the EU, as it incurs disproportionate cost especially given the relatively small size of many companies in the creative industries.
 3. One of our members has reported that The UK's exit from the EU has created major issues and limited crew options for VFX (visual effects) productions:"

"Previously we regularly employed EU and EEA based staff at short notice, and they were able to move to Cardiff with ease and work at our VFX studio. In the past this helped us compete with London studios as non-UK crew were more open to work in Wales, whereas the majority of UK crew only want to work in London, particularly on shorter term projects. Remote working has lessened the impact, but not enough to fully compensate for this."

"Now, when hiring EU talent, the additional bureaucracy and timescales have affected us greatly. Every case is different depending on nationality, and we must ensure that we have the correct right to work documentation, get share codes for our files, and if we then want to keep talent in the longer term, we have to look at sponsorships which comes at a cost depending on nationality and role. The process is a lot more complicated and convoluted."

"The sector also benefited from streams of income for VFX mentoring from schemes like the Cross Channel Film Lab which was EU funded but this was closed after leaving the EU."

4. It is also worth reflecting that, over and above the practical difficulties, there is perhaps the perception that the UK is less welcoming to talent from the EU. A report by the Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre (PEC) on the issue of accessing talent after the UK left the EU cited many from creative organisations UK-wide who state that the UK in general was seen as less welcoming and inclusive, thus acting as a deterrent to recruiting talent from the EU².

- **The impact of new trading arrangements relating to cultural activity**
5. While we are not aware of many widely available figures on the overall impact of leaving the EU on the creative industries, we note that the Creative PEC stated in its 2023 'State of Creativity' report that "Research undertaken ... tentatively suggests that between 2016 and 2019, the result of the Brexit referendum and the uncertainty it

² [Migration and accessing talent in the Creative Industries. Creative Industries PEC. March 2023, p29, para 4.3.4](#)

created for businesses that traded with the EU may have depressed creative services exports by 15%”³.

6. In the TV market specifically however, the interruption of production caused by COVID caused a fall in exports but the TV exports report for 2021-22⁴ shows that there has been a post-pandemic growth in the market with some European territories increasing, for example France, Italy and Germany (although France and Italy not yet back up to pre-Covid levels). Scripted drama remains the leading genre for exports and therefore we welcome the support for that genre in Wales from S4C, Creative Wales, the BBC and also Netflix, who commissioned *Sex Education* and other shows and also bought *Dal Y Mellt*, the first Welsh-language show on Netflix – the show has now been commissioned for a second series.
7. However, post-pandemic the increased demand for content has led to skills shortages, as highlighted by various reports on creative industry skills in Wales, including October’s report on the creative industries workforce from the Senedd media committee⁵.
8. For the UK overall, Screenskills has forecast⁶ that “by 2025, an annual investment of between £95.1m and £104.3m will be needed to meet the training requirements of the film and HETV production workforce. This excludes the costs of any job placements that might accompany intensive training programmes”. It also states that “now that free movement from the European Union (EU) has ceased, the pool of EU talent that had been available to mitigate shortages in the UK labour market is no longer accessible. This is likely to result in increased pressure on jobs”.
9. TAC and others in the sector are doing our best to counter these effects, for example through the TAC-S4C training partnership, which since its inception in 2019 has held 102 courses with 1,497 registrations.
10. In terms of the new trade deals with non-EU nations, while audiovisual is not always included in the arrangements, it is important to ensure that no new deals involve watering down IP protections or encouraging a significant increase in imported TV content, which would have impacts on the UK/Wales’ own cultural output and production sector.
11. Following our departure from the EU the UK remains part of the European Convention on Transfrontier Television Convention, meaning UK content still benefits from the requirement that television broadcasters must ensure that 10% of their budget is dedicated to content originating in a country that is a signatory to the EC TTC and on-demand services must ensure 30% of their catalogue includes such European works. It is therefore important that the UK remains part of this Convention.

³ [The State of Creativity. Creative Industry Policy & Evidence Centre, 2023, p17](#)

⁴ [UK TV Exports Report 2021-22. Pact/Fremantle/BBC Studios/ITV Studios/All3Media/3Vision](#)

⁵ [Behind the scenes: the creative industry workforce in Wales. Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport & International relations Committee, Oct 2023, p15-16](#)

⁶ [Forecast of labour market shortages and training investment needs in film and HETV production. Screenskills with BFI, Nordicity, Saffery Champness, Jun 2022 p23](#)

- **The availability of guidance and support for the sector relating to the new relationship between the UK and EU**

12. While new travel restriction can cause issues, British TV production companies are still able to attend the international markets and TAC has been working with the UK Department for Business & Trade to ensure that companies in Wales are able to access UK Government support and also learn from those already working in the international markets, both within and ex-EU. TAC, DBT and S4C jointly held a 'Going Global' event in March this year, bringing together producers, distributors, financiers and others to talk about export strategies and support. We will be holding a further such event in North Wales in November.

13. We are also in regular liaison with the Welsh Government/Creative Wales/Ffilm Cymru Wales, which are working to encourage more international co-productions and to attract more high-end TV and film-making to Wales, in collaboration with the British Film Commission and others.

14. To this end we are pleased to see the introduction of schemes such as Sinema Cymru, developed between Creative Wales, S4C and Ffilm Cymru with aim of supporting Welsh language films that have international big screen potential. Creative Wales has also provided production funding for two new dramas, *Men Up* (Boom Cymru) and *Tree on a Hill / Pren ar Y Bryn* (Fiction Factory). There was also recently a Creative Wales-sponsored showcase to 35 delegates of European funding agencies, hosted by Ffilm Cymru Wales.

- **The impact on access to funding programmes and networks**

15. The loss of access to the EU Creative Europe MEDIA programme has caused a loss of investment into TV and film production in the UK by the EU and a reduction the ability to collaborate and collectively promote European content to the rest of the world.

16. Between 2014-2020, the UK received €68 from the Creative Europe programme⁷. While UK (via the Global Screen Fund) and Welsh governments have been putting resources into various aspects of skills provision, TV/film development and so on, it is not clear whether initiatives such as the Global Screen Fund will be maintained year-on-year and so the loss of the EU funding on an ongoing basis could nevertheless have a negative impact on the funding available.

17. The investment from the UK PSBs remains important and TAC is currently working to ensure that productions which are listed as being made in Wales are making a genuine contribution to Welsh creative skills base and economy, in order that strategic investment out of London and in Wales achieves its intended aims.

18. It is also important that the UK maintains its creative sector tax reliefs and continues to add to them. HM Treasury/HMRC recently reviewed the screen sector tax reliefs for

⁷ [Impacts on Arts and Culture. UK in a changing Europe, April 2001](#)

Children's, High-End TV (HETV), Film and Animation and took the decision to part-merge them into a single 'expenditure credit'. This was welcomed by TAC and others, including the decision to maintain the HETV qualification threshold at £1m per hour (instead of raising it which was proposed by HM Treasury).

19. However to enable minority indigenous broadcasters and producers to benefit from the additional international investment this brings, it is important to introduce a lower qualification threshold for HETV expenditure credit for minority indigenous language productions, due to the lower budgets involved. Given the interest of Netflix and others in Welsh language production, this could provide a real additional boost to outside investment in the TV sector in Wales and some other parts of the UK.

- **Any changes to the UK-EU relationship that might improve cross-border working for the culture sector**

20. Overall, the UK visa system needs to be simplified as much as possible through the use of technology and other means to allow freer travel for creative artists and workers. Further 'soft power' work also needs to be done to counter the perception of the UK as somewhere that does not welcome talent from the EU or elsewhere.

21. In general every avenue needs to be explored to encourage greater co-operation between Wales and other EU countries.

22. We note that the UK has re-joined the EU Horizon scientific research programme in order to continue international scientific collaboration. We would similarly like to see the UK look to re-access the MEDIA programme, which would lead to similarly greater co-operation in the creative industries. There is already a range of other non-member countries which take part in at least some aspects of the Creative Europe programme and we would like to see the UK take steps to do likewise.

www.tac.cymru

CEU 02

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y Gymraeg, Chwaraeon, a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol | Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee**Diwylliant a'r berthynas newydd â'r UE | Culture and the new relationship with the EU**Ymateb gan: Media Cymru | Evidence from: Media Cymru

The Committee is considering the impact of the UK's exit from the EU on the culture sector and would like to understand your views on the following:**1. The impact of the new relationship on artists and creative workers touring and working cross-border (including touring and working in Wales).**

Expected negative impact of Brexit for Welsh artists touring Europe had been highlighted by the National Assembly of Wales' Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee 2018 inquiry.¹ Following a 2019 survey, 83% of the respondents from the Music and Performing Arts sector in Wales expressed concern about the impact of Brexit, while the whole creative sector presented worries about mobility for artists in Europe, access to funding and limitations in the labour market.² The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Music in association with UK Music have claimed that "this free-flowing network between the EU and the UK is being choked by a range of restrictions red tape, on music workers looking to tour, on moving kit, and the restrictions on the trucks needed to do the moving, which were brought in by the Trade and Co-operation Agreement (TCA)" (p. 10).³ Our Media Cymru ongoing *The creative and media industry survey for Wales 2023* includes an open question on the impact of Brexit. About 25 of the

¹ The Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee of the National Assembly of Wales (2018). Brexit, the arts sector, creative industries, heritage and the Welsh language. Available at <http://senedd.assembly.wales/documents/s81782/Report%20Brexit%20the%20arts%20sector%20creative%20industries%20and%20the%20Welsh%20language.pdf>

² Komorowski, M. & Lewis, J. (2020). *Clwstwr Policy Brief No 1. The (Potential) Impact of Brexit on Creative Businesses*. Clwstwr. Available at: <https://clwstwr.org.uk/clwstwr-creative-industries-report-no-1-size-and-composition-creative-industries-wales>

³ APPG on Music. (2022). *Let the Music Move – A New Deal for Touring*. Available at: <https://www.ukmusic.org/research-reports/let-the-music-move-a-new-deal-for-touring/>

responses signal Brexit as a problem for their creative activities, five of which are presented here verbatim as examples of specific impacts on recruitment: “Brexit has meant it is harder to find staff especially at short notice”, “Brexit has closed down our EU recruitment channel”; and on the mobility of artists: “huge problems in freedom of movement as a performing artist, and difficulties in moving equipment across European borders due to new carnet policies”, “Brexit pretty much killed UK acts travelling to mainland EU” and “huge impact due to our international touring for example, productions in Europe”. These examples highlight how there has been a negative impact after the UK’s exit from the EU.

2. The impact of new trading arrangements relating to cultural activity.

Uncertainties brought about by Brexit had an impact on the relocation decisions to the European mainland for media,⁴ and fashion⁵ companies. The new trading arrangements have made it more complex, demanding, and costly to hire skilled workers from Europe,⁶ importing and exporting art works,⁷ and acquire relevant technologies. As mentioned above, personnel and equipment transport into, through, and from Europe has also become a difficult issue.

3. The availability of guidance and support for the sector relating to the new relationship between the UK and EU

A recommendation for a “one-stop-shop” for advice and information on European requirements was already presented in the 2018 inquiry on the impact of Brexit.⁸ The Arts Council of Wales currently provides a site that offers links to an Arts Admin document that provides this information, albeit last updated in November 2021.⁹ The Musicians’ Union provides an interactive flowchart to provide an overview of the requirements for UK musicians touring Europe.¹⁰ PEC has recently issued a recommendation for a Home Office hotline that can help with clarifying

⁴ Komorowski, M. (2019). *Brexit and the media industry - How Europe’s capitals attract UK’s businesses*. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13673882.2018.00001051>

⁵ Silva, E. S. & Vecchi, A. (2022). *Fashion MSMEs confronting Climate Change, COVID-19 and Brexit: Key Drivers for Supply Chain Relocation*. PEC & Nesta. Available at: <https://pec.ac.uk/discussion-papers/fashion-msmes-confronting-climate-change-covid-19-and-brexit-key-drivers-for-supply-chain-relocation>

⁶ PEC. (2023). *Post-Brexit migration and accessing foreign talent in the Creative Industries*. Available at: <https://pec.ac.uk/research-reports/migration-talent-and-the-creative-industries-after-brexit>

⁷ Payne, A. (2023, August 19). *British art scene feels Brexit bite*. *Politicshome.com* Available at: <https://www.politicshome.com/news/article/british-art-scene-feels-brexit-bite>

⁸ The Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee of the National Assembly of Wales (2018). *Brexit, the arts sector, creative industries, heritage and the Welsh language*. Available at <http://senedd.assembly.wales/documents/s81782/Report%20Brexit%20the%20arts%20sector%20creative%20industries%20heritage%20and%20the%20Welsh%20language.pdf>

⁹ Arts Council of Wales. (2021). *European Touring Guide for UK Artists*. Available at: <https://arts.wales/news-jobs-opportunities/european-touring-guide-for-uk-artists>

¹⁰ Musicians’ Union. (2023). *Working in the EU after Brexit*. Available at: <https://musiciansunion.org.uk/working-performing/working-overseas/working-in-the-eu>

visa procedures and support sponsoring processes for the hire of EU nationals.¹¹ There is a guidance for working, performing and touring in Europe available at Gov.uk, but the helpline for Export Support Services is no longer available.¹²

4. The impact on access to funding programmes and networks

Changes in the regulation from EU State Aid rules to Subsidy Control which took place in January 2023, have impact upon programmes, like Media Cymru, which are administering public funds to promote innovation in the creative industries. The new subsidy control regulations with “the combination of a principle-based regime, the different levels of compliance requirements and the obligation for self-assessment presents some important considerations for public bodies, not least a potential increase in administration, more immediate uncertainty and a greater risk of non-compliance.”¹³ Two of the survey responses also address this issue: “Brexit has removed funding streams that would have been beneficial for my R&D” and “there were more grants available to support what we do”. Red tape and lack of comparable funding is presented as main difficulties.

Having administered UKRI R&D funding programmes under both the EU and the new UK Subsidy control rules, we have found **the new subsidy control rules more bureaucratic than the EU legislation, while also placing a greater burden on companies**. This would appear to be in direct contravention of the stated aims of Brexit.

5. Any changes to the UK-EU relationship that might improve cross-border working for the culture sector

The on-going negotiation with EU on a general agreement on cultural touring should continue¹⁴ to ensure barriers are removed or, at least, further reduced.

Any other views

¹¹ PEC. (2023). Post-Brexit migration and accessing foreign talent in the Creative Industries. Available at: <https://pec.ac.uk/research-reports/migration-talent-and-the-creative-industries-after-brexit>

¹² Department for Culture, Media and Sport and Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport. (2022). Guidance Working, performing and touring in Europe - guidance for the performing arts, theatre, opera, dance, circus and other live performance genre. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-performing-and-touring-in-europe-guidance-for-the-performing-arts-theatre-opera-dance-circus-and-other-live-performance-genre>

¹³ ICAEW (2023). UK subsidy control replaces EU state aid rules. Available at: <https://www.icaew.com/insights/viewpoints-on-the-news/2023/feb-2023/uk-subsidy-control-replaces-eu-state-aid-rules#:~:text=The%20new%20UK%20regime%20has,energy%20usage%3B%20and%20local%20growth.>

¹⁴ Parliamentary debate (2023, June 1). Musicians touring Europe. Available at: <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-06-15/debates/5879777E-07B2-4799-8002-F6499EF9AE6D/MusiciansTouringInEurope>

The “one-stop-shop” mentioned above is still missing and would be valuable to help navigate the new rules and requirements, both for those touring through Europe and for those hiring EU citizens.

JANUARY 2024

INWARD VISITS

- 16 Jan **Visit to Wales by German Ambassador to the UK**
The Ambassador came to Wales for a two-day visit. During his visit he held separate meetings with the First Minister and the Minister for Economy. The meeting with the FM focussed on renewables, youth mobility and our ambitions to forge closer links with our European neighbours. The meeting with the Economy Minister focussed on the recent MoU signing with Baden Württemberg, Wales' strength in renewables and our prime location for inward investment.
- 31 Jan? **Visit to Wales by Maharashtra Legislative Assembly**
The Minister for Social Justice met with the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly following their interest in developing a similar Wellbeing of Futures Generation Act.

OUTWARD VISITS

- 10 Jan **First Minister visit to Silesia, Poland**
On 10 January the First Minister undertook a three-day visit to Silesia to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Silesian Voivodeship. This was also an opportunity to undertake a programme of visits and events aligned to the areas of collaboration set out in the MOU. A Written Statement on the visit can be found here: [Ministerial Overseas Visit to Silesia](#)

Dear committee members,

You may have heard at the end of 2023 about a number of job losses across Reach plc, the parent company of WalesOnline, North Wales Live and several other large, well-established and well-regarded regional websites and newspapers across the UK. More than 300 roles will be lost from editorial, including in Wales.

I felt it was important that members of the committee, and the Senedd more widely, were aware of the number of significant challenges faced by the commercial regional media at the moment, which are impacting its ability to cover news as effectively as we would like, and as effectively as countries like Wales and the wider UK deserve and expect. It would not be a stretch to say there are tangible threats to its future.

Those challenges include falling numbers of visits to our websites from external referrers. For example, Facebook has taken a unilateral decision to withhold news from its users, meaning, at a stroke, local news on Reach websites alone is being read tens of millions of times fewer every month. This is despite the fact that we know many readers use Facebook as their news feed. (It's important to note that our online audiences remain huge, but measures like those taken by Facebook nevertheless significantly affect our revenue and mean we cannot grow (and therefore employ more journalists) at the pace we would like).

The challenges also include falling advertising yields, advertisers remaining more cautious about advertising in the current economic climate and tech giants like Meta and Google hoovering up the vast majority of advertising revenue. This makes monetising those large audiences very challenging. On top of this, we are dealing with a significant increase in our costs because of inflation.

A further challenge that has emerged over the last year or so is the direction the BBC is taking. Last summer, I wrote to all of Wales' MPs to draw their attention to the BBC's 'Across the UK' plans which seek to transform the corporation's provision of local news, cutting its local radio services and diverting savings into beefing up the BBC's digital

local news services. This harms not only those members of the public who rely on the BBC's broadcast output but also harms the commercial local news sector by aggressively moving into a section of the market already being well-served. This risks taking yet more audience (and the commensurate advertising revenues which we use to pay our journalists) away from commercial local news websites.

And, finally, there is another potential threat to commercial news providers in Wales in the form of a clause in the Local Government Finance (Wales) bill published in November which would remove the requirement on local authorities to publish a notice of changes to council tax in at least one newspaper circulating in its area. It would allow local authorities to publish the notice on their websites instead. Although there are only a small number of public notices relating to council tax that this would affect every year, if the Welsh Government's intention is to introduce these changes in future legislation as it updates the different laws that impose obligations on public bodies to advertise in newspapers, it will have a significant impact on news organisations in Wales that receive this advertising, as well as on those readers who rely on printed newspapers for their information. It would be yet another damaging hit to the revenue of news publishers in Wales, and risk contributing further to the tangible threat to their future.

WalesOnline, Reach plc and the commercial local journalism sector as a whole does not shy away from fair competition or challenges. Neither do I wish to frame the sector as unable or unwilling to take its own steps to improve and grow. We are constantly exploring new ways of generating revenue and audience. In the last few months alone, we have launched a paid-for version of the WalesOnline app and a subscription-only newsletter from one of our most respected journalists, Will Hayward. Furthermore, we have grown our number of newsletter subscribers in WalesOnline from nothing at all just a few short years ago to around 350,000 today. Essentially, we never stop trying to make our journalism effective, sustainable and widely-read.

In Wales, we regularly see the debate around the strength of the news sector in Wales framed in very negative terms. But there are a large

number of talented, courageous and committed journalists working around the country, not just at WalesOnline but at the BBC, S4C, ITV and other smaller organisations. The industry faces its challenges, and we could always do with more journalists, but there is a significant amount of robust and investigative work taking place here.

Local and regional websites also use their resources to do things that simply wouldn't happen without us: the comprehensive coverage of our criminal and coroners' courts, the freedom to campaign on behalf of communities and openly call out those seeking to undermine them (freedoms denied to the BBC because of its impartiality requirements), the elevation of voices that wouldn't otherwise be heard and the celebration of those doing wonderful things across the country.

It would be a disaster for local communities and for adequate coverage of government both locally and nationally if the pressure on our resources caused some local titles to call it a day.

I felt it was important to draw this to the committee's attention and I will be happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you for reading.

Yours sincerely,

Steffan Rhys

Editor, WalesOnline

Audience and Content Director for Wales, Reach plc

Delyth Jewel MS

Chair

Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee

2 February 2024

Dear Delyth

Local Government Finance (Wales) Bill: section 20

As you will be aware, our Committee is currently undertaking Stage 1 scrutiny of the Local Government Finance (Wales) Bill.

On 31 January 2024 we held an evidence session specifically focused on the provisions in section 20 of the Bill, which would replace the requirement on local authorities to publish details relating to council tax in local newspapers with a new duty to publish council tax notices electronically. Our session was scheduled in response to the number of consultation responses we received specifically related to section 20. Witnesses on our panel included representatives from Newsquest, Reach plc and Wrexham.com. Their views on the provision within the Bill were mixed, and concerns raised included the potential "future direction of travel" for public notices more broadly and the potential detrimental impact on local democracy, informed communities, and the viability of local news outlets as a result of the revenue lost from no longer publishing such notices.

Given the relevance to your remit, we agreed to draw the discussion to your attention. Further detail is available in the Committee meeting [transcript](#).

Yours sincerely



John Griffiths MS

Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



Department
for Culture,
Media & Sport

Agenda Item 5.4

Rt Hon Lucy Frazer KC MP
Secretary of State for Culture, Media
and Sport
1st Floor
100 Parliament Street
London SW1A 2BQ

E: enquiries@dcms.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/dcms

2 February 2024

Delyth Jewell MS
Chair, Culture, Communications, Welsh Language,
Sport, and International Relations Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff CF99 1SN

INT2024/00866/DC

Dear Delyth,

I am writing in response to your letter of 11 January 2024, regarding the recent challenges at S4C. Most of the points raised are addressed in my letter to the Board of S4C on 16 January 2024, to which you were copied. I am continuing to treat this issue with the utmost seriousness. As its sponsor department, DCMS has had frequent contact with S4C at senior official level as well as through correspondence and meetings between ministers and S4C leadership.

With regard to the Committee's specific question about the formal role of the Welsh Government in the public appointment of the new Chair of S4C, as you will know, S4C public appointments are made in compliance with the Broadcasting Act 1990 and appointments are made by the Secretary of State. While broadcasting is not a devolved issue, the DCMS Concordat with the Welsh Assembly Government (April 2011 Annex E Para 7) states that 'DCMS will consult with the Minister for Heritage on "Welsh appointments" to the Boards of the BBC and S4C.'

In accordance with this, as has been standard for previous S4C appointments, the Welsh Government is invited to appoint a representative to the Advisory Assessment Panel, which is responsible for assessing which candidates are appointable for the role. In addition, the Welsh Government is consulted on the role specification prior to the launch of the campaign, and asked to suggest potential candidates to approach for the role. The Welsh Government Deputy Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism is also formally consulted for views at the final appointment decision stage. You will be aware that the role is also subject to a pre-appointment scrutiny hearing by a parliamentary Select Committee before an appointment can be confirmed.

I consider that the above measures already provide the Welsh Government with a formal role in the upcoming appointments process for the Chair of S4C and do not consider any changes to be required at this time. The UK Government remains committed to ensuring the future success of S4C and Welsh-language broadcasting.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lucy Frazer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rt Hon Lucy Frazer KC MP
Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport

Dawn Bowden AS/MS
Dirprwy Weinidog y Celfyddydau, Chwaraeon a Thwristiaeth
Deputy Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism

Agenda Item 5.5


Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref DC/DB/00072/24

Huw Irranca-Davies MS
Chair
Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee
SeneddLJC@senedd.wales

5 February 2024

Dear Huw,

I am writing in accordance with the inter-institutional relations agreement to notify you of a meeting of the Culture and Creative Industries Inter-Ministerial Group (IMG), which will take place on 8 February 2024 and will be held virtually.

This is the first Culture and Creative Industries IMG and will be chaired by the UK Governments Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. The meeting will likely cover, the Creative Industries Sector Vision and current creative & cultural sector issues.

I will provide an update after the meeting.

I am also copying this letter to Mick Antoniwn MS, the Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution; the Rt Hon Elin Jones MS, the Llywydd; and, the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee.

Yours sincerely,



Dawn Bowden AS/MS
Dirprwy Weinidog y Celfyddydau, Chwaraeon a Thwristiaeth
Deputy Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
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Gohebiaeth.Dawn.Bowden@llyw.cymru
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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth Gymraeg sy'n dod i law yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Agenda Item 5.6

MICK ANTONIW AS/MS
Y Cwnsler Cyffredinol a Gweinidog y Cyfansoddiad
Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: CG/PO/50/2024

Huw Irranca-Davies MS
Chair
Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee
Senedd Cymru

16 February 2024

Inter-Institutional Relations Agreement: Inter-Ministerial Standing Committee

I am writing in accordance with the inter-institutional relations agreement to notify you of the sixth meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Standing Committee (IMSC), which will take place on 20 February 2024.

I will be chairing the meeting, which will be the first IMSC meeting since the re-establishment of the Northern Ireland Executive. I anticipate that this virtual meeting will provide an opportunity to discuss intergovernmental relations as a whole following the return of Northern Ireland Ministers, as well as UK legislation and also community cohesion. I will also be highlighting the recent final report from the Independent Commission on the Constitutional Future of Wales.

I have copied this letter to the the Llywydd, and to the Chairs of the Finance Committee, the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee, the Equality and Social Justice Committee, and the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee.

I will provide an update after the meeting.

Mick Antoniw AS/MS

Y Cwnsler Cyffredinol a Gweinidog y Cyfansoddiad
Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Gohebiaeth.Mick.Antoniw@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Mick.Antoniw@gov.Wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Datganiad Amgueddfa Cymru: Effaith Cyllideb Ddrafft Llywodraeth Cymru 24/25

Ar 19 Rhagfyr, cyhoeddodd Llywodraeth Cymru ei chyllideb ddrafft ar gyfer 2024-2025, gan gyflwyno toriad ariannol o 10.5% i Amgueddfa Cymru.

Mae'r toriad hwn o 10.5% yn cynrychioli gostyngiad o £3 miliwn mewn cyllid Cymorth Grant. Yn ogystal, mae Amgueddfa Cymru yn parhau i wynebu diffyg o £1.5 miliwn o flwyddyn i flwyddyn, sy'n golygu bod yn rhaid i Amgueddfa Cymru leihau ei chyllideb refeniw ar gyfer 2024/25 gan £4.5 miliwn erbyn diwedd mis Mawrth.

Dyma'r toriad mwyaf i gyllideb yn hanes yr Amgueddfa, a bydd yn cael effaith fawr ar waith Amgueddfa Cymru o ddydd i ddydd. Er mwyn sicrhau y gall y sefydliad barhau i weithredu o dan y gyllideb newydd, mae Amgueddfa Cymru yn gorfod ystyried gwahanol ffyrdd o arbed arian, gan gynnwys newid trefniadau gweithredu, edrych ar effeithlonrwydd costau, ac o bosibl colli swyddi.

Mae 90% o'r incwm a dderbynnir gan Lywodraeth Cymru yn cael ei wario ar gostau staff. Er ein bod yn edrych ar ffyrdd newydd o gynhyrchu incwm, yn ogystal â ffyrdd o leihau costau gweithredol eraill, bydd rhaid i'r rhan fwyaf o'r gostyngiad ddod drwy leihau swyddi. O ganlyniad, gyda chymeradwyaeth Llywodraeth Cymru, rydyn ni'n rhedeg cynlluniau diswyddo gwirfoddol a diswyddo gorfodol ar draws y sefydliad.

Mae hwn yn gyfnod cythryblus i Amgueddfa Cymru, a'r flaenoriaeth dros yr wythnosau a'r misoedd i ddod yw darparu gofal a chefnogaeth i'n staff a'n gwirfoddolwyr. Rydyn ni wedi bod yn ymgynghori â'r undebau llafur drwy gydol y broses.

Dywedodd Jane Richardson, Prif Weithredwr Amgueddfa Cymru:

“Rhaid i ni sylweddoli y bydd effeithiau hirdymor y toriadau hyn ar Amgueddfa Cymru, a'r sector diwylliant yng Nghymru, yn sylweddol. Rydyn ni eisoes yn gweithio mewn hinsawdd economaidd hynod heriol ar ôl Covid, wrth i ni geisio rheoli risgiau er mwyn gwarchod, diogelu a hyrwyddo'r casgliad cenedlaethol.

“Mae'r sefyllfa hon yn heriol i bawb, ac rydyn ni'n cydnabod y bydd rhaid i ni wneud penderfyniadau ariannol anodd. Byddwn ni'n canolbwyntio ar gyflawni ein pwrpas creiddiol, sef ysbrydoli addysg a mwynhad i bawb drwy gyfrwng casgliad cenedlaethol Cymru.”

Mae Amgueddfa Cymru yn croesawu dros 1.3 miliwn o ymwelwyr y flwyddyn i'w saith amgueddfa a chanolfan gasgliadau, ac yn gyfrifol am warchod a gofalu am gasgliad cenedlaethol Cymru – dros 5 miliwn eitem o bwysigrwydd hanesyddol a

diwylliannol. Yr Amgueddfa yw un o ddarparwyr mwyaf Cymru o addysg tu allan i'r ystafell ddosbarth – bob blwyddyn bydd dros 200,000 o blant a phobl ifanc yn defnyddio adnoddau addysg yr Amgueddfa, sy'n seiliedig ar y casgliadau.

Dywedodd Jane Richardson:

“Mae'n rhaid i ni edrych eto ar beth yw Amgueddfa Cymru, beth rydyn ni'n ei gynrychioli a beth rydyn ni'n ei gyflawni. Mae gwahanol gyfleoedd ac opsiynau i'w hystyried, ond nid yw am fod yn hawdd ac mae llawer mwy o heriau ar y gorwel.

“Mae'r casgliad cenedlaethol yn drysor diwylliannol gwerthfawr sy'n perthyn i holl bobl Cymru. Mae'n adnodd i bawb ei ddefnyddio a'i fwynhau yn eu cymunedau, yn ein teulu o amgueddfeydd, ac yn ddigidol. Mae'n cynrychioli ac yn dathlu celf, hanes, gwyddoniaeth, a straeon amrywiol Cymru. Mae felly'n hanfodol ein bod yn taclo'r her ariannol hon gyda'r nod o greu Amgueddfa Cymru sy'n addas ar gyfer y dyfodol.”

Nodiadau i olygyddion

- Mae Amgueddfa Cymru yn Gorff Gweithredol a Noddir gan Lywodraeth Cymru. Fe'i sefydlwyd gan Siarter Frenhinol, ac mae'n derbyn canran uchel o'i nawdd gan Lywodraeth Cymru. Rydyn ni hefyd yn elusen gofrestrdig, ac yn ddarostyngedig i oruchwyliaeth reoleiddiol y Comisiwn Elusennau.
- Rydyn ni'n elusen, ac mae ein teulu o saith amgueddfa a chanolfan gasgliadau wedi'u gwasgaru ar draws Cymru. Ond rydyn ni'n fwy nag adeiladau. Mae ein hamgueddfeydd yn ganolfannau cymunedol pwysig sy'n ymestyn tu hwnt i'w milltir sgwâr. Ein nod yw ysbrydoli pawb drwy stori Cymru, gan gydnabod bod gan bawb rywbeth i'w gyfrannu drwy ein hamgueddfeydd, rhaglenni, casgliadau a'r gwaith yr ydym yn ei wneud.

Ffeithiau a Ffigurau 2022-23:

- Croesawodd Amgueddfa Cymru 1,308,628 o ymwelwyr.
- Rhoddodd 604 gwirfoddolwr 26,273 awr o'u hamser i Amgueddfa Cymru.
- Ymwelodd dros 2.3 miliwn o bobl â'n gwefan.
- Benthycwyd eitemau o'r casgliad cenedlaethol i 20 o'r 22 ardal awdurdod lleol yng Nghymru.
- Cynhaliodd Amgueddfa Cymru 39 o brojectau ymchwil yn ymwneud â chelf, hanes a gwyddoniaeth.
- Mae pobl o 227 o leoliadau wedi ymweld â gwefan Amgueddfa Cymru.
- Mae 30,000 o ddelweddau o weithiau celf o'r Casgliad Celf Gyfoes Cenedlaethol wedi cael eu digideiddio ac ar gael ar wefan celfarycyd.cymru.
- Deg Atyniad am Ddim i Ymwelwyr Gorau y DU gan gylchgrawn Which? wedi rhoi Sain Ffagan ar y brig ac Amgueddfa Genedlaethol Caerdydd yn bumed eleni.
- Dathlodd Big Pit ei ben-blwydd yn 40 oed gyda digwyddiadau i'r cyhoedd ac i'r staff. Cafodd hefyd ei enwi'n un o'r atyniadau am ddim gorau i ymwelwyr yng nghylchgrawn *You*.

Amgueddfa Cymru Statement: Impact of Welsh Government 24/25 Draft Budget

On 19th December, the Welsh Government announced its 2024-2025 draft budget, presenting Amgueddfa Cymru – Museum Wales with a financial cut of 10.5%.

The 10.5% cut represents a £3m reduction in Grant in Aid funding. In addition, Amgueddfa Cymru continues to incur a year-on-year deficit of £1.5m, meaning that Amgueddfa Cymru must reduce its 2024/25 revenue budget by £4.5m by end of March.

This represents the largest funding cut in the museum's history and will have a sizeable impact on Amgueddfa Cymru's day-to-day operations. To ensure that the organisation can continue to operate within the revised budgets, Amgueddfa Cymru is having to consider different cost-saving options including changing operating arrangements, cost efficiencies, and potential job losses.

90% of the income received from Welsh Government is spent on staff costs. Whilst we are exploring new income generation opportunities as well as other operational costs, most of the reduction will need to be met by reduction of posts. As a result, with the Welsh Government's approval, we are running voluntary severance and compulsory redundancies across the whole of the organisation.

This is an unsettling period for Amgueddfa Cymru, and the priority is to provide care and support to our staff and volunteers over the coming weeks and months. Consultations with trade union colleagues have been taking place throughout the process.

Amgueddfa Cymru Chief Executive, Jane Richardson said:

"We shouldn't underestimate the long-lasting effect these cuts will have on Amgueddfa Cymru and the wider culture sector in Wales. We are already working within an extremely challenging financial environment post-Covid as we try and manage the ongoing risks to protecting, preserving, and promoting the national collection.

"This financial situation is challenging for everyone, and we recognise that we must make difficult financial decisions. We will focus on delivering on our core purpose of inspiring learning and enjoyment for everyone through the national collection of Wales."

Welcoming over 1.3 million visitors a year to its family of seven national museums and Collection Centre, Amgueddfa Cymru is responsible for conserving and caring for the national collection of Wales, made up of over 5 million items of significant historic and cultural value. Each year over 200,000 children and young people

engage in the museum's collections-based learning programmes resources, making it one of the largest providers of learning outside of the classroom in Wales.

Jane Richardson stated:

"We have to look again at what Amgueddfa Cymru is, what we represent and what we deliver. There are different opportunities and options to consider, but it's not going to be easy and there will be many more challenges ahead.

"The national collection is a precious cultural treasure that belongs to all the people of Wales. It is a resource for everyone to explore, enjoy and experience in their own communities, in our family of museums and digitally. It represents and celebrates art, history, science, and the diverse stories of Wales. It is therefore imperative that we tackle this financial challenge head on with the view of creating an Amgueddfa Cymru fit for the future."

Notes to editors

- Amgueddfa Cymru – Museum Wales is an Executive Welsh Government Sponsored Body, established by Royal Charter, and receives a large percentage of its funding from the Welsh Government. We are also a registered charity, subject to the regulatory oversight of the Charity Commission.
- Amgueddfa Cymru – Museum Wales is a charity, and a family of seven national museums and one collections centre located across Wales. But we're more than our buildings. Our sites are vital community spaces that reach far beyond their location on a map. Our aim is to inspire everyone we reach through Wales's story, and we recognise that everyone has something to contribute through our museums, collections and the work we do.
- **2022-23 Facts and Figures:**
 - Amgueddfa Cymru welcomed 1,308,628 visitors.
 - 604 volunteer donated 26,273 hours of their time to Amgueddfa Cymru.
 - Over 2.3 million people visited our website.
 - The national collection has been loaned to 20 of 22 local authority areas in Wales.
 - Amgueddfa Cymru ran 39 research projects covering art, history, and science.
 - People from 227 locations have visited the Amgueddfa Cymru website.
 - 30,000 images of artworks from the National Contemporary Art Collection have been digitised and made available on the celfarycyd.wales website.
- This year St Fagans came top in Which? Top Ten UK Free Visitor Attractions, with National Museum Cardiff positioned in fifth.
- In 2023 Big Pit celebrated its 40th Anniversary with both public and staff events. It was also named one of the top free visitor attractions in You Magazine.

Dawn Bowden MS
Deputy Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism
Welsh Government

19 February 2024

Impact of budget reductions on arms-length bodies

Dear Dawn

At our meeting on 8 February 2024, we considered a [letter](#) from members of the Public and Commercial Services Union at Amgueddfa Cymru and the National Library for Wales that related to the proposed budget reductions for 2024-25. We are writing to you to outline the increased concerns we have about the likely effects which budget reductions could have on arms-length bodies.

We noted in our [report on the Welsh Government's Draft Budget for 2024-25](#) that, whilst we accept the exceptionally difficult decisions facing the Welsh Government, we nevertheless feel that the Welsh Government must prioritise spending in certain areas of this portfolio. We also raised concerns with the government about the timeframe for redundancy processes which might now have to be run by arms-length bodies within your ministerial remit. We noted that:

Any redundancy process cannot be rushed. Such processes must be done diligently; consistently across different arms-length bodies; appropriately to account for the wellbeing of staff; and properly.

In line with the regular procedure for Draft Budget scrutiny, we will consider your response to these points, and others, in due course when we receive your formal response to our report. Since we published that report, however, more information about the likely effect of these cuts has been brought to our attention, and so we now wish to seek further information, and assurance, from you about the decision to reduce revenue budgets for arms-length bodies..

We are aware that some arms-length bodies which are funded by your department were asked to “scope” or plan for much larger revenue budget reductions than those outlined in the Draft Budget for 2024-25. We are deeply concerned that this might mean those bodies could be asked to make a similar level of reduction in 2025-26 as they have in the Draft Budget 2024-25. Were arms-length bodies to be asked to make similar levels of cuts in successive years, we would gravely fear for their future.

As such, we would like to know:

1. The level of budget reductions that arms-length bodies in your remit were asked to plan for while officials were preparing the Draft Budget for 2024-25.
2. What information your officials sought from arms-length bodies to inform the budget reductions outlined in the Draft Budget for 2024-25.
3. What assurances you can provide to us that the level of reductions proposed for 2024-25 are a “one-off” reduction for the bodies within your ministerial remit, and not the first phase of a “two-year” cut.

We would be grateful if you could provide the above information separately for the following arms-length bodies:

- Sport Wales
- National Library of Wales
- Amgueddfa Cymru
- Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales
- Welsh Books Council

We know that the 2024-25 budget reductions are having a sizeable impact on the day-to-day operation of these arms-length bodies. Many are having to look again at the services that they can provide, and are having to consider reducing operational costs by reducing staffing levels. We recognise that such extensive restructuring, and the staff redundancies that would inevitably follow, would be deeply unsettling for everyone concerned, and that the fallout of these redundancies would continue to be felt for some time. We are aware that you have committed to revisiting the remit letters of these organisations in light of their proposed budget reductions. Were similar levels of budget reductions to be introduced next year, we fear that these bodies would be destabilised again. This would be an unsustainable situation. Such continuing uncertainty, and cuts of this scale, would devastate our national institutions and cause irreparable damage to their ability to function properly.

As was outlined in the letter that was sent to us, we too would ask, and we quote, "what will be left of Wales' flagship cultural and national institutions if these cuts are imposed?".

We look forward to receiving a response by 4 March 2024.

Yours sincerely,



Delyth Jewell MS
Committee Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



HK/MLW

7 February 2024

Committee Chair and Members
Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
CARDIFF
CF99 1SN

Dear Chair and Members of the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee,

I am writing to you regarding the potential budget cut that the publishing sector will face in the coming financial year. Whilst I am fully aware that Wales as a nation is facing a grave financial situation where almost all public sector organisations will have some extremely difficult decisions to make, including the Books Council, I would like to explain what the proposed cuts of 10.5% cuts will mean to us and our sector.

The publishing sector continues to deliver exceptional value for an amount of funding which would barely cover a single film or TV production. The outputs in the form of books, ebooks, audio books, magazines and websites produce content that has a long legacy and benefits the widest possible constituents. The direct beneficiaries of the publishing grants are publishers who employ staff, authors and illustrators, freelance designers and editors, typesetters and printers, booksellers, schools and libraries, and of course, readers.

Whilst we have weathered a decade of standstill funding and have continued to contribute substantially to the foundational economy across all of Wales this proposed budget cut of 10.5% will have a severe impact and will cause long-lasting damage that would be very difficult to reverse.

We would urge you to consider how many outputs and activities will be lost by reducing the publishing grants by £249,763 vis a vis the costs for a single TV or film production. We appreciate that Creative Wales finds itself in the unenviable position of having to decide how cuts should be implemented and that passing on an equal proportion of the cuts may seem the only option. This does not, however, take into account the substantial and tangible contributions we make to almost all of the Well-being Goals and cross sectoral priorities, not to mention our significant impact on the Welsh-language targets.

Our Welsh Language content is vitally important in providing engaging contemporary content in a variety of formats to support readers of all interests and abilities. Given the Welsh Government's policy to reach one million Welsh speakers, it seems counter-intuitive to cut the very content readers and learners rely on to learn, practice, and enjoy the language. It is my understanding that whilst books are facing a cut, other organisations which work directly in the Welsh Language such as the Urdd, The National Centre for Learning Welsh and the Mentrau Iaith will retain a proposed standstill budget. The total sum we are expected to save from the Welsh-language Publishing Grant budget is £177,049. Some of the individual grant applications we process can be as small as £250 which illustrates the severity of losing such an amount.

Our Welsh-language Publishing Development Subcommittee has discussed how to implement cuts and there is agreement that a 'salami slice' approach whereby each section will be subject to an equal cut is not feasible. Consequently, it was agreed, as far as possible, that the core functions of programme publishing, and posts should be protected. This means that individual book grants for both adults and children, the digital news service, author commissions and magazines will all be affected. The budgets for book marketing, training, support for the Welsh-language publishers' group CWLWM's outreach work, bookseller incentives and reader-related research will all have to cease. More worryingly, the much greater impact will be on the publishing grants and ultimately how many books are published. This is particularly concerning given that the number of supported titles has shrunk already due to a 25% increase in production costs.

It concerns us deeply that the already exceedingly small and strained budget for English-language publications will have to lose £72,714; again, a very small sum in most contexts but devastating in ours since some of the grants we administer here are for less than £200. The real dilemmas brought about by a deficit in an understanding of Welsh history, politics and culture are well documented and given that the majority of learners and readers in Wales are informed through English content it is calamitous to implement a further reduction.

We cannot and should not have to rely on multi-national publishers in London with little interest or knowledge of our country to be the fall-back position for our English-language content just because it is easier or because they happen to have the largest publishing industry in the world.

We are not certain that it will be possible to protect the budget ear-marked for the creation of a new English-language magazine with a sustainable model following the outcome of the recent franchise tender given and the severe pressure that budget is under. When faced with an overwhelmingly large output of English-language content from England (approx. 300,000 books a year) Wales can ill afford to produce less content that authentically presents and discusses its specific concerns. There is a real risk that a shrinking offer will draw readers further away from content made in Wales for Wales.

The New Audiences Grant has been an opportunity for real innovation and improved representation and several new undertakings are at risk of ceasing to exist. With Welsh Government's emphasis on working towards further implementation of the Race Equality

Action Plan it would be tragic if some of the real progress we have achieved was halted or severely delayed.

The #SchoolsLoveReading programme inspired young readers, in some cases providing the very first books they have ever owned and helped schools to support reading for pleasure activities. With the emphasis of our curriculum on teaching through literature, supporting fewer books in Welsh or English that authentically portray Welsh history, culture and society would be counter productive. The PISA results are tangible evidence that we need to do more to engage our young people with a variety of different content, but it is that very breadth of choice that will be at risk.

The benefits of reading to mental health and well-being have been widely documented, never more so than during several lockdowns and the Covid-19 pandemic. The Reading Well Programme builds on that evidence that bibliotherapy is an effective early mental health intervention. By making such titles available for the first time in Welsh we are supporting social prescribing and community health, while providing a crucial source of mental health and well-being support for people to access and engage with in the Welsh-language.

Through distribution activities the Books Council generates approx. £3 million in revenue which supports 16 posts and since it operates on a not-for-profit basis provides additional subsidies for publishers and booksellers; we service hundreds of booksellers and deliver to over 40 different countries. To put our operation into context, the total book market in Wales is estimated to be approx. £70 million which highlights the pressures small independent booksellers, publishers, and our Distribution Centre face and how finely balanced our book ecosystem is.

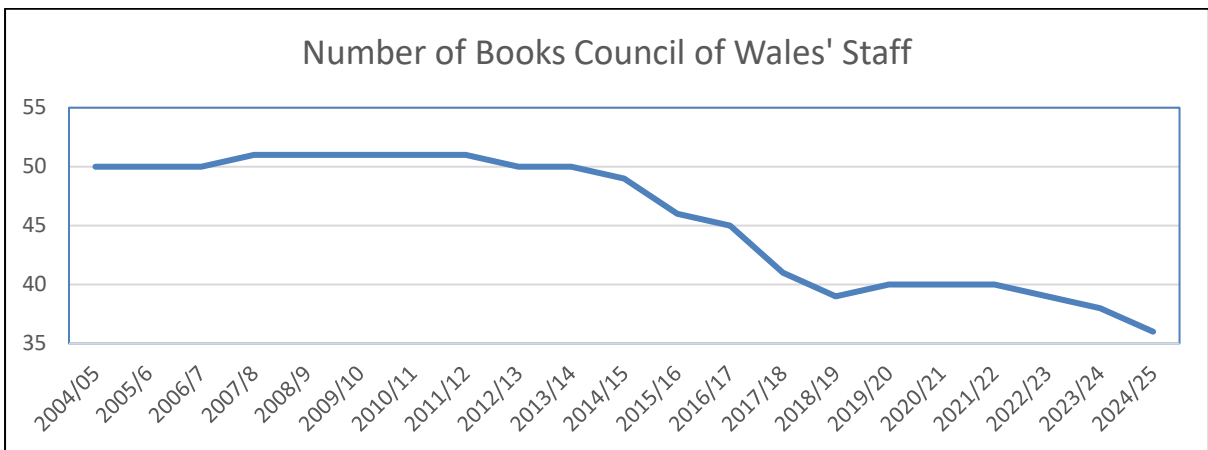
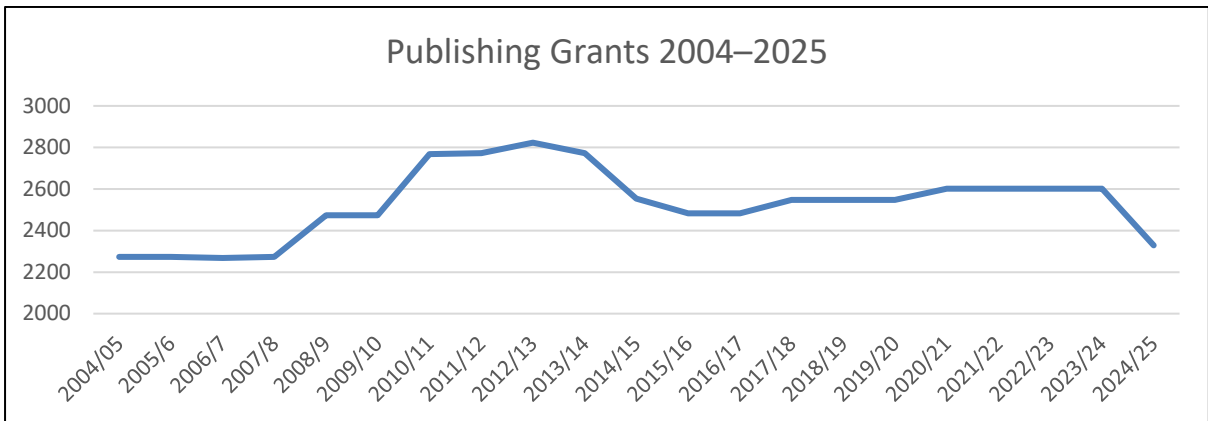
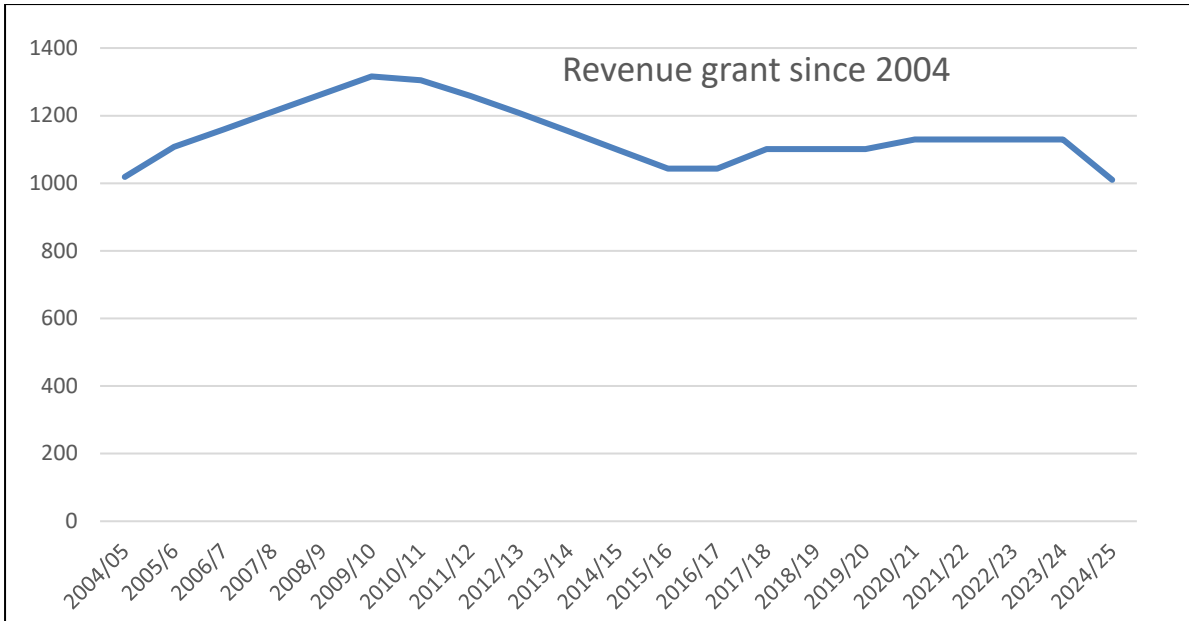
Wales already has the smallest spending on arts and culture when compared to other European countries of a similar size. All countries recognise the power of telling their own stories, in their own languages, and I hope you agree with me that we need more rather than less content which engages our citizens in a meaningful way.

I have outlined how our work reaches across different Government department responsibilities and how our infrastructure supports the implementation of key Welsh Government policies; also what the impact of the proposed 10.5% cuts will be in the relative context of the size of our grant funding, especially with regard to the publishing grants. I urge you, therefore, to support a reduction to the proposed cuts as this will help the sector and us to continue providing a valuable service to our nation.

With sincere thanks for your consideration,



HELGARD KRAUSE
Chief Executive



Dear Minister,

We write to you to express our alarm that the publishing industry in Wales is facing a proposed cut of 10.5%. This comes after a decade in which there has been a 37% cut in real terms.

This cut is a dire threat to publishing in Wales. The pressure on publishers is already unsustainable, with staff burning out under the pressure of working with minimal levels of funding and staffing.

We urge you to afford the Welsh publishing sector the same protection as other Welsh-language organisations such as the Urdd, Welsh for Adults Centres and the Mentrau Iaith. The materials produced by the publishers are essential to the work of each of these, given the integral part that literature plays in all cultural activity in Wales.

No cerdd dant music festivals or recitation groups could be held without poetry, it would not be possible to learn Welsh without novels, and intelligent conversations about Welsh politics, history and society could not happen without books. A threat to the publishing industry is a threat to all of this.

In the context of Welsh legislation such a cut goes against the objective of reaching a Million Welsh speakers, as well as the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. Books are an integral part of our cultural landscape; the side effect of such a long-term cut is a barren landscape, hindering Wales' creative, political, cultural and social potential.

We call on you to reconsider these cuts. The Welsh publishing industry is in a vulnerable position after years of cuts in real terms. The state has a duty to protect an industry that educates and engenders such social welfare through the production of quality books. The free market could not be expected to support books published in a minority language.

With thanks

Cwlwm Cyhoeddwr Cymru on behalf of publishers of Welsh-language books and reading materials

Ein cyf/Our ref DB-PO-0041-24

Delyth Jewell MS
Chair
Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee

8 February 2024

Dear Delyth,

I am writing to you in relation to the support the Welsh Government has provided to the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) in recent years given the committee's interest in, and focus on, these issues.

The Welsh Government has provided the following financial support to the WRU:

January 2021 – Welsh Ministers agreed a package of financial support for sports that suffered a loss of income as a result of the Covid-19 restrictions that required fixtures to be played behind closed doors in 2020-21. The WRU and the four regions received a non-repayable grant of £13.5m for the loss of spectator income for international and Pro-14 matches. The WRU and each of the professional rugby regions received an equal £2.7m share of the grant.

January 2022 – Welsh Ministers agreed a further package of non-repayable grant funding of £3m for sports affected by Covid-19 restrictions that prohibited spectator attendance at sporting events between 26 December 2021 and 21 January 2022. The WRU received a £475,373 share of this funding, which was distributed to professional and semi-professional rugby clubs, which were required to play fixtures behind closed doors during this period.

March 2022 – Following an approach by the WRU, the Welsh Government took an unprecedented, but necessary measure in agreeing a £18m loan to enable the WRU to refinance its existing three-year UK Government Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CLBILS) loan. At that time, the WRU was unable to satisfy the terms of the CLBILS loan. It was made clear to Welsh Ministers that without urgent assistance in the form of a refinanced loan, the organisation – and the four regions – faced existential financial risks.

The Welsh Government loan was provided directly to the WRU with agreed conditions that mirrored the CLBILS terms, but with a significantly extended repayment term of 18 years. This agreement provided a more affordable repayment schedule for the WRU while giving the organisation headroom to recover.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

The general terms of conditions for the loan were developed in discussion with the Development Bank of Wales and take into consideration the level of risk in relation to the loan and subsidy control.

June 2023 – The WRU approached the Welsh Government to renegotiate the loan following fundamental changes to its business plan. This resulted in a change to some of the terms and conditions, including the repayment date to align with the WRU’s corporate refinancing date with their main lender. These changes were agreed by both parties to assist the WRU during an extremely challenging period for the four regions and to support the long-term sustainability of the professional game.

The Welsh Government’s loan to the WRU is not a Covid loan, but a commercial loan. The Welsh Government did not create a Covid loan scheme for sports organisations during the pandemic but Welsh Ministers did provide a non-repayable grant scheme – rugby received more than £14m in grants under that scheme. Each of Wales’ four professional rugby regions received a total of around £7m to £8m via a combination of Welsh Government--funded grants and loans. During this period the UK Government (through DCMS) provided the equivalent level of rugby in England with loans through their Winter Support Package for sport.

This significant support – including unprecedented action to extend the term of the repayment of the loan – demonstrates our support for the WRU and Welsh rugby.

The Welsh Government values the cultural and sporting importance of rugby in Wales. We will continue to engage with the WRU to ensure the game has a positive and sustainable future at all levels.

The Welsh budget is facing the most severe and stark settlement from the UK government in the devolution era. Our budget is worth £1.3bn less than was the case at the start of the comprehensive spending review period. This has placed enormous pressure across all areas of government and significantly reduced the scope for devolved budgets to deliver the additional support many businesses need. The steps we have taken to support professional rugby go beyond what has been available to English rugby but the scale of the financial stress currently facing the Welsh budget as a whole does limit the options for intervention available to Welsh Ministers.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dawn Bowden', written in a cursive style.

Dawn Bowden AS/MS

Dirprwy Weinidog y Celfyddydau, Chwaraeon a Thwristiaeth
Deputy Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism

Mark Drakeford MS
First Minister
Welsh Government

09 February 2024

The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

Dear Mark,

At our meeting on 24 January 2024, we considered the first of our International Relations quarterly monitoring reports, and discussed the UK Government's plans to ratify the UNESCO Convention for Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

To assist our further consideration of this matter, the Committee would be grateful to receive the following information:

1. The Welsh Government's view on:
 - a) the UK's ratification of the Convention;
 - b) the value and benefits of UK membership to Wales; and
 - c) intangible cultural heritage it would like to see included in the inventory, and why.
2. What plans are in place for the Welsh Government to collate its own inventory.
3. Whether the Welsh Government has suggested intangible cultural heritage for inclusion, and the rationale for their inclusion.

4. Whether the Welsh Government supports the inclusion of the examples listed in the [UK Government press release](#), such as the Nos Galan road races, 3am carol singing, Mari Lwyd, St David's Day, the Royal Welsh Show, St Dwynwen's Day and Eisteddfodau.
5. Whether existing inventories could be used, such as the one maintained by Museums Galleries Scotland.
6. How the Welsh Government has worked with the UK Government to prepare for ratification and the frequency of this joint working.
7. The Welsh Government's involvement to date on the UK's international obligations in this area, including international cultural agreements such as this Convention.
8. How the Welsh Government has contributed to the design of the public survey that forms part of the UK Government's consultation.
9. Whether additional resources will be required to collate and maintain a Welsh inventory, and what these are.
10. What arrangements are in place to ensure monitoring and compliance of the Convention's obligations.
11. How the Welsh Government will ensure that the provenance of intangible cultural heritage is unique to Wales as much of our cultural heritage and traditions have shared roots with Celtic peoples from across Europe.

Finally, and in the context of this discussion, we would be grateful to understand what the Welsh Government's view is relating to calls for St. David's Day to be designated a national public holiday.

I would be grateful for your response by 08 March 2024. I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee for information.

Yours sincerely,



Delyth Jewell MS
Committee Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

Rt Hon Lucy Frazer KC MP
Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport
UK Government

09 February 2024

The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

Dear Lucy,

At our meeting on 24 January 2024, the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee discussed the UK Government's plans to ratify the UNESCO Convention for Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

To support our further consideration of this matter, the Committee would be grateful to receive the following information:

1. What benefits can be expected from inclusion on the national inventory, such as access to funding or initiatives to support intangible heritage?
2. When it comes to the approval panels that will be allocated to each nation, how will the panel for Wales be established, and with which government will responsibility lie? For example, will the Welsh Government be determining the membership for the panel in Wales?
3. How does the UK Government envision a 'compatible inventory' operating, and how will the UK and Welsh governments work together to maintain the Convention's arrangements?
4. How will the UK Government work with the devolved governments to ensure the inventory is maintained?

I look forward to hearing from you in due course. I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Senedd's Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee for information.

Yours sincerely,



Delyth Jewell MS
Committee Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



Richard Collier-Keywood

Chair

Abi Tierney

Chief Executive

Nigel Walker

Executive Director of Rugby

Welsh Rugby Union

09 February 2024

Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union - Independent Review Report progress update

Dear Richard, Abi, and Nigel,

Thank you for attending an evidence session with the Committee on 24 January 2024, where you provided us with an update about the WRU's response to the findings of the recent Independent Review into allegations of sexism, misogyny, homophobia and racism in the organisation.

The report made clear that a significant amount of work is required in order to rebuild trust in the WRU, and to address serious shortcomings in the organisation's culture, governance, and leadership. The Committee welcomes the progress that has been made to date, to address the report's recommendations. We particularly commend the appointment of an external oversight group to ensure that this progress continues at pace, as well as your undertaking to publish regular "progress reports". We trust that these will provide assurances of the senior leadership team's commitment to ensuring the future success of the WRU.

We note from your first quarterly "update report" that a number of actions arising from the Independent Review are due to be in place by 30 June 2024. To keep us informed of your progress, we would like to take evidence from you again in the early Autumn of 2024, following that milestone.

We look forward to receiving further updates in due course.

Yours sincerely,



Delyth Jewell MS
Committee Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



From:
Sent: Tuesday, February 20, 2024 5:40 PM
To:
Subject: ITV Wales news item

Good evening

Bringing to your attention and sharing with you a written statement which has been given to ITV Wales in advance of a news item to be aired this evening, Tuesday 20 February, from 6pm.

Our CEO Abi Tierney has also given an interview to ITV Wales which expands on some of the sentiment found below.

We have been informed that the interview and associated news item will feature alongside a contribution from a former Group employee, who has asked to remain anonymous.

Specifically, this individual describes negative experiences whilst working for the Group in 2019 and 2021.

It should be noted that we have taken care to respect this individual's desire to remain anonymous in the words provided below, which should explain the lack of any direct reference to an incident or incidents.

Finally, we feel it is important to let you know that Abi has repeated calls today to WRU staff and anyone who has been affected by what is described or any other related incident to please get in touch with her directly, contact their line manager or use the anonymous hotline found via the SeeHearSpeakUp website or at 0800 056 2539, to seek support.

Comment:

'Firstly, it is vitally important for me, on behalf of everyone at the Welsh Rugby Union, to formally apologise directly to the individual involved. The behaviour described is totally unacceptable and was not ever, and will not ever, be tolerated.

'Our culture did not prevent such an incident from happening and, whilst we know our People team worked hard to offer support and care over an extended period of time, some of our HR policies for addressing such incidences were not right. We have said already that we regret the use of non-disclosure settlements or similar arrangements where employment ended.

'More widely, I would like to reiterate the full apology both myself and others have previously offered to anyone who has been affected by issues and challenges highlighted by our recent Independent Review.

'Although the person has wished to remain anonymous, from the description of the circumstances, it is our understanding that this is one of the cases examined by the Review and in this way has already fed the recommendations for change that we are committed to deliver. The Review gives us a roadmap to continuous improvement and our current progress against the recommendations can be found here: <https://community.wru.wales/cy/the-wru/reports/>'

'The Review was conducted independently to the WRU. However, we know that the Review Team made many direct approaches and had an open call for people to speak to them and we co-operated with and encouraged this. Specifically, we made it clear that we would be happy for anyone to speak freely with the Review Team, including those who had left employment and were the subject of confidentiality arrangements. People who spoke to the Review team did so on a confidential basis. We therefore cannot confirm and do not know whether this person decided to speak to the Review or not.

'We continue to encourage people to access our whistleblowing line if they are uncomfortable speaking to their line management about any issues. As we have already said, we understood that historical cases may come forward during and after the Review period. We continue to welcome dialogue with anyone involved or affected by any of the issues raised, so that we can apologise to them and continue to learn and improve.'

WRU Group CEO Abi Tierney.

Dyweddodd Prif Weithredwr Undeb Rygbi Cymru Abi Tierney:

'Yn gyntaf, mae'n hynod o bwysig i mi, fy mod ar ran pawb yn Undeb Rygbi Cymru, yn ymddiheuro'n ffurfiol i'r unigolyn o dan sylw. Mae'r ymddygiad â ddisgrifiwyd yn hollol anerbyniol ac ni fydd fyth yn cael ei oddef.

'Mae'n amlwg na lwyddodd ein diwylliant o fewn y gweithle ar y pryd i atal y digwyddiad. Ry'n ni'n gwybod y gweithiodd ein tîm Adnoddau Dynol (Pobl) yn galed dros gyfnod maith o amser, i gynnig cefnogaeth a gofal. Ry'n ni hefyd wedi dysgu y gellid fod wedi gwneud rhai pethau'n well yn ystod y broses. Ry'n ni eisoes wedi dweud ei bod yn edifar gennym bod cytundebau atal datgelu a threfniadau tebyg wedi eu defnyddio pan ddaeth y cyfnod cyflogaeth i ben.

'Yn ehangach, hoffwn bwysleisio unwaith eto ein bod yn ymddiheuro'n llawn i unigolion sydd wedi cael eu heffeithio gan ddigwyddiadau a heriau sydd wedi eu nodi yn yr Adolygiad Annibynnol diweddar.

'Er bod y person ar yr achlysur hwn, wedi penderfynu aros yn ddi-enw – mae'r disgrifiadau a'r amgylchiadau yn ein harwain i gredu bod yr achos penodol hwn, eisoes wedi cael ei archwilio gan y Panel Adolygu. Mae'r Panel hwnnw wedi cynnig argymhellion penodol i ni ac ry'n ni fel Undeb wedi ymrwymo i gyflwyno'r newidiadau hynny. Mae'r broses hon yn cynnig arweiniad clir i ni am sut y gallwn ni barhau i wella ein darpariaeth a gellir gweld statws ein ymrwymadau a'r hyn sydd eisoes wedi ei weithredu yma: <https://community.wru.wales/cy/the-wru/reports/>'

Er mai adolygiad annibynnol oedd hwn, ry'n ni'n gwybod i aelodau o'r Tîm Adolygu gysylltu'n uniongyrchol gydag unigolion gan wahodd pobl i rannu eu profiadau. Mae Undeb Rygbi Cymru wedi annog hyn hefyd ac wedi cydweithio'n llwyr gyda'r broses. Rydym yn benodol – wedi datgan ein bodlonrwydd i unrhyw unigolyn siarad yn agored gyda'r Tîm Adolygu – gan gynnwys cyn-aelodau staff oedd wedi arwyddo cytundebau atal datgelu. 'Roedd yr holl sgysiau hyn yn gyfrinachol ac felly ni allwn gadarnhau – gan nad ydym yn gwybod hynny – os y gwnaeth yr unigolyn o dan sylw yng nghyd-destun yr honiad penodol hwn – siarad gyda'r Adolygiad neu beidio.

'Ry'n ni'n parhau i annog unigolion i ddefnyddio ein llinell ffôn gyfrinachol 'Chwythu'r Chwiban' os nad ydynt yn gyfforddus yn trafod unrhyw fater gyda'u rheolwr llinell. 'Roedd yr Undeb yn deall y byddai'n bosib i achosion hanesyddol gael eu cyflwyno yn ystod ac wedi cyfnod yr Adolygiad. Mae

Undeb Rygbi Cymru yn parhau i groesawu trafodaeth gydag unrhyw unigolyn sydd wedi cael ei effeithio gan unrhyw fater sydd wedi cael ei godi – fel y gallwn ymddiheuro iddynt a pharhau i ddysgu a gwella'n darpariaeth yn y dyfodol.”

Diwedd

Ends

Mark Drakeford MS
First Minister of Wales
Vaughan Gething MS
Minister for Economy
Welsh Government

09 February 2024

Year of Wales and India

Dear Mark and Vaughan,

At our meeting on 24 January 2024, we considered the Welsh Government's plans for a year-long celebration of Wales in India during 2024.

The Committee welcomes the Wales in India campaign and would like to know more about this area of the Welsh Government's International Relations work - especially in the light of the challenging financial climate in which the Draft Budget 2024-25 has been set, and the potential effects on what can be delivered. We would be grateful for your responses to the following questions:

1. Could you provide the Committee with more information about the Welsh Government's plans for the year of Wales in India 2024, including planned activities and timescales?
2. What lessons from previous 'Wales In' years are being taken on board for Wales in India 2024?
3. During 2024-25 Draft Budget scrutiny, the Minister for Economy and Minister for Rural Affairs told the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs (ETRA) Committee that the Welsh Government's trade programme will be reduced due to budgetary pressures. We understand that this would mean taking part in fewer trade missions overseas, and potentially increasing virtual activity. How has the Welsh Government reconciled this with the First Minister's statement that the focus of Wales in India will be on 'developing trade and investment links, soft power and NHS health links'?

4. Could you confirm the draft budget allocation for Wales in India 2024 and whether this has been reduced?
5. What impact, if any, has the revised approach set out by the Ministers to ETRA Committee had on planning for Wales in India?
6. In light of reductions to relevant budgets, how will the Welsh Government balance Wales in India activities with other international activities, including with its priority relationships, as listed in the International Strategy?
7. Could you confirm whether there are current plans for Ministerial overseas visits to India?

I would be grateful to receive a response by 08 March 2024.

Yours sincerely,



Delyth Jewell MS
Committee Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

Huw Irranca-Davies MS
Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee
huw.Irranca-Davies@senedd.wales

12 February 2024

Dear Huw,

I am writing in response to your letter regarding the Data Protection and Digital Information Bill (the Bill) dated 31 January.

Your letter refers to discussions held by the Legislation, Justice & Constitution Committee with regards to clause 114 of the Bill (Direct marketing for the purposes of democratic engagement) and asks my views and further details on a number of matters.

In relation to your question about the Welsh Government's assessment of clause 114's engagement with Standing Order 29. Clauses 108 to 119 of the Bill make amendments to, and in relation to, the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003 (the PEC Regulations). These PEC Regulations concern the protection of data subjects' privacy in relation to electronic communications. Therefore, to the extent that the PEC Regulations apply to the processing of personal data, clause 114 relates to the reserved matter of protection of personal data (paragraph 170 of Schedule 7A to the Government of Wales Act 2006). Therefore, Standing Order 29 is not engaged.

Welsh Government was not consulted by UK Government Ministers in the preparation of this clause, and neither its substance nor policy intent has been raised with us. We note the comments made in the Commons debate on this provision.

My officials have spoken to their UK Government counterparts who have advised that there are currently no plans to prepare regulations using this new power for devolved elections. Should this position change I will inform the Committee.

I trust that this letter provides the Committee with the information they require.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Gohebiaeth.Mark.Drakeford@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Mark.Drakeford@gov.wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

I am copying this letter to the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee, and to the Local Government and Housing Committee.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Drakeford". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

MARK DRAKEFORD

Rt Hon Michelle Donelan MP
Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and
Technology
HM Government

19 February 2024

National Underground Asset Register

Dear Michelle,

I am writing to you following the Committee's consideration of a [Supplementary Legislative Consent Memorandum](#) related to the Data Protection and Digital Information (No.2) Bill ("the Bill"). During the reporting stage of legislative proceedings in the House of Commons, you introduced amendments to the Bill relating to establishing a National Underground Asset Register.

As you will be aware, there are hundreds of owners of underground assets across the country, ranging from local government to utility companies. All these owners will have their processes for holding such data. Whilst we do not have a specific position on the establishment of such a register, we do have concerns that the amended Bill transfers powers to the Secretary of State, through regulation-making powers, to make decisions on a National Underground Asset Register as it relates to Wales.

The Welsh Government has expressed "constitutional policy concerns" around regulation-making powers under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 being transferred from Welsh Ministers back to the Secretary of State (as set out in paragraph 22 of the [Supplementary Legislative Consent Memorandum No.3](#)). We are not sure, however, about its view or involvement on this policy matter more generally.

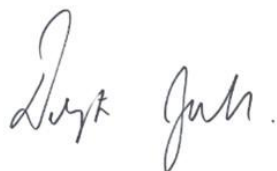
We would like to know what discussions you, or your officials, have had with the Welsh Government regarding the establishment of a National Underground Asset Register. We would like particularly to know what considerations are being given to devolved competencies and how they will be managed.

We would also welcome an outline from you about the Welsh Government's involvement in developing the policy for such a register.

As it stands, the lack of detail and transparency in the Welsh Government's Supplementary Legislative Consent Memorandum about the amendments to the Bill (identified as requiring the legislative consent of the Senedd) has hindered our ability to assess the policy implications of these changes. We would therefore welcome clarity about your discussions with the Welsh Government to assist our considerations.

As the Bill is proceeding through the House of Lords, we would be grateful to receive an urgent response to this matter. I am copying this letter to the Chairs of the Senedd's Climate Change and Environment Committee and Legislative, Justice and Constitution Committee for their information.

Yours sincerely,



Delyth Jewell MS
Committee Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

Dafydd Rhys
Chief Executive Officer
Arts Council of Wales

19 February 2024

Investment Review transition support

Dear Dafydd,

I am writing to you following our consideration of correspondence on 8 February 2024 from the Deputy Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism regarding the future of National Theatre Wales. In that letter, the Deputy Minister said:

"...there is Transition Support available to current Arts Portfolio Wales organisations, including National Theatre Wales, who were unsuccessful in their application this Investment Review. This support includes both financial support and the offer of additional and specific advice and expertise to help the organisations adjust to no longer receiving their core annual funding."

We would be grateful if you could confirm:

1. How much funding the Arts Council has allocated for transition funding
2. How many applications have been made for transition funding
3. What "additional and specific advice and expertise" comprises of
4. How many applications have been made for such advice
5. When determinations will be made on applications for transition funding
6. When successful applicants will receive transition funding?

We look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Delyth Jewell'.

Delyth Jewell MS
Committee Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



Lorne Campbell
National Theatre Wales

19 February 2024

Outcome of Investment Review

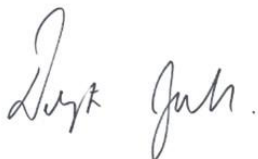
Dear Lorne

Our committee has received correspondence from the Deputy Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism regarding the future of National Theatre Wales, which we discussed in our meeting on 8 February.

Unfortunately, it seems that no options for future support will be forthcoming from the Welsh Government, and so we would encourage you to make use of the transitional support that is being made available through the Arts Council. I appreciate that this is not the news you had hoped for. We have written, as a committee, to the Arts Council to obtain further information about the processes involved in the transitional support that's available.

I can only imagine how unsettling a period this will be for you as an organisation, and that your priority over the coming weeks will be to provide care and support to your staff. I know that you are very concerned for the welfare of individual members of your team, and so I really do hope that support is being made available to you. As a committee, we really do wish you all every success in your future endeavours.

Yours sincerely,



Delyth Jewell MS
Committee Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



Agenda Item 8

By virtue of paragraph(s) ix of Standing Order 17.42

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