

Rt Hon Carwyn Jones AM
First Minister
Welsh Government
Tŷ Hywel
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

24 May 2017

Dear First Minister

Appointment of new BBC Board Member for Wales

Under the new BBC Charter, the governing BBC Board will have a non-executive Nation Member for Wales. The recruitment of the Nation Member for Wales is being managed by the UK Government but the consent of the Welsh Government is needed before an appointment can be made.

As you will be aware, the Welsh Government has recently refused to give its consent to the UK Government's preferred candidate for the position. This has led the Department for Culture, Media and Sport to decide to re-run the recruitment exercise. This does, however, mean that more time is now available to consider whether the appointment should be subject to a pre-appointment hearing before the Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee.

The Committee in its report 'the Big Picture' recommended that the Welsh Government should withhold its consent for any appointment until the Committee has had an opportunity to hold a hearing with the UK Government's nominee for the post. This would be in line with arrangements for the Chair of the new Board, who cannot be appointed unless a pre-appointment hearing has been held and a report published by the House of Commons Select Committee.

The Welsh Government has yet to formally respond to our recommendation. However, the Minister for Lifelong Learning and the Welsh Language, in giving evidence to the Committee on 10 May, indicated that he favoured pre-appointment hearings for this appointment but was not prepared to accept the Committee's recommendation without a more general agreement from the UK Government for all the legislatures of the UK.

My purpose in writing is, therefore, twofold. First, to ask whether you will reconsider the decision not to accept the Committee's recommendation to withhold consent for the appointment of a candidate until a hearing is held? This seems to be a matter that is entirely within the control of the Welsh Government.



While the UK Government may be responsible for the recruitment exercise, confirmation of the appointment is a matter for the Welsh Government. It does not seem unreasonable for the Welsh Government to make clear to the UK Government that it sees a pre-appointment hearing as a necessary part of its consideration of whether a candidate should be approved.

My other purpose in writing is to ask that you write to your counterparts in Scotland and Northern Ireland, and to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, seeking agreement, as suggested by the Minister, that pre-appointment hearings are necessary for all the legislatures of the UK for positions such as this.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bethan Jenkins". The script is cursive and fluid.

Bethan Jenkins AM
Chair

