

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

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 3 – Senedd

Meeting date: 11 December 2024

Meeting time: 09.30

For further information contact:

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Hybrid – Supplement

Please note the documents below are in addition to those published in the main Agenda and Reports pack for this Meeting

3.6 Impact of funding reductions for culture and sport

(Pages 1 – 2)

Attached Documents:

Correspondence from Hefin David MS: Expressing concerns on behalf of a Welsh language publisher based in Hefin David MS's constituency about the financial support for the publishing sector in Wales – 6 December 2024

6 Impact of funding reductions for culture and sport: Consideration of draft report

(10.40 – 11.40)

(Pages 3 – 76)

Attached Documents:

Draft report



Agenda Item 3.6

Good afternoon,

Please find below a copy of correspondence sent to the Welsh Government by myself, following a meeting with Gwasg Rily Publications, who are based in my constituency, on 21st November 2024.

I would be grateful if the Committee could formally consider this correspondence as a Paper to Note.

Yours sincerely,

Hefin

Hefin David MS

Member of the Senedd, Caerphilly

Dear Cabinet Secretaries, Dear Minister

OUR REF: AS/MDLNJS/251124

I am writing to you after recently meeting with Gwasg Rily Publications (www.rily.co.uk), a Welsh language publisher based in my constituency.

Rily are one of the largest publishers of Welsh language books for children, but, like other publishers in Wales, they have suffered a great deal from the previous UK Government's austerity which has significantly impacted the Welsh Government's and the Welsh Books Council's ability to support them. The industry's support has been reduced by almost half in real terms since 2010 and publishers like Rily are now struggling more than ever before. This has been worsened by cuts to the budgets of schools and local authority library services, who were once their major customers.

They have already responded by embracing extra sales channels such as Amazon and direct sales; and have increased their marketing to reach a wider audience. They have also diversified into more original English titles and have taken advantage of Creative Wales support to attend Frankfurt Book Fair to develop international opportunities; but while there is increased general interest and also potential

international sales, these things take time, and the immediate environment is still challenging.

Rily are based in Caerphilly, after having started in Ystrad Mynach, and are a small family-run, independent business that now employs people across Wales, many in small rural communities. They are very worried about the potential impact any further cuts would have, with some publishers already having ceased publishing. They are therefore asking that any further cuts are halted in the forthcoming Welsh Government budget, with the focus switching instead to sustainable investment in what is one of the foundational sectors of the Welsh economy.

I firmly believe that Gwasg Rily Publications has a great deal of potential in helping the Welsh Government to deliver on its aims in the Curriculum for Wales and Cymraeg 2050, and they are keen to establish how they can do this more effectively. If Welsh Government officials are willing and able to meet with the company to discuss, then please let me know and my office will help to facilitate.

Yours sincerely

Hefin

Hefin David MS

Member of the Senedd, Caerphilly

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