

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

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Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 1&2, Tŷ Hywel

Meeting date: 14 March 2023

Meeting time: 09.30 – 11.00

For further information contact:

Lleu Williams

Committee Clerk

0300 200 6565

[SeneddCulture@senedd.wales](mailto:SeneddCulture@senedd.wales)

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## Pre-meeting registration

(09.15 – 09.30)

### 1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

(09.30)

### 2 Pre-appointment scrutiny hearing with the preferred candidate for the post of Chair of the Arts Council of Wales

(09.30 – 10.15)

(Pages 1 – 35)

#### Attached Documents:

- Research Brief: Pre-appointment scrutiny hearing with the preferred candidate for the post of Chair of the Arts Council of Wales
- Pre-appointment hearing questionnaire
- Preferred candidate CV
- Preferred candidate personal statement
- Information pack for applicants
- Welsh Government Briefing
- Diversity data of candidates



### **3 Papers to note**

(10.15)

#### **3.1 Scrutiny of the Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2023–24**

(Pages 36 – 47)

##### **Attached Documents:**

- Letter from the Welsh Government on its response to the Committee report: Scrutiny of the Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2023–24 – 6 March 2023
- Welsh Government response to the Committee's recommendations of its report: Scrutiny of the Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2023–24
- Letter from the Finance Committee: Evidence provided by the Welsh Government – 8 March 2023
- Letter to National Museum Wales regarding scrutiny of the Welsh Government Draft Budget 2023–24 – 14 February 2023
- Letter from National Museum Wales regarding scrutiny of the Welsh Government Draft Budget 2023–24 – 22 February 2023

#### **3.2 Legislative Consent: Online Safety Bill**

(Pages 48 – 50)

##### **Attached Documents:**

- Letter from the Minister for Economy regarding the Committee's Report on the supplementary Legislative Consent Memoranda on the Online Safety Bill (No.3 and No.4) – 20 February 2023
- Online Safety Bill technical briefing session on 8 February 2023: follow up information – 1 March 2023

### **3.3 Scrutiny of the financial implications of Bills**

(Pages 51 – 52)

#### **Attached Documents:**

- Letter from the First Minister to the Finance Committee regarding scrutiny of the financial implications of Bills – 15 February 2023

### **3.4 Welsh Government international relations**

(Pages 53 – 60)

#### **Attached Documents:**

- Letter to First Minister regarding Welsh Government international relations – 17 February 2023
- Response from the First Minister regarding Welsh Government international relations – 7 March 2023
- Welsh Government international visits – February 2023

### **3.5 Inquiry into the impact of increasing costs**

(Pages 61 – 74)

#### **Attached Documents:**

- Letter from Community Leisure UK Wales and the Wales Sports Association (WSA) regarding the Committee's inquiry into the impact of Increasing costs – 23 February 2023
  - Annex 1: Cost-of-living report: Public Leisure in Crisis – November 2022
  - Annex 2: Letter from Community Leisure UK – 2 February 2023
  - Annex 3: Letter from the Welsh Sports Association (WSA) – 1 February 2023

### **3.6 Future of St David's Hall**

(Pages 75 – 76)

#### **Attached Documents:**

- Letter to the Petitions Committee from the Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport, and Chief Whip regarding petition P-06-1323 – 7 February 2023

### **3.7 Local Authority Library and Leisure Services**

(Pages 77 – 78)

#### **Attached Documents:**

- Letter from the Local Government and Housing Committee: Inquiry into local authority leisure and library services – 9 March 2023

## **4 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the remainder of this meeting**

(10.15)

## **5 Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: Consideration of the draft report on the Committee's initial findings**

(10.15 – 11.00)

(Pages 79 – 118)

#### **Attached Documents:**

- Draft report on the Committee's initial findings on the allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union
- Committee Correspondence

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Maggie Russell

**Tell us a little bit about yourself and your background (for committee session)**

I am a working class girl from Llanrumney, Cardiff.

I was brought up as part of a vibrant, wider family on my father's side from the Rassau in Ebbw Vale, and my mother's in North Yorkshire.

My family had no formal connection with the arts, and in today's language we would say they were from a lower socio-economic background.

In my teenage years, I came across Llanover Hall Youth Arts centre and Chapter and the experiences I had as a result, changed the story of my life.

I graduated from Warwick University in 1984 with a degree in Theatre Studies and more recently (2012) completed a Post Graduate Professional training as a Psychotherapist.

I am married with grown up children and step children.

I am dyslexic, and view it as an additional benefit, alongside recognising the specific adjustments it requires.

I live in a bilingual household and have worked on Welsh language projects however, I am not a Welsh speaker.

**Q.1: What is your motivation for applying to be Chair of Arts Council of Wales ?**

I am motivated by a lived experience that the arts can make a difference in people's lives and a professional observation of how powerful that difference can be culturally, socially and economically.

I am committed to widening access, nurturing talent and reflecting the culture and arts of Wales to all its people and beyond its borders.

One of the things that has attracted me to apply for this role is the policy work undertaken in these areas that can create a congruent framework for change including The Government's LGBTQ+ and Anti-racist Wales, Action Plans; and the ACW, Widening Engagement Action plan 2022-25.

I am at a moment in my life where I can harness my professional and personal experience, be fully available to engage in this role and, I hope to make a useful contribution in this role to the Arts and Culture in Wales.

## **Question 2: Why do you think you are well-suited for the role ?**

I have over 35 years experience at all levels of the arts, cultural heritage and creative industries in a Welsh, UK, and international context as reflected in my full CV which I understand has been made available to the committee.

In brief, I began my professional career in the era of multiculturalism arts policy in Coventry in 1985, working at the grass routes of community engagement. I returned to Wales in 1987 where I worked for a number of companies, in various roles - Administrator, and marketing The Magdalena Project, JessicaCohen Dance, & the Made in Wales Stage Company. Arts consultant for The Sherman Theatre, Valleys Live; promoter & producer Flying Music (London), Chapter & Brith Gof (Goddoddin, Pax)

I was the founder director of The Point, a mixed economy venue, in what was then Cardiff Docks as it emerged into Cardiff Bay.

I have also worked as a senior leader in a corporate media organisation at BBC Wales, in various roles including Head of Talent; Chair of The Training Committee, Head of On Screen Diversity, and member of the senior management team. I was departmental manager for the Drama dept., which in addition to individual projects for BBC Network delivered radio drama for BBC Wales and Radio 4 and produced Pobol y Cwm for S4C. I also worked as an executive producer & producer on a wide variety of award winning productions including Food for Ravens, Belonging, Score, High Hopes, The Magicians House, Dirty Work, Tales from the Pleasure Beach, Define Normal, Care, Border cafe, Jack of Hearts & The Passion and more recently Keeping Faith.

This experience has equipped me with the necessary skills to operate as a senior leader in a complex, multi-disciplinary organisation, and given me the ability to operate in an environment of change and accountability which meets the requirements of the role of Chair of ACW.

## **Question 3: What are the 3 main outcomes that you want to achieve during your tenure ?**

As Chair of ACW I will work to be ambitious, widen engagement, and put policy into action.

1. To deliver what has been set out in the documents and policies related to ACW and specifically the investment review and the process for that review.

2. To enable the broader policy work, informed by the Future Generations Act and the Welsh Government cultural contract; and the specific 6 key principles of the investment review, creativity, widening engagement, Welsh language, climate justice, nurturing talent and transformation to act as a catalyst, that empowers the arts sector to deliver an ambitious refreshed creative offer that reflects the ACW's priorities.

3. To support the ambition, energy and creativity of the sector so that we make, work and sustain a resilient arts ecology open to all and representative of all. One that surprises, engages & inspires us all.

**Question 4: How will your work with individuals and organisations that support and promote the work of the Arts Council ?**

My personal leadership style is to be actively curious, supportive, open and collaborative. Working in partnership, seeking clarity and respectful consensus are essential components at all levels of working creatively.

I will support the ACW to work collaboratively with the sector, wider partners and Government departments and policy agendas where the ACW experience and expertise may have something to offer, e.g. Health, Education, Creative Wales, and Cymraeg 2050.

However, I recognise not all conversations will be easy and ACW should not retreat from difficult conversations, it should seek to engage with creative tension, but always in a way that is open, respectful, and professional.

Throughout my career I have represented the case for the arts in professional and public forums, the press and media.

I am fully aware of the necessity of maintaining appropriate professional boundaries.

**Question 5: How will you ensure that you maintain your independence from The Welsh Government, whilst also influencing and holding the government to account on areas of priority for arts and culture. ?**

As a Royal Charter body and a charitable organisation, the ACW independence is fundamental and it is required to operate in accordance with a range of legally defined processes and responsibilities.

ACW also needs to deliver the agreed responsibilities as a Welsh Government sponsored body and develop policies and mechanisms to enable it to do this, ensuring



that all appropriate governance issues are attended to e.g. the spending of public funds, accountability, etc.

The ACW charter specifies that it is to “advise and co-operate” with government and “to develop and improve the knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts;” and with both these statements in mind I recognise the ACW responsibility to seek opportunities to use its expertise, and research to contribute to, and where appropriate influence the wider agenda.

The overriding principle of how I would maintain independence whilst holding the government to account would be framed by the 7 Nolan principles of public life and recognising the separation between the function of the ACW chair and council and the ACW executive and staff.

And as stated in answer to question 4. I recognise not all conversations will be easy and ACW should not retreat from difficult conversations, it should seek to engage with creative tension, but always in a way that is open, respectful, and professional.

**Question 6: How would you work with Senedd Members, Senedd Committees, and other stakeholders**

My approach would be to be open to and foster ongoing, appropriate communication at all levels, with members, committees and stakeholders. I recognise the responsibility of the ACW chair is to listen, and learn as well as to lead, and that feedback is an important part of that process.

I am aware that there are different levels of accountability for the delivery of the work of the ACW to the government through the minister and the scrutiny of that work by the Senedd led by the culture committee.

I am also aware that part of my ongoing education will be to deepen my understanding of the interconnected relationship of all stakeholders, and my knowledge of the processes of Senedd members, and committees - I have no hesitation in seeking advice or asking questions.



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

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**Information pack for applicants**

**Arts Council of Wales**

**Appointment of Chair**

Closing date: 03 January  
at 16:00



**The Commissioner for  
Public Appointments**

# **Arts Council of Wales**

## **Contents**

### **Submitting an Application**

#### **Annex A: Appointment of Members to the Arts Council of Wales**

#### **Annex B: The role and responsibilities of the Arts Council of Wales**

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## Arts Council of Wales

### Submitting an application

Thank you for your interest in the appointment of Chair at the Arts Council of Wales. As Chair, you can influence the strategic direction and development of the provision of arts experiences for the people of Wales. You will contribute to the development and the delivery of Welsh Government and Arts Council of Wales policies and priorities for the arts in Wales, the UK and internationally. The attached Annexes provide details on the role of members and the person specification, the role and responsibilities of the Arts Council of Wales and the selection process.

To apply please visit the Welsh Government public appointment website here <https://cymru-wales.tal.net/vx/lang-en-GB/mobile-0/appcentre-3/brand-2/candidate/jobboard/vacancy/7/adv/>.

To apply for this role, click on the Arts Council of Wales Chair vacancy and click on 'Apply' at the bottom left-hand corner. The first time you apply for a post, you will need to complete a registration form for the Welsh Government's online application system. You will only need to register once, and you will be able to keep yourself updated on the progress of your application, and any other applications you make, via your registered account.

Once you have registered, you will be able to access the application form. To apply you will need to upload a personal statement and your CV to the 'Reasons for applying' section of the online application form. The personal statement and CV should both be a maximum of two pages of A4 (four pages total).

### Personal Statement

The personal statement is your opportunity to:

- 1) outline your interest in the role,
- 2) demonstrate how you meet the criteria set out in the person specification, and
- 3) outline how you could contribute to the work of the Arts Council of Wales.

How you choose to present the information is up to you. However, you should aim to provide detailed examples that demonstrate how your knowledge and experience matches each of the criteria, and which describe what your role was in achieving a specific result. It will also benefit the selection panel if you can be clear which particular evidence you provide relates to which criteria. Providing separate paragraphs in relation to each criterion is common practice.

Please limit your personal statement to two pages. Your application may be rejected if you exceed this limit.

### CV

Please ensure your CV includes brief details of your current or most recent post and the dates you occupied this role. Please identify any past or present Ministerial appointments.

### References

## Arts Council of Wales

Please provide two referees who can be contacted later in the process (for successful candidates only).

### Indicative timetable

Closing date:	03 January 2023 16:00
Shortlisting:	17 <sup>th</sup> & 18 <sup>th</sup> January 2023
Interviews:	14 <sup>th</sup> , 15 <sup>th</sup> & 17 <sup>th</sup> February 2023

### Diversity Statement

The Welsh Government and the Arts Council of Wales believe that public bodies should have board members who reflect Welsh society - people from all walks of life - to help them understand people's needs and make better decisions. This is why the Welsh Government is encouraging a wide and diverse range of individuals to apply for appointments to public bodies. Applications are particularly welcome from all under-represented groups including women, people under 30 years of age, black, Asian and minority ethnic people, disabled people, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

### Disability Confident

The Welsh Government accepts the social definition of disability, in which it is recognised that barriers in society act to disable people who have impairments or health conditions or who use British Sign Language. We are committed to removing barriers so that all staff can perform at their best. The Equality Act 2010 uses the medical definition of disability ("a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term impact on a person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities").

**We guarantee to interview anyone who is disabled whose application meets the essential criteria for this post.** By 'minimum criteria' we mean that you must provide us with evidence in your application which demonstrates that you generally meet the level of competence for the role and any qualifications, skills or experience defined as essential.

We are committed to the employment and career development of disabled people. If you would like a guaranteed interview, please contact [publicappointments@gov.wales](mailto:publicappointments@gov.wales).

If you have an impairment or health condition, or use British Sign Language and need to discuss reasonable adjustments for any part of this recruitment process, please contact [publicappointments@gov.wales](mailto:publicappointments@gov.wales) as soon as possible and a member of the team will contact you to discuss your requirements and any questions you may have.



## Arts Council of Wales

### Contacts:

For further information regarding the selection process, please contact:

Public Appointments Team  
Public Bodies Unit  
Email: [publicappointments@gov.wales](mailto:publicappointments@gov.wales)

For further information regarding the role of the Arts Council of Wales and the role of Chair please contact :

Jason Thomas Director Culture Sport and Tourism, The Welsh Government  
E-mail: [Jason.thomas@gov.wales](mailto:Jason.thomas@gov.wales)

If you need any further assistance in applying for this role, please contact the Public Appointments Unit - [publicappointments@gov.wales](mailto:publicappointments@gov.wales).

For further information about Public Appointments in Wales, please visit [www.gov.wales/publicappointments](http://www.gov.wales/publicappointments).

## **Appointment of Chair to the Arts Council of Wales**

### **The role of the Chair**

The Chair is accountable to Welsh Government Minister(s) and may also be held to account by Senedd Cymru / Welsh Parliament. Communications between the Council and the Minister must, in the normal course of business, be conducted through the Chair. The Chair must ensure other Council members are kept informed of all such communications.

The Chair is responsible for ensuring the Council's policies and actions support the Minister's wider strategic policies, and the Body's affairs are conducted with probity. Where appropriate, the Chair must make arrangements to communicate and disseminate these policies and actions throughout the Body.

The Chair has particular leadership responsibilities for:

- formulating the Council's strategies;
- ensuring the Council, in reaching decisions, takes proper account of statutory and financial management requirements and all relevant guidance including guidance provided by the Welsh Ministers;
- -developing strong and effective relationships with the council and wider sector.
- maintaining oversight of overall progress of the Arts Council of Wales' senior leadership team, including the Chief Executive.
- promoting the economic, efficient and effective use of staff and other resources;
- ensuring high standards of regularity, propriety and governance; and
- representing the views of the Council to the public.

The Chair must also:

- ensure all Council members are briefed fully on the terms of their appointment and on their duties, rights and responsibilities;
- lead the council to actively widen access and create an inclusive Arts sector and organisation, in line with the Art's Council of Wales' Widening Engagement Action Plan and the Welsh Government's Anti-racist Wales Action Plan, Action on Disability Framework and the LGBTQ+ Action Plan;
- provide oversight throughout the Investment Review process and transition to the revised model.
- ensure all Council members receive appropriate training, including on the financial management and reporting requirements of charities and public sector bodies and on the differences which might exist between private and public sector practice;
- ensure the Council has a balance of skills appropriate to directing the Body's business;
- in instances where appointments to vacancies on the Council are to be made by the Minister, advise the Minister on the needs of the Body;

## Arts Council of Wales

- assess the performance of individual Council members in accordance with the arrangements agreed with the partnership team and the performance of the Chief Executive.
- ensure an appropriate code of conduct for Council members, including rules and guidance on Council members' interests and conflicts of interest, is in place.

### **Essential Criteria**

In your application, you will be expected to demonstrate the following essential criteria, which will be tested further at interview:

- Experience of operating as a senior leader in a complex, multi-disciplinary organisation, and the ability to operate in an environment of change;
- A strong commitment to developing the role of the arts throughout Wales and extensive knowledge of the arts, culture, heritage and/or creative industries sectors. An appreciation of the cultural, economic and socio-political contexts in which the Arts Council of Wales operates; and its obligations under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015;
- A proven track record of increasing diversity and promoting inclusion and equality. A demonstrable commitment to widening access and participation in the arts throughout Wales;
- Able to evidence a thorough understanding of good governance, accountability and financial responsibility, ideally including public sector finances;
- Experience of sound decision-making and leading the development of strategic, creative and impartial solutions and strategies to achieve long term goals;
- Demonstrable ability to build effective relationships across sectors and act as an ambassador for the arts. Command the confidence of stakeholders at all levels, including Ministers;
- Has a commitment to [Nolan's Seven Principles of Public Life](#).

### **Desirable Criteria:**

- Experience of the arts, culture, heritage or creative industries in a Welsh context.
- Welsh Language (as detailed below) or a commitment to developing these skills within two years

## Arts Council of Wales

- Experience or understanding of commercial and income-generating activities, including fundraising, and the ability to apply this to arts organisations, and/or
- Experience or understanding of applying digital technology for the promotion and sustainability of the arts.

We particularly welcome applications from women, disabled people and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people.

### Welsh Language

The ability to communicate through the medium of Welsh is desirable, as follows.

Understanding: Can understand parts of a basic conversation

Reading: Can read some basic words and phrases with understanding

Speaking: Can hold a basic conversation in Welsh

Writing: Can write basic messages on everyday topics

In addition, all candidates should demonstrate an awareness of the importance of the Welsh language in a bilingual Wales with an appreciation of the Welsh Government's policies and strategies for the language.

### Other:

Location: Meetings are held on-line, at ACW's Offices in Cardiff Bay and at various locations throughout Wales. The Council's response to Covid-19 means that on-line meetings are more likely in the short to medium term.

Time Commitment: 18.5 hours per week, approx.

Tenure of office: Three years.

Remuneration: **£43,810** , the Chair is also are entitled to travel and other reasonable expenses within agreed limits.

### Eligibility

Candidates should also note that membership of the Arts Council of Wales is a disqualifying office for membership of [The Senedd Cymru under The Senedd Cymru Disqualification\) Order 2020.](#)

## **Arts Council of Wales**

### **Conflict of Interests**

You will be asked to declare any private and professional interests which may, or may be perceived to, conflict with the role and responsibilities as a Member of the Arts Council of Wales, including any business interests and positions of authority outside of the role in the Arts Council of Wales. Any conflicts of interest will be explored at interview. If appointed, you will also be required to declare these interests on a register which is available to the public.

### **Due Diligence**

Welsh Government Public Bodies Unit will undertake due diligence checks on all candidates successfully sifted to interview. This will include, but not necessarily be limited to social media and Internet searches. As a result, you may be asked questions at interview in relation to any due diligence findings.

### **Standards in public life**

You will be expected to demonstrate high standards of corporate and personal conduct. All successful candidates will be asked to subscribe to the Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies, you can access this document at:

<http://www.bl.uk/aboutus/governance/blboard/Board%20Code%20of%20Practice%202011.pdf>

## The role and responsibilities of the Arts Council of Wales

### Background

The Arts Council of Wales was established by Royal Charter in 1994. The Arts Council funded largely by grant in aid from the Welsh Government. It is also a registered charity subject to Charity Law and is one of the four Lottery Distributors in Wales.

The Council's aims as set out in its Royal Charter are:

- a) to develop and improve the knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts;
- b) to increase the accessibility of the arts to the public in Wales;
- c) to advise and co-operate with the Welsh Government and relevant bodies;  
and
- d) to carry out the objects through the medium of both the English and Welsh languages.

As part of the terms and conditions of funding, Council Members have individual and corporate responsibility to the Welsh Government.

### About the Arts Council of Wales

As the country's funding and development agency for the arts, the Arts Council:

- **supports and develops high quality arts activity** – it invests public funding, provided by the taxpayer, and allocated by the Welsh Government, helping the arts to thrive in Wales
- **develops and delivers the Welsh Government's strategic priorities for the arts** – it ensures appropriate mechanisms, process and procedures are in place to deliver on the strategic agenda set by the Welsh Government, as set out in the prevailing strategy document (currently the Programme for Government) and the Annual Remit letter
- **distributes Lottery funds** – through applications to its funding programmes it invests in projects that develop new arts activity, supporting individuals and organisations
- **provides advice about the arts** – through its staff and its advisers, the Arts Council has the largest concentration of arts expertise and knowledge in Wales
- **shares information** – the Arts Council is the national centre of a network of information and intelligence about the arts in Wales. It also has strong international links in the UK and beyond
- **raises the profile of the arts in Wales** – the Arts Council is the national voice for the arts in Wales, making sure that people are aware of the quality, value and importance of the country's arts

## Arts Council of Wales

- **generates more money for the arts economy** – through initiatives such as *Collectorplan* – the Council’s scheme to encourage more people to buy art - and its work to secure European funding; these bring more money into the arts economy
- **influences planners and decision-makers** – the arts take place in many different settings. They can have a dramatic impact on the quality of people’s lives, and the places in which they live and work. The arts are also frequently at the heart of initiatives for economic and social regeneration, from transforming learning in schools and for promoting health and wellbeing. The Arts Council plays a key role in ensuring that the contribution that the arts can make is recognised, valued and celebrated.

## The selection process

The interview panel will assess candidates' CVs and personal statements to determine who it believes best meets the criteria for the role, and therefore who will be invited to interview. The panel will rely only on the information you provide in your CV and statement to assess whether you have the skills and experience required. Please ensure that you provide evidence to support how you meet all of the essential criteria.

The selection panel will be chaired by Jason Thomas, Welsh Government, supported by Helgard Krause and a Senior Independent Panel Member

Your application may be "long-listed", subject to the volume of applications received, before it is passed to the shortlisting panel for consideration. You should be aware that in this situation, your application might not be considered in full by all of the panel.

We anticipate that the panel will have decided during December 2022 who will be invited for interview in January 2023.

The panel will select for interview only the strongest applicants who it feels have demonstrated that they best meet the criteria set out in the person specification. However, if you have applied under the guaranteed interview scheme and you meet the minimum essential criteria for the post, then you will also be invited for interview.

If you are invited to interview and if the interview date is not already provided in this information pack, we will aim to provide you with as much notice as we can of the interview date. If you are unable to make the arranged interview date, we will endeavour to re-arrange it but it might not be possible due to time constraints within the appointment timetable or selection panel availability.

You will receive email communication from our application centre to let you know whether you have been invited to be interviewed. It is our intention interviews for the will take place virtually. Should you be invited to interview, you will be provided with guidance and arrangements for conducting your interview online.

If invited to interview, the panel will question you about your skills and experience, asking specific questions to assess whether you meet the criteria set out for the post.

Candidates who the panel believe are 'appointable', will be recommended to Ministers who will make the final decision. The Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport, and Chief Whip may choose to meet with appointable candidates before making a decision. If she does, she will meet all candidates and in the presence of the panel chair or their nominated representative. There will be a time gap between interview and a final decision on appointment decision. Candidates who have been interviewed will be kept informed of progress.



## Arts Council of Wales

If you are successful, you will receive a letter appointing you as a Member of the Arts Council of Wales, which will confirm the terms on which the appointment is offered.

Welsh Ministers and Senedd Cymru have agreed to introduce pre-appointment scrutiny of significant Welsh Government Ministerial appointments by the relevant Senedd Cymru committee in order to further improve the scrutiny and transparency of the public appointment process. As this is deemed a significant public appointment, the final stage of the appointment process will be a pre-appointment hearing, where the Minister's preferred candidate will appear before the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee.

If you are unsuccessful at sift or at interview, you will be notified by Welsh Government. We appreciate it takes a lot of time and effort to apply for roles and that feedback is a valuable part of the process. As a result, the letter will provide the details of who you may approach for feedback on your interview and application, if you so wish.

### Queries

For queries about your application, please contact [publicappointments@gov.wales](mailto:publicappointments@gov.wales).

### If you are not completely satisfied

Welsh Government will aim to process all applications as quickly as possible and to treat all applicants with courtesy. If you have any complaints about the way your application has been handled, please contact the Public Appointments Unit: [publicappointments@gov.wales](mailto:publicappointments@gov.wales).

## Recruitment of Chair– Arts Council Wales

### Vacancy summary:

The Arts Council of Wales was established by Royal Charter in 1994. The Arts Council funded largely by grant in aid from the Welsh Government. It is also a registered charity subject to Charity Law and is one of the four Lottery Distributors in Wales. The Council's aims as set out in its Royal Charter are:

- a) to develop and improve the knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts;
- b) to increase the accessibility of the arts to the public in Wales;
- c) to advise and co-operate with the Welsh Government and relevant bodies; and
- d) to carry out the objects through the medium of both the English and Welsh languages.

The Chair is accountable to Welsh Government Minister(s) and may also be held to account by Senedd Cymru / Welsh Parliament. Communications between the Council and the Minister must, in the normal course of business, be conducted through the Chair. The Chair must ensure other Council members are kept informed of all such communications. The Chair is responsible for ensuring the Council's policies and actions support the Minister's wider strategic policies, and the Body's affairs are conducted with probity. Where appropriate, the Chair must make arrangements to communicate and disseminate these policies and actions throughout the Body.

### Background:

As the country's funding and development agency for the arts, the Arts Council:

- supports and develops high quality arts activity – it invests public funding, provided by the taxpayer, and allocated by the Welsh Government, helping the arts to thrive in Wales
- develops and delivers the Welsh Government's strategic priorities for the arts – it ensures appropriate mechanisms, process and procedures are in place to deliver on the strategic agenda set by the Welsh Government, as set out in the prevailing strategy document (currently the Programme for Government) and the Annual Remit letter
- distributes Lottery funds – through applications to its funding programmes it invests in projects that develop new arts activity, supporting individuals and organisations
- provides advice about the arts – through its staff and its advisers, the Arts Council has the largest concentration of arts expertise and knowledge in Wales
- shares information – the Arts Council is the national centre of a network of information and intelligence about the arts in Wales. It also has strong international links in the UK and beyond

- raises the profile of the arts in Wales – the Arts Council is the national voice for the arts in Wales, making sure that people are aware of the quality, value and importance of the country's arts Arts Council of Wales
- generates more money for the arts economy – through initiatives such as *Collectorplan* – the Council's scheme to encourage more people to buy art - and its work to secure European funding; these bring more money into the arts economy
- influences planners and decision-makers – the arts take place in many different settings. They can have a dramatic impact on the quality of people's lives, and the places in which they live and work. The arts are also frequently at the heart of initiatives for economic and social regeneration, from transforming learning in schools and for promoting health and wellbeing. The Arts Council plays a key role in ensuring that the contribution that the arts can make is recognised, valued and celebrated.

**Publicity summary:**

The Welsh Government circulated details of the appointment through stakeholder lists held by the Public Bodies Unit (PBU); advertised the role in Welsh Government's Anti-Racist Stakeholder Bulletin; shared details of the recruitment with Welsh Government Outreach team to cascade amongst under-represented groups; and posted the vacancy on the Welsh Government public appointments website and the UK Cabinet Office website.

**Publicity summary:**

The vacancy was promoted by through the Arts Council's Social Media channels and website.

The Welsh Government circulated details of the appointment through stakeholder lists held by the Public Bodies Unit (PBU) and posted the vacancy on the Welsh Government public appointments website and the UK Cabinet Office website.

The vacancy was promoted by the following Social Media channels and advertised through the media listed below:

- Safle Swyddi
- Golwg 360
- Diversity Jobsite Network
- Fish4jobs (JobsWales)
- Guardian
- Arts Professional
- Arts Jobs

## **Recruitment process summary:**

Advertised on both Welsh Government and Cabinet Office website between 14 November 2022 and 3 January 2023. The closing date for receipt of applications was extended from 12 December 2022 to 3 January 2023 to generate a greater number of applications. There were no other changes made to the initial recruitment plan.

Sift – 19 January 2023

Stakeholder Session – 9 – 10 February 2023. The stakeholder session members included representatives from the Arts Council, stakeholders, and Welsh Government. The topic for discussion at the session was '*Reaching under-represented groups to widen engagement. With particular focus on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people, LGBTQ+ people, disabled people and people from a lower socio-economic background.*'. Candidates were asked to prepare to share personal thoughts on this topic (maximum 10 minutes), and then facilitate the discussion.

Interviews – 14<sup>th</sup> February 2023

At interview, candidates were asked to provide a 10-minute presentation on the following:

*What is your vision for the Arts Council of Wales following the Investment Review and what would success look like?*

## **Assessment advisory panel membership:**

Jason Thomas - Director of Arts, Culture, Sport and Tourism Welsh Government  
Helgard Krause - Chief Executive, Books Council of Wales  
Aaqil Ahmed – Senior Independent Panel Member

A total of 15 applications for the new role were received. Six candidates were recommended for interview although two withdrew their applications prior to the interviews taking place. The Assessment Advisory Panel considered there to be two appointable candidates.

## **Deputy Minister for Arts, Culture, Sport, Tourism & Chief Whip's preferred candidate – Margaret Russell**

### **Conflict of Interest**

On application, Margaret declared her husband, Dr. Aled Eirug, is chair of Coleg Cymraeg, the Welsh medium higher and further education body and her daughter, Holly Kalo, works as an administrator for the IRIS LGBTQ film festival.

The panel considered this declaration presented no conflict of interest.

**Political Activity (as stated on the application form)**

None

## Diversity data of candidates - Chair – Arts Council of Wales

	Applied	Interviewed
Number of Candidates	15	4
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	10	3
Male	5	1
Other gender		
Gender self-description		
Gender prefer not to say		
<b>Disability</b>		
Declared disability	1	
No declared disability	13	4
Disability prefer not to say	1	
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
White	14	4
Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups		
Asian / Asian British	1	
Black / Black British		
Other ethnic group		
Ethnicity self-description		
Ethnicity prefer not to say		
<b>Age</b>		
16-24		
25-34		
35-44	2	1
45-54	3	
55-64	10	3
65-74		
75-84		
85+		
Age prefer not to say		
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>		
Bisexual		
Gay or Lesbian	1	
Heterosexual	13	4
Other sexual orientation	1	
Sexual orientation self-description		
Sexual orientation prefer not to say		
<b>Religion</b>		
Buddhist		
Christian	6	1
Hindu	1	
Jewish		
Muslim		
Sikh		
Other religion	1	
Atheist / No religion	7	3
Religion prefer not to say		

<b>Principal Residence</b>		
North East		
Yorkshire & Humberside		
East Midlands		
West Midlands	1	
East		
London		
South East	1	
South West	1	
Wales	12	4
Scotland		
Northern Ireland		
Other residence		
Residence prefer not to say		
<b>Principal Employment</b>		
Mostly Civil Service	1	
Mostly Private Sector	1	
Mostly Third Sector	4	
Mostly Wider Public Sector	3	1
Mixed	6	3
Other principle employment		
Principle employment prefer not to say		
<b>Public Appointments Held</b>		
0 Public Appointments Held	10	2
1 Public Appointments Held	5	2
2 Public Appointments Held		
3 Public Appointments Held		
4 Public Appointments Held		
5-9 Public Appointments Held		
10+ Public Appointments Held		
Public Appointments Held prefer not to say		
<b>Political Activity</b>		
Declared political activity	2	3
No declared political activity	13	1
Political activity prefer not to say		
Conservative		
Green		
Labour	4	2
Liberal Democrats		
Plaid Cymru	1	1
Scottish National Party		
United Kingdom Independence Party		
Any other parties		

# Agenda Item 3.1

Mark Drakeford AS/MS  
Prif Weinidog Cymru  
First Minister of Wales

Vaughan Gething AS/MS  
Gweinidog yr Economi  
Minister for Economy

Jeremy Miles AS/MS  
Gweinidog y Gymraeg ac Addysg  
Minister for Education and Welsh Language

Dawn Bowden AS/MS  
Dirprwy Weinidog y Celfyddydau a Chwaraeon, a'r Prif Chwip  
Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport, and Chief Whip

Ein cyf/Our ref MA/VG/0362/23

Delyth Jewell AS  
Cadeirydd - Y Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y Gymraeg, Chwaraeon a Chysylltiadau  
Rhyngwladol



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

6 Mawrth 2023

Annwyl Delyth,

Ysgrifennwn atoch mewn perthynas ag Adroddiad y Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y Gymraeg, Chwaraeon a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol – Craffu ar Gyllideb Ddrafft Llywodraeth Cymru ar gyfer 2023-24.

Hoffem ddiolch i aelodau'r Pwyllgor am ystyried y pwnc ac am gyhoeddi'r adroddiad. Ynghlwm mae ymateb ysgrifenedig gan Lywodraeth Cymru i'r adroddiad hwn. Mae'n cynnwys ymateb i bob un o'r 10 argymhelliad a wnaed gan y Pwyllgor.

Yn gywir,

**Vaughan Gething AS/MS**  
Gweinidog yr Economi  
Minister for Economy

**Jeremy Miles AS/MS**  
Gweinidog y Gymraeg ac Addysg  
Minister for Education and Welsh Language

**Mark Drakeford AS/MS**  
Prif Weinidog Cymru  
First Minister of Wales

**Dawn Bowden AS/MS**  
Dirprwy Weinidog y Celfyddydau a Chwaraeon,  
a'r Prif Chwip  
Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport, and Chief  
Whip

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Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

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.



## **Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport & International Relations Committee Report - Scrutiny of the Welsh Government Draft Budget 2023-24**

We would like to thank the members of the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport & International Relations Committee for their report on 'Scrutiny of the Welsh Government Draft Budget 2023-24'. We have set out our responses to the report's individual recommendations below.

**Recommendation 1: We recommend that the Welsh Government publish a full breakdown of all funding used to fund activities related to the FIFA World Cup 2022. This should include which budget line the funding has come from.**

**Response: Accept**

The Welsh Government recognised that the FIFA World Cup 2022 offered a unique opportunity to raise Wales' international profile and, as such, developed a comprehensive programme of activities designed to deliver the ambitions of the International Strategy.

A total budget of £4.65m has been allocated as follows:

- **Partner Support Fund** - £1.8m allocated to 19 projects, BEL 6250
- **Marketing activities, including Lleisiau Cymru** - £2.5m, BEL 6250
- **External Evaluation** - £22,825, BEL 6250
- **Ministerial engagement & visits** - These costs will be published on the database for Ministerial overseas travel at: [Ministerial Code information publication: 5th assembly | GOV.WALES](#), Central Budgets.
- **International Overseas Office Activity** = £310,000 allocated, BEL 3720

**Recommendation 2: We recommend that the Welsh Government provide additional targeted funding to the sports and culture sectors to help venues and organisations that face closure but have a sustainable future beyond the immediate crisis, as well as for the health and wellbeing of the public.**

**Response: Reject**

The Welsh Government recognises the exceptional inflationary pressures to utility costs and costs of living pressures at the arm's length bodies and local sector organisations. We have used this draft Budget for 2023-24 to the best of our ability to ensure our resources support as many organisations as possible within the budget available to us.

To assist with these pressures, Welsh Ministers have agreed to provide additional funding to the National Library of Wales; Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales; the arts sector via the Arts Council of Wales, the sports sector via Sport Wales; and the independent museums and community libraries in Wales.

Local museums, libraries, and archives would be eligible to apply to the existing Transformation Capital Grant programme for support to undertake capital works that support organisations' sustainability.

**Recommendation 3: We recommend that the Welsh Government provides quarterly updates to the Committee on matters arising with regards to areas facing financial challenges in Wales**

**Response: Reject**

This is already in place through the Committee Schedule and the regular meetings held between the Deputy Minister for Arts, Sport & Chief Whip and Chair of the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport & International Relations Committee.

**Recommendation 4: We recommend that the Welsh Government publishes the membership of the cultural strategy oversight board and commits to providing regular updates on progress made on the development of the strategy.**

**Response: Accept**

This is already being addressed. At a recent meeting of the Culture Strategy Steering Group, members were asked if they would be content to have their names published and were unanimous that this could now happen. My communications officials have advised that the appropriate mechanism for announcing the Steering Group membership should be via a written statement which officials are now drafting.

I have already committed, through conversations and communications with the Chair of the Committee, and in my [earlier written statement](#) to the Senedd in November 2022, that I will update on progress as key milestones in the development of the strategy are achieved. I am happy to offer further assurances on this matter.

**Recommendation 5: We recommend that the Welsh Government publishes its initial report on the development of a cultural strategy, in full, when it is available in March 2023**

**Response: Reject**

The Welsh Government would be happy to offer an update on progress following receipt of the interim report, however, we are not intending to produce and publish an initial report during the development of the Culture Strategy.

The period of engagement with stakeholders, led by the external partner, will complete at the end of March and I expect to receive an interim report from the partner on the findings of their engagement activity. This is a requirement of the contract. However, the purpose of the interim report is to provide a working document which will bring early insights to myself, the Designated Member, the Steering Group, and the team leading on the development of the strategy as we move towards developing early drafts of the new strategy.

**Recommendation 6: We recommend the Welsh Government should publish the total amount of funding allocated to sport across government, beyond what is provided to Sport Wales.**

**Response: Accept**

Our spending allocated to sport in Wales is provided directly to Sport Wales with a £23m revenue allocation and £8m capital allocation in 2023-24. Other parts of Welsh Government allocate funding indirectly to sport and physical activity, for example, education provide funding for sustainable communities for learning for facilities in schools, including sports facilities, but it is not feasible to disaggregate the sporting component from our overall spending.

**Recommendation 7: We recommend that the Welsh Government undertakes a comprehensive assessment of the impact of expenditure on the Welsh language across government portfolios, and to set out how it plans to monitor the impact of expenditure across policy areas in the future.**

**Response: Accept**

Through our budget process we already publish a suite of documents as part of the Draft Budget, which includes individual Ministers' responses to their respective Senedd scrutiny committees, and which provides a more detailed account as to how Draft Budget decisions have impacted on different groups or areas including the Welsh Language. The Strategic Integrated Impact Assessment (SIIA) continues to outline the contextual evidence that has supported our spending decisions.

*Cymraeg 2050* is a wide-ranging strategy delivered across Welsh Government portfolios. The Welsh language is integral to all the decisions taken and embedded in policy and delivery at the outset. Our approach to integrated impact assessments supports our ambition to work collaboratively across portfolios. By bringing together the range of impact assessment duties including the Welsh language in a coherent framework, the assessment reduces complexity and duplication and is supported by cohesive decision making to inform inclusive policy and delivery budgets. For this reason, it is not possible to separately identify Welsh language expenditure.

We will look further as to how the information contained within the integrated impact assessments can be shared to provide clarity on expected expenditure on the policy areas contained within them.

While we are committed to improving how we undertake and outline the impacts of our spending decisions such an approach must be proportionate.

There are dedicated budgets within the Education and Welsh Language portfolio (Welsh Language / Welsh in Education / Welsh Language Commissioner) and other direct interventions across government such as ARFOR, the Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan, the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme and childcare. However, beyond this Identifying the impact of indirect expenditure in particular where benefits are not the primary purpose of expenditure may not be possible to quantify or require disproportionate resource to do so.

Our resources are focussed on the impact of initiatives across government and delivering our action plans supporting our ambitions in *Cymraeg 2050*. In achieving these goals, we will continue to work collaboratively with internal and external stakeholders.

**Recommendation 8:** We recommend that the Welsh Government reviews the level of funding that is required to maintain and enhance opportunities for Welsh-medium activity in local communities across Wales as a result of the increased costs of living. This review should also consider the impact of spending as well as the amount provided.

**Response: Accept**

At the time of this response, we await the final independent report of the *Review of the Grant Scheme to Promote the Welsh Language*. As we consider the recommendations and conclusions of this report, we will consider the level of funding provided to this area and how to assess the impact of that spend.

In his oral statement on 24 January this year, *Results of the 2021 Census in relation to the Welsh language*, the Minister for Education and Welsh Language announced £260,000 of additional funding for grant recipients to contribute towards the increased cost of living. A press announcement was made on 6 February: [More funding for organisations who help everyone use more Cymraeg | GOV.WALES](#)

**Recommendation 9:** We recommend that the Welsh Government reviews how it can provide specific additional revenue funding to support new Welsh medium schools once opened. The Welsh Government should also consider how it could further support schools in the English-medium sector to move along the language continuum and expand Welsh-medium provision.

**Response: Accept in Principle**

Professional learning is a key feature of our approach to moving schools along the continuum to provide more education through the medium of Welsh. As set out in the evidence paper, we are working with regional consortia and local authorities to ensure practitioners are identified and supported to undertake professional learning in order to improve Welsh language teaching in English-medium schools and support all schools to move along the school categorisation continuum.

Around £6.1m will be allocated in the Teacher Development and Support Budget Expenditure Line in 2023-24 to this end. Under the Co-operation Agreement, £1.675m will be earmarked for the National Centre for Learning Welsh in 2023-24 to deliver courses for young people aged 16-25 and to the education workforce. This funding supports a pilot with the company *Say Something in Welsh*.

Along with the National Centre, they are developing an app to reinforce learners' Welsh language skills and to develop their confidence. Developments like these have the potential to increase the use of Welsh in all of our schools. We plan to roll out this pilot to 10 other English-medium schools and planning for this work starts now.

We are also investing revenue funding of £6.6m over the term of this Senedd to support all local authorities to develop or expand their late immersion provision. Local authority immersion provision has previously been funded through the RSG and this funding therefore offers local authorities the opportunity to re-purpose their funding from the RSG to support new schools.

In addition to this funding, in line with the Welsh in Education Workforce Plan, we are reviewing the funding currently available to support the provision of professional learning opportunities and support for the implementation of Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs) to establish clear funding streams and outcomes. This work is currently ongoing. Of course, the same approach does not suit everyone and we must continue to find a series of different interventions to support all learners wherever they are on their language journey.

Of the 11 projects prioritised to proceed to the next stage of the business case process under the second phase of the Welsh medium capital grant, total funding of £32.1m was approved, of which £30.8m is capital funding and £1.3m is revenue funding to support the growth and use of the Welsh language in education

**Recommendation 10:** We recommend that the Welsh Government outlines how it will provide additional financial support to the Welsh Language Commissioner where it is required, for instance to support costly legal proceedings that could not be anticipated

**Response: Accept**

The Welsh Language Commissioner's estimate for the 2023-24 financial year notes that the costs of legal advice can vary significantly, and that it is difficult to anticipate the circumstances where legal advice or representation will need to be procured.

Due to the budgetary alignment of central government bodies, it is not possible for bodies to keep reserves for unpredicted purposes that may arise or may not. We have advised the Commissioner that her financial estimate should include a reasonable and sufficient level of funding to pay for legal advice and representation. The Commissioner's expectation is that legal costs over the medium term will continue at around £80,000 per annum. The Commissioner has therefore allocated a budget of £80,000 from her 2023-24 revenue budget to pay for legal costs.

If the Commissioner's legal costs would exceed the sum in the budget, and funds could not be allocated from elsewhere within her budget, the Commissioner would need to write to Welsh Ministers and seek additional in-year finding. Ministers would deal with such requests on a case by case basis if and when they arise.

Chair, Children, Young People, and Education Committee  
Chair, Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee  
Chair, Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee  
Chair, Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee  
Chair, Equality and Social Justice Committee  
Chair, Health and Social Care Committee  
Chair, Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee  
Chair, Local Government and Housing Committee

8 March 2023

Dear Committee Chairs,

### Scrutiny of the Draft Budget 2023-24: Evidence provided by the Welsh Government

In our [report](#) on the scrutiny of the [Welsh Government Draft Budget 2023-24](#), we made several recommendations relating to budget presentation improvements. We also agreed to consult Committees on the documentation provided by the Welsh Government alongside its Draft Budget proposals, concluding that:

*"Conclusion 1. We welcome the Minister's willingness to consider ways in which budget documentation can be improved. While we have reflected our views above, the Committee has decided to consult Senedd committees on their experiences of scrutinising this year's budget documentation and ways in which improvements can be made."*

As a result, in reflecting on this year's budget scrutiny experience and in seeking improvements to the budget documentation provided by the Welsh Government at the 2024-25 Draft Budget and beyond, I would be grateful for the views of your committee in response to the following question:

What improvements would you like to see in the Welsh Government's Draft Budget documentation and subsequent ministerial written evidence?

Please make reference to the timeliness, quality and usefulness of any documentation and/or evidence received in your response.

We would appreciate responses by **Friday 28 April 2023**. Your views will then be collated and fed back to the Minister for Finance and Local Government, for her consideration in advance of the Budget Priorities 2024-25 Plenary debate that will be led by the Finance Committee and take place before summer recess.

Yours sincerely,



Peredur Owen Griffiths MS  
Chair, Finance Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.





Peter Holt  
Interim Chief Operating Officer  
National Museum Wales

14 February 2023

**Protecting national collections at National Museum Wales**

Dear Peter

Thank you for your response to the Committee's letter requesting information to inform scrutiny of the Welsh Government's Draft Budget for 2023-24. The Committee considered your response at its meeting on 2 February 2023.

The Committee noted that there was no specific reference in your letter on whether the additional funding provided specifically would ensure that the Museum is able to further protect national treasures within the its collections. In their response to a similar request, the National Library of Wales told us that:

*As regards that particular risk I am glad to report that the quick action by the Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport to support and provide a grant of £500k has alleviated the failings of the fire and smoke dampers in our building, but the continued reduction in capital funding will only create further and serious risks to the national collections. Therefore, it is vital that Welsh Government provides the additional urgently needed capital funding requested by the National Library as expeditiously as possible.*

As such, the Committee would be grateful if you could provide assurance that there is no risk to the national collections held by National Museum Wales as result of your budget settlements from the Welsh Government.

I look forward to receiving your response in due course.

Yours sincerely,



Delyth Jewell MS

Committee Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



Amgueddfa Cymru  
Parc Cathays  
Caerdydd  
CF10 3NP  
Ffôn: 0300 111 2 333

Amgueddfa Cymru – Museum Wales  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff  
CF10 3NP  
Tel: 0300 111 2 333

Delyth Jewell MS  
Committee Chair

22 February 2023

Dear Delyth

Thank you for your follow up letter and the opportunity to respond to your specific query. While we feel that the settlement for Amgueddfa Cymru is reasonable over the next two years, the longer term outlook is more uncertain and certainly poses challenges. Therefore, we cannot provide you with the assurances that you seek. There are significant structural issues within Amgueddfa Cymru's buildings that means there is an ongoing risk to National Collections. These are noted on our Strategic Risk Register.

Extensive Condition Surveys (completed in 2022) highlight a maintenance backlog across our museums of at least £65m, with £15m of these items being deemed as critical that are in need of urgent repair. In addition to this, a further assessment of the Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing (MEP) infrastructure at National Museum Cardiff has shown that significant investment is required in these areas. There are several options that need considering for this MEP, but the cheapest of these shows a further £25m is required over the next seven years. We hope that the investment required for National Museum Cardiff may, in time, be included in a 'Masterplan' bid that allows the whole of the site in Cathays to be re-imagined for use over the next 100 years.

So, in short, to provide assurance of the national collection, Amgueddfa Cymru requires an additional £90m of capital funding over the remainder of this decade. This would require careful planning to allow the museum to resource properly over a number of years and it is appreciated that this funding would likely come from a range of sources.

Yours sincerely



Peter Holt  
Interim Chief Operating Officer

Mae croeso i chi gysylltu â ni yn Gymraeg, byddwn yn eich ateb yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd yn arwain at oedi.  
We welcome correspondence in Welsh and we will answer you in Welsh. This will not lead to any delay.



Cefnogir gan  
**Lywodraeth Cymru**  
Supported by  
**Welsh Government**

**Llywydd Dros Dro** | Acting President - Dr Carol Bell PhD DLitt FLSW FSA  
**Trysorydd** | Treasurer – Hywel John FCA  
**Cyfarwyddwr Cyffredinol** | Director General – David Anderson OBE

**Rhif elusen** | Charity number - 525774  
**Rhif TAW** | VAT number – GB 783 4541 10



Ein cyf/Our ref: VG/0060/23

Delyth Jewell MS  
Chair  
Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee  
Welsh Parliament  
[SeneddCulture@senedd.wales](mailto:SeneddCulture@senedd.wales)

20 February 2023

Dear Delyth,

Many thanks to you and the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee members for considering the Supplementary Legislative Consent Memoranda (Memoranda No. 3 and No. 4) in respect of the UK Government's Online Safety Bill.

I welcome the report published by the Committee on 10 February noting that members agree with the Welsh Government's assessment that clauses 157, 160, and 165, and Schedule 14 of the Bill, as amended at Commons Report stage, include provision which fall within a purpose within the legislative competence of the Senedd, as described in Standing Order 29.1(i).

Yours sincerely,

**Vaughan Gething AS/MS**  
Gweinidog yr Economi  
Minister for Economy

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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.

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

Document is Restricted

Peredur Owen Griffiths MS  
Chair of the Finance Committee

15 February 2023

Dear Peredur,

### **Scrutiny of the financial implications of Bills**

Further to your letter of 19 December 2022 to the First Minister regarding the scrutiny of the financial implications of Government Bills, I have considered the Finance Committee's further request.

I will give a commitment that all Welsh Ministers will endeavour to respond to the Finance Committee's Stage 1 report for Senedd Bills in advance of the General Principles debate on that Bill.

However, Finance Committee will wish to note in giving this commitment, there will be occasions where the detail the Committee is asking for will not be readily available within the timeframe.

The Government continues to follow the requirements of the Senedd's Standing Orders where the financial resolution seeks agreement to the financial implications of a Bill not as introduced, but as amended, after completing its scrutiny journey. In addition, Welsh Ministers will continue to provide the Finance and the policy scrutiny committees with details of where there have been developments or amendments that have significant changes to the financial implications of each Bill.

I have asked my officials to consider further the implications of moving the financial resolution debate to a week after the General Principles debate and the impact this will have going forward on the legislative programme.

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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.

Your letter along with this reply has been copied to all Welsh Ministers. This reply will also be issued to the Business Committee and the Chairs of Policy Committees.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lesley Griffiths". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end of the name.

**Lesley Griffiths AS/MS**  
**Y Gweinidog Materion Gwledig a Gogledd Cymru, a'r Trefnydd**  
**Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd**

Mark Drakeford MS  
First Minister

17 February 2023

**Re: Correspondence on 7 December 2022**

Dear Mark

Thank you for your letter dated 7 December 2022. Following consideration of the information provided, we would like to ask further questions. Specifically, we request further clarification in relation to overseas engagement and Memorandums of Understanding, as set out below.

#### Overseas engagement

We welcome your commitment to provide us with monthly reports of all diplomatic visits and ministerial visits overseas, starting from December 2022.

We received the first email containing a list of meetings, covering December 2022 and January 2023 on 6 February 2023. We note that the list does not include some visits, nor the level of detail, publicised on Welsh Government social media accounts.

A list of examples is Annexed to this letter. We request that all Ministerial meetings, with detail of what was discussed, are included in future and look forward to receiving the same for February in the coming weeks. The Committee would also welcome the inclusion of international events held by Welsh Government-sponsored bodies that are directly linked to the international strategy's delivery.

#### Memorandums of Understanding

We welcome your commitment to include an annual list of Memorandums of Understanding as part of your annual reporting on the activities of the Welsh Government's overseas offices.

However, we note that you agreed to publish a list in response to requests from Members of this Committee during evidence in June 2022.<sup>1</sup>

The Committee believes a dedicated webpage would greatly assist Members, stakeholders and the public with an interest in the Welsh Government's international relations. This would also achieve a greater degree of

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<sup>1</sup> See paras 98-100, <https://record.assembly.wales/Committee/12857>



transparency than is achieved via the provision of a one-off annual list which provides a snapshot of the position at a certain moment in time, as recognised by the First Minister.<sup>2</sup>

As such, we would like to reiterate our original request for the Welsh Government to publish and maintain a list of Memorandums of Understanding on its website.

We note the accessible Welsh Government webpage for intergovernmental concordats, memorandums and other agreements between UK government, Welsh Government, Scottish Government and Northern Ireland Executive. We ask that a similar format for their international equivalents be considered.<sup>3</sup>

We would be grateful for a response to the issues raised in this letter by 9 March 2023.

Yours sincerely



Delyth Jewell MS  
Committee Chair

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<sup>2</sup> See para 100, <https://record.assembly.wales/Committee/12857>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.wales/concordats-memorandums-of-understanding-and-other-agreements>



Annex: Examples of Ministerial visits publicised on social media December 2022 – January 2023

Ministers visits

<i>INWARD VISITS</i>	<i>To MINISTERS</i>
December 2022	
07 December	The First Minister met the Agent General of Québec.
07 December	( <a href="#">Welsh Government tweet:</a> ) Bienvenue au Pays de Galles @LineRivardDG. Today @PrifWeinidog welcomed the Agent-General of @QuebecUK to Cardiff. They spoke about the close relationship between Wales & Quebec, our languages, the strengths throughout our sectors & the importance of international collaboration 🤝
13 December	The First Minister met the High Commissioner of Namibia.
January 2023	
2 January	The First Minister met the Deputy High Commissioner of India at the reception in Cardiff for the Welsh hockey team before their journey to India to participate in the World Cup
25 January	The First Minister met the Head of the Catalan Delegation to the UK and Ireland.
25 January	( <a href="#">Welsh Government tweet:</a> ) A warm welcome to Francesc Claret, head of @Catalonia_UK, as he met @PrifWeinidog today. They discussed opportunities to share learning on #UBI and language, as well as youth exchange between Wales and Catalonia
<i>OUTWARD VISITS</i>	<i>By MINISTERS</i>
December 2022	
09-18 December	Minister for Climate Change visit to Québec - attendance at COP15 and separate meetings with the Québec Minister of the Environment and the Fight against Climate Change and the Québec Minister for International Relations.
12 December	( <a href="#">Welsh Government tweet:</a> ) Sunday at #COP15 started meeting representatives of the Wampis Nation – a government of Indigenous

	peoples in the Peruvian Amazon. Then @JulieJamesMS spoke at the 7th Summit showing how smaller countries can influence negotiations on global biodiversity
13 December	( <a href="#">Welsh Government tweet:</a> ) Quebec is an important partner for Wales, with growing cooperation across many sectors. Climate Change Minister @JulieJamesMS met with @M_Biron during #COP15 to discuss further strengthening the Wales-Quebec partnership
13 December	( <a href="#">Welsh Government tweet:</a> ) Monday in Montreal was another busy one for Climate Change Minister @JulieJamesMS. From Carmarthen to Catalonia and from Monmouthshire to Montreal, we covered topics including flooding prevention to forest management. There's a lot to learn from each other!
14 December	First Minister visit to London - meeting with EU Heads of Mission (EU Ambassador to the UK and all EU27 Ambassadors), US Ambassador and Japanese Ambassador.
14 December	( <a href="#">Welsh Government tweet:</a> ) This morning @PrifWeinidog met with @PedroSerranoEU in London. Discussions included Wales' engagement with European regions and in key networks, like @Atlantic_Arc & @VI_Brussels
14 December	( <a href="#">Welsh Government tweet:</a> ) Afterwards, @PrifWeinidog addressed EU Heads of Mission @EUdelegationUK in London. He talked about our shared values, common challenges, and the importance of working together. We are committed to strengthening our partnerships with EU states, regions and networks
14 December	( <a href="#">Welsh Government tweet:</a> ) 2022 marks 50 years of Japanese investment into Wales @PrifWeinidog joined Ambassador Hayashi to celebrate this historic milestone @JAPANinUK, and to look ahead to future opportunities to strengthen the relationship between our nations
14 December	( <a href="#">Welsh Government re-tweet of Polish ambassador:</a> ) Great meeting of EU Heads of Mission with First Minister of Wales @MarkDrakeford, during which we discussed economic and cultural ties. Grateful to Wales for showing openness towards EU citizens and businesses. I hope the First Minister can visit Poland soon!
14 December	( <a href="#">Welsh Government re-tweet of German ambassador:</a> ) Excellent meeting with First Minister of Wales @MarkDrakeford on the close economic & cultural links to the European Union EU. We are grateful for the openness

	of the Welsh Government towards EU citizens & business, but also towards students through the Taith program.
14 December	( <a href="#">Welsh Government tweet</a> .) To round off his visit to London, @PrifWeinidog met with @USAmbUK Jane Hartley. Talks focused on our work to promote Wales in the USA and the significant contribution American investment makes to the Welsh economy
16 December	( <a href="#">Welsh Government tweet</a> .) It was busy yesterday at #COP15 where @JulieJamesMS 🌳 Hosted a great meeting with @ScotGovNetZero and @ParksCanada 🌳 Talked trees with Christian Messier of @CEF_CFR 🌳 Took questions at the Rio Pavillion 🌳 Discussed the power of smaller regions working together with @CharetteB



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

[Delyth.jewell@senedd.wales](mailto:Delyth.jewell@senedd.wales)

7 March 2023

Dear Delyth,

I am writing in response to your letter of 17 February 2023, in which you requested additional information about overseas engagement, visits and Memoranda of Understanding.

### Overseas Engagement

In my letter of 7 December I agreed that my officials would notify the Committee of all diplomatic visits to Wales and Ministerial visits overseas – with a retrospective summary provided each month. That first summary, for visits in December and January, was provided on 6 February. That summary did include all diplomatic visits and Ministerial visits overseas in that time period.

In your letter, you request additional information on these visits. For Ministerial visits overseas, additional information is usually provided by Ministers via a Written Statement within a few days of that overseas visit.

Providing details of discussions held with representatives of other governments could be prejudicial to Welsh Government's future ability to have frank and open discussions with international stakeholders potentially inhibiting the openness of discussions. However, I am content for my officials to provide an overview in the summary which outlines the high-level topics discussed, for example trade and investment, education etc.

You also requested a list of meetings held by Welsh Government Sponsored Bodies which support the delivery of the International Strategy. This information is not held centrally therefore it will not be possible to provide this on a monthly basis. However, I will ensure that some of the key events undertaken by WGSBs are included in the annual report when it is published later this year.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
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CF99 1SN

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

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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.

## Memoranda of Understanding

You have requested a dedicated webpage which lists the current active Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) that we hold with other countries and regions. I can confirm that a webpage showing live MOUs has been created and is available here:

<https://www.gov.wales/international-bi-lateral-agreements>

We will not be publishing the full details of the MOUs online. As I said in my letter of 7 December bi-lateral agreements of this nature are not normally published. Unlike the MOUs and concordats published between UK and Devolved Governments as part of intergovernmental relations, these are agreements with third parties and, as such, we would need to have their permission to publish the documents.

Yours sincerely,

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

**MARK DRAKEFORD**

## **INWARD VISITS – FEBRUARY 2023**

**03 February**

### **Visit by Irish Ambassador to the UK**

Bi-lateral with Minister for Economy to discuss co-operation across the Wales-Ireland joint statement. Meeting included discussions on barriers to trade, wider trade links, freeports, renewable energy and maintaining strong links with EU.

**09 February**

### **Visit by Political Councillor from North Uganda**

Bi-lateral with Minister for Social Justice to discuss the work of the Gulu Mission in northern Uganda and possible areas where mutual support could strengthen their work.

## **OUTWARD VISITS – FEBRUARY 2023**

**28 February**

### **Minister for Education visit to Ireland**

Visit included meetings with Irish Minister Simon Harris TD, Prof. Orla Feeley at Dublin University College, Trinity College on digital plans for the Irish language and a visit to Irish-language school Gaelscoil Thaobh na Coille. A fuller statement on the visit will issue in the normal course of business.



23 February 2023

Dear Delyth Jewell MS,

**RE: Inquiry into the impact of increasing costs and the Welsh Government's response**

Following the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee inquiry into the impact of increasing costs and the consequent Welsh Government's response to the Committee's recommendations, we are writing with significant concern that not enough is being done by the Welsh Government to support the sector.

The Committee has provided great leadership, and there is now an opportunity to build on the insights gathered in the past few months to work with the Welsh Government and advocate for additional support for the sport, physical activity, and leisure sector.

While the Welsh Government has repeatedly said that they are not aware of any immediate threat to facilities in terms of closure, we believe this view is misguided as there is a very real and immediate threat to the delivery of public leisure services. The focus on whether or not facilities stay open gives an incomplete picture of the current situation and diminishes the impact of increasing costs on the ability for people to be physically active. While facilities may stay open, programmes, activities and staffing levels will be significantly affected. This is also evidenced, and widely supported, in the petition<sup>1</sup> submitted by Swim Wales to protect leisure centres and swimming pools from closure during the current energy crisis.

We have outlined the current state of the sector in our responses to the Welsh Government's Draft Budget consultation and our more recent responses to the Local Government Settlement. They are attached for your reference.

Welsh Government's response to the Committee's report

Having reviewed the Welsh Government's response to the Committee's report following the inquiry on the impact of increasing costs, we remain concerned that the Welsh Government is not providing enough support to the sector, and that their understanding of the sector is at times inaccurate. We have set out examples below.

In response to the Committee's third recommendation on leisure trust eligibility to the Energy Service, Welsh Government writes that "Local Authorities and other public sector organisations can access technical and financial support from the Welsh Government's Energy Service, to improve the energy efficiency of their swimming pools and leisure centres (including those managed by leisure trusts), helping to reduce carbon emissions."

However, this response is incomplete and inaccurate. While leisure trusts are eligible to receive support, local authorities still need to apply for the scheme on their behalf and if leisure trusts are responsible for the energy bills themselves, it is currently not possible for leisure trusts to access the zero interest loans (unless the Council starts paying the bills).

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<sup>1</sup> Petition Protect leisure centres and swimming pools from closure during the current energy crisis. Available at: <https://petitions.senedd.wales/petitions/245334>



With regards to the fourth recommendation on capital funding, the Welsh Government is leaving the responsibility with Local Authorities to use the unhypothecated capital funding provided to Local Authorities for investment in sports and leisure facilities “if Authorities consider it is appropriate to do so.” We know from experience that without a clear directive or encouragement from the Welsh Government and the Minister in particular, this will not happen. Welsh Government needs to be clear about the evidence that leisure facilities are consistently in the top 5 most carbon intensive buildings in a local authority area<sup>2</sup>.

With regards to the fifth recommendation on additional targeted funding and the eight recommendation on providing distinct support, the Welsh Government’s response does not refer to any new or additional funding for the sector to address the impact of increased costs. Moreover, when reviewing the Draft Budget from the Welsh Government, capital funding for Sport Wales remains at an equal level, representing a real terms cut.

This comes at a time where it is more critical and urgent than ever that we invest in our ageing facilities, with two thirds of the public leisure building stock is past its replacement date, the energy and cost of living crisis being felt across the sector, and the climate crisis demanding real and immediate action.

#### Projections for public leisure delivery in 2023-24

Local governments, as key partners in the provision of public leisure either through in-house delivery or as a partner to leisure trusts, continue to face significant pressures with their financial planning and budgeting. Welsh local government is facing a £784m budget black hole next year alone which is only likely to rise ever further in subsequent years<sup>3</sup>. Therefore, while the 7.9% increase in funding from the Welsh Government, which is around £400m, is welcomed, we echo the Welsh Local Government Association’s warning that tough decisions will remain due to continuing challenging economic circumstances<sup>4</sup>.

Analysis conducted by the Welsh Sports Association suggest that there are widespread moves by Local Authorities to make changes to sport and leisure provision. In at least half of the budget consultations in progress or concluded the Local Authority suggest either restricted opening hours (e.g. Monmouthshire), increased fees and charges (e.g. Pembrokeshire and Caerphilly) or closure of facilities (Carmarthenshire is proposing to undergo asset transfer or closure of St Clears leisure centre). In Neath Port Talbot, the Council’s need to increase council tax by an additional 2% “to begin to address the budget gap required to keep leisure facilities open in 2023/24”<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> As identified through the ‘opportunity identification’ of the Welsh Government Energy Service.

<sup>3</sup> Welsh Local Government Association. “Hopeful of continuation of Welsh Government’s commitment to local services”. Available at: <https://www.wlga.wales/hopeful-of-continuation-of-welsh-government%e2%80%99s-commitment-to-local-services>

<sup>4</sup> Welsh Local Government Association. Welsh Government has supported councils with today’s settlement, but tough decisions remain, says WLGA. Available at: <https://www.wlga.wales/welsh-government-has-supported-councils-with-settlement-but-tough-decisions-remain>

<sup>5</sup> Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Cabinet, Report of the Corporate Directors Group 19th January 2023. Available at: <https://democracy.npt.gov.uk/documents/s83662/CAB-190123-REP-Draft%20Budget%20for%20Consultation%202023-24%20-%20CAB%20FINAL.pdf>

## Recommendations

Having evaluated the Welsh Government's written response and the debate around both the Welsh Government's Draft Budget and the response to the Committee's report, we remain significantly concerned about the current state of the sport, physical activity and leisure sector, and the levels of support provided by the Welsh Government.

Specifically, as sector representative bodies, we are urging the Welsh Government to:

- Encourage local government to invest in public leisure and culture as essential services, in line with their responsibilities under the Well-being of Future Generations Act.
- Set out what tangible support the Welsh Government will provide to the wider sector – including leisure centres, swimming pools, theatres and the wider arts and culture sector – to help navigate the energy crisis across 2023-24 so that service restrictions and facility closures can be minimised.
- Set out a long-term plan for the future of non-statutory public leisure services.
- Recognise the unique role that charities and social enterprises play in our economy and for the wellbeing of communities, and prioritise support for high-energy using charities and social enterprises where the sole purpose is social value and delivery of public services for communities.

We would welcome a conversation with you to discuss how we can continue to advocate for how vital public leisure is for the health and wellbeing of our nation and work collaboratively across Welsh Government departments to get the right level of support to our sector.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of any further assistance.

Yours sincerely,



Matthew Williams  
Head of Policy and Communications  
Welsh Sports Association

Jennifer Huygen  
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## **Cost-of-living report: Public Leisure in Crisis November 2022**

### Summary

- 82% of our members are at risk, ranging from those that are in crisis now to those that can see the crisis point on the horizon.
- Trusts' current financial positions are characterised by end-of-year projections of deficit budgets.
- Trusts have highlighted four underlying challenges that affect their financial position: changed income levels from customers using their facilities; continued uncertainty around local government budgets; the increased costs in utilities; and investment in pay awards.
- The current operational landscape and the uncertainty around Council budgets makes it difficult to plan ahead, but with the majority of Trusts in a precarious situation, decisions need to be made now to be able to manage public leisure services in the future. This leads to reviews of opening hours and service delivery, and an implementation of recruitment freezes.
- The majority of Trusts report a positive and strong working relationship with their Council. The strong partnership between Trusts and Councils is reflected in their joint desire to keep public leisure and culture services running and operated through charitable trust delivery with the priority of keeping buildings open.
- In light of the precarious position of local authorities and public leisure and culture delivery, we urge Welsh Government to:
  - Urge the UK Government to recognise the public leisure and culture sectors as vulnerable sectors, and to commit to an extension of the energy price cap to cover charitable leisure and culture services;
  - Commit to an increase in revenue funding to local authorities with a directive to support preventative wellbeing services;
  - Provide additional capital funding for energy projects through the Welsh Government's Energy Service and Salix funding that is accessible to leisure and culture trusts.



## Introduction

Leisure and culture trusts operate public leisure services in 50% of all local authorities in Wales, and manage libraries in 4 local authority areas. They also operate parks and playgrounds, theatres, town halls and cultural centres. Collectively, they manage 115 physical buildings in communities across nearly every region in Wales, welcome over 16.6 million visits a year<sup>1</sup>, and have a combined workforce of over 3000 people.

Community Leisure UK (Wales) conducted in-depth one-to-one conversations with all leisure and culture trusts in Wales during the period of 7 - 18 November 2022. This report is a summary of these conversations, highlighting the current position of leisure and culture trusts, and, ultimately, reflecting the risks to the sustainable delivery of public leisure and culture services in light of the current cost-of-living crisis<sup>2</sup>.

## Current position of Trusts

As of mid November 2022, 82% of our members are at risk, ranging from those that are in crisis now to those that can see the crisis point on the horizon. However, this is a moving picture, with a fine line for many between being stable and tipping quickly into crisis.

For 55% of all Trusts, the services they deliver are being underwritten this financial year by local government partners, above and beyond their regular contractual arrangements and associated management fees. This support may be through additional grant funding to cover the increase in utility costs, underwriting deficit budgets, or a continuation of a similar payment as was given during Covid-19 as part of the Hardship Fund (but without the Council being able to draw the funds from the Welsh Government).

However, some Trusts work in partnership with more than one local authority. Alarming, when looking at the total number of local authority contracts managed by leisure trusts, it shows that two-thirds of public leisure provision (67%) is in crisis already or rapidly heading towards one. As this covers 7 out of 22 local authorities, it means that around a third (31%) of all public leisure in Wales is currently in an unsustainable position.

## Financial forecast

The majority of Trusts (82%) will run a deficit budget by the end of this financial year. None of the Trusts are making a surplus, as the best end-of-year positions are projected to be break-even. Reserves have also diminished, with 55% of Trusts reporting minimum or no

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<sup>1</sup> Pre-Covid visitor statistics.

<sup>2</sup> For more information about the general impact of the cost-of-living crisis on public leisure and culture, and mitigations taken by leisure and culture trusts, please see our [submission from September 2022](#) to the Inquiry into the impact of increasing costs by the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee.

reserves. The next 4 months are critical, with operating costs continuing to rise and uncertainty over continued financial support from Local Authorities while awaiting budget settlement details.

Within this context, Trusts have highlighted four underlying challenges that affect their financial position: changed income levels from customers using facilities and services; continued uncertainty around local government budgets; the increased costs in utilities; and investment in pay awards.

### Income

#### *Customer returns*

While usage of facilities is recovering, with an average of 86% usage of fitness, studio and general leisure usage when compared to pre-Covid visitor numbers, this does not correspond to a full return of income. Not only has the return level of customers stabilised, and therefore income has stagnated, but the number of people on concessionary or taking a pay-as-you-go membership has significantly increased. Therefore general income from leisure membership is still reduced.

To illustrate, one member stated that their visitor numbers are 102% compared to pre-Covid, but their general income is still 10% lower than pre-Covid as 80% of their current gym and fitness membership is on a concessionary rate. The exceptions are swimming lessons and classes, where there is a strong return with some still working on waiting lists and backlogs from the pool closures during the pandemic.

For library services, footfall is slowly recovering but not yet back to preCovid levels. As many libraries share their facilities with other community services, such as the public Council support office, it is difficult to count how many people come in for library services only, as the footfall is measured by the total number of people who come through the doors. However, while the footfall in libraries may be slower, the number of virtual issues of books and home delivery is seeing a higher demand.

In theatre, the panto season is slow but ticket sales are on track. Trusts note that because of how Christmas falls this year, there are a number of shows after Christmas which may impact on sales. Ticket sales for shows earlier this year also indicate an increase in last-minute bookings rather than a high presale number as was common preCovid. Therefore, while some are currently behind on presale numbers when compared to preCovid, this change in audience habits means they anticipate a recovery for panto this season.

### *Local authority budgets*

The need for Councils across Wales to make large efficiency savings in 2023-24 will likely have a negative impact on Trusts' ability to operate as it will influence their income through agreed management fees and general support. The Welsh Local Government Association has warned that "council services face the most difficult period in their history" with a £802 million funding shortfall in the next two years, meaning that Councils "will be forced to take impossible decisions which will profoundly impact service provision"<sup>3</sup>. As leisure services are a non-statutory service, they are at an increased risk of service cuts.

A revision of existing management fees with the view of adapting and reducing this general support is anticipated. While 45% of Trusts receive financial support from their local authority partner to manage pay differentials and inflation (either through management fees linked to the Consumer Price Index or additional funding support from the Council to cover pay rises), the anticipation is that the general fee will be reduced, equating to a zero gain.

### Expenditure

#### *Utilities*

Utilities are a critical point of an unsustainable increase in costs, as reported on in earlier briefings<sup>4</sup>, especially for members who came out of contract earlier this year. There is a collaboration between Councils and Trusts around energy and utilities, where 73% of Trusts benefit from being part of local authority energy baskets where they can access more favourable rates or have price protections in their partner agreements with Councils.

Trusts have been working closely with Councils to evaluate the environmental impact of their facilities and to seek investment in renewable energy sources such as solar PV. Councils are looking at how the Welsh Government Energy Service can be used to support their Trust partners and Trusts themselves are looking at ways to fund these new investments, for example by accessing funding from Sport Wales. However, these investments will reduce pressure in the medium- to long-term while the majority of Trusts are facing unsustainable pressures now.

#### *Pay awards*

All Trusts recognise the importance of pay awards. They have increased wages over the past 12 months in order to recruit and retain staff in light of increased competition from other

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<sup>3</sup> WLGA response to the UK Government's Autumn Statement. Available here:

<http://www.wlga.wales/autumn-statement-is-a-missed-opportunity-to-help-our-communities>

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 2. In addition, our report from May 2022 gives a full outline of cost pressures experience by leisure and culture trusts. Available here:

<https://communityleisureuk.org/work/latest-sector-landscape-reports/#wales>



sectors and to keep differentials across team structures. The annual Community Leisure UK HR survey showed that the average annual permanent staff budget had more than doubled, and average annual casual staff budget had more than tripled since September 2021.

Staff salaries will increase again in April 2023 with increases to the national minimum wage and national living wage which creates a further point of pressure in anticipated expenditure. To illustrate, one Trust, who is a Living Wage Foundation employer, mentioned that their end of year deficit budget of £300k is mostly caused by realigning pay scales to ensure there is no erosion of pay differentials between staff.

### **Impact on the delivery of public leisure services**

The current operational landscape and the uncertainty around Council budgets makes it difficult to plan ahead, but with the majority of Trusts in a precarious situation, decisions need to be made now to be able to manage public leisure and culture services in the future.

In 8 local authority areas, Trusts are reviewing what they are able to deliver under the current operating environment with the potential for closures and/or service reductions. In one instance, a Trust has been asked by the Council to create a forecast on the impact of full pool closures and the associated cost savings. A revision of opening hours is also planned, depending on footfall in libraries and bookings in leisure facilities, as a consequence of potential management fee reductions in the new financial year or as part of a wider package of energy saving measures over the coming winter period.

The current operating pressures also impact on the workforce, with four Trusts now implementing or considering recruitment freezes and others carefully considering their existing team structures. Recruitment of new staff is mostly focused on frontline positions rather than back office support, such as lifeguards, swimming teachers and hospitality staff, to keep key community activities and services going.

### **Support and collaboration with local authorities**

The majority of Trusts report a positive and strong working relationship with their Council, with both Officers and elected officials. The strong partnership between Trusts and Councils is reflected in their joint desire to keep public leisure and culture services running and operated through charitable trust delivery with the priority of keeping buildings open.

However, there are some challenges for Trusts in engaging with their local authority partner where there have been political changes and new elected officials in post. In these circumstances it is more important than ever to work to develop a strong relationship in





order to ensure understanding and have open communication about how public leisure is delivered for the benefit of communities across Wales.

Trusts are acutely aware that their Local Authority partners are facing their own multi-million pound deficit budgets, with difficult decisions to be made on where savings need to be found. Therefore, there is no guarantee that from the new financial year leisure and culture services will be able to continue to operate in their current form. Councils can currently give no commitment for financial support beyond March 2023.

### **Request to Welsh Government**

The hesitancy by the Welsh and UK Government to act on early warnings has meant that the impact of increased cost of living is not only being felt by the public but is putting leisure and culture services at significant risk, which will affect the nation's health and wellbeing.

As the Welsh Government is preparing its budget, we request, therefore:

1. To urge the UK Government to recognise the public leisure and culture sectors as vulnerable sectors, and to commit to an extension of the energy price cap to cover charitable leisure and culture services.
2. Immediate, direct financial support to the public leisure and culture sector as part of its commitment to create a stronger, fairer and greener Wales through an increase in revenue funding to local authorities. This increase in funding should provide a directive to support preventative wellbeing services<sup>5</sup>, including public leisure and culture.
3. Additional capital funding for energy projects through the Welsh Government's Energy Service and Salix funding, with all benefits of these schemes being accessible to Trusts as key partners to local authorities.

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<sup>5</sup> For more information on how leisure and culture trusts can support with preventative wellbeing services, please see our joint report with the Welsh NHS Confederation here: <https://communityleisureuk.org/work/health-wellbeing/#wales-health-report>



2 February 2023

Dear Mr Evans,

**RE: Provisional Local Government Revenue and Capital Settlements for 2023-24**

We are writing to you on behalf of leisure and culture trusts in Wales who deliver vital public leisure, sport, physical activity, library, cultural and arts activities for communities across Wales. These are charitable, non-profit distributing organisations that operate on small margins and deliver public leisure and culture in collaboration with local government.

The public leisure and culture sector is currently in crisis and in need of additional support from the Welsh Government. As charitable Trusts are key partners to local government and support them in the delivery of the Future Generations Act, the Local Government Revenue and Capital Settlement provides a vital opportunity to confirm much needed support for leisure and culture trusts.

State of the public leisure and culture sector

As evidenced in the recent report from the Senedd's Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee, Wales' "culture and sport sectors need additional help to cope with the cost of living crisis. They are still dealing with the impacts of the pandemic – both on participation and their own financial health – and so are ill-equipped to weather the storm we all currently face."<sup>1</sup>

Coordination and collaboration between Welsh Government departments, encompassing Culture and Sport, Economy, Health and Social Services, as well as Local Government, will be key to addressing this crisis.

We undertook an in-depth analysis of the position of our members in Wales. In November 2022, 60% of our members were in crisis or rapidly heading towards one. When we repeated the question post- announcement of the Energy Bill Relief Scheme in January 2023, this figure had increased slightly to 70% of our members in Wales.

In November 2022, 80% of our members projected a deficit budget at the end of this financial year. The combined deficit anticipated for this financial year is over £5.4 million for leisure trusts only.

One Trust that was at risk in November and is now in crisis as of January 2023 commented: *"Will be in crisis by the end of this year. No current planned closures but significant staff reorgansation in order to meet rising costs. Likely redundancies and significant organisational turmoil."*

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<sup>1</sup> Welsh Parliament Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee. Increasing costs Impact on culture and sport November 2022. Available at: <https://business.senedd.wales/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=39879>

For the minority that are not yet in a crisis position, they commented in November: “Utilities coming up in April with gas going up 250% and electricity 49%-152% rise. This would mean an additional £700k in costs immediately from April 1st.”

There is no financial projections data available for the next financial year, as this is dependent on confirmation of local authority levels of support. There are widespread cuts to services expected with financial support from Councils to leisure trusts reducing and an inability to offset reduced funding through income generation due to the nature of the services and price sensitivity to ensure services remain accessible. As a result of the financial uncertainty in the landscape, Trustee Boards for our members are faced with difficult decisions around the future viability of organisations and uncertainty over being able to sign off as going concerns for the next year.

We recognise that local government, as key partners in the provision of public leisure and culture, continue to face significant pressures with their financial planning and budgeting. Welsh local government is facing a £784m budget black hole next year alone which is only likely to rise ever further in subsequent years<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, while the 7.9% increase in funding from the Welsh Government, which is around £400m, is welcomed, we echo the Welsh Local Government Association’s warning that tough decisions will remain due to continuing challenging economic circumstances.<sup>3</sup>

#### Confirmed business support

While we welcome the Minister’s recognition of the current economic context, including high inflation, and the pressures on businesses and other ratepayers in Wales, there is an urgent need to recognise the distinct operating environment and additional benefits offered through social enterprise and charitable trust delivery models. As public benefit organisations, delivering public services, these organisations have limited ability to offset cost increases through charging or income generating activities.

As organisations dedicated to: maximisation of public benefit, within available resources; deep community integration, knowledge and engagement; promoting community employment; and concerned with service sustainability and development, rather than, exclusively, shareholder investment returns, they offer potentially greater interest and focus on and long-term commitment to community benefit, development and wealth-building<sup>4</sup>.

Therefore, while the Welsh Government’s announcement of £140m of non-domestic rates relief for retail, leisure, and hospitality businesses in Wales is welcomed, for our members as

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<sup>2</sup> Welsh Local Government Association. “Hopeful of continuation of Welsh Government’s commitment to local services”. Available at: <https://www.wlga.wales/hopeful-of-continuation-of-welsh-government%e2%80%99s-commitment-to-local-services>

<sup>3</sup> Welsh Local Government Association. Welsh Government has supported councils with today’s settlement, but tough decisions remain, says WLGA. Available at: <https://www.wlga.wales/welsh-government-has-supported-councils-with-settlement-but-tough-decisions-remain>

<sup>4</sup> Stone King. Leisure and Culture Trusts and Progressive Public Sector Commissioning: a Paper Commissioned by Community Leisure UK. Available at: <https://communityleisureuk.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Leisure-Trusts-and-Progressive-Commissioning.pdf>

charities and social enterprises, this will provide little to no relief as they will already receive business rate relief.

Key recommendations for the 2023-2024 Settlement

Given how vital public leisure and culture is for the health and wellbeing of our nation, we would urge the Minister to consider the following recommendations for the final 2023-2024 Settlement:

- Confirm the increase in revenue funding, with an encouragement for local government to invest in public leisure and culture as essential services, in line with their responsibilities under the Well-being of Future Generations Act.
- Set out what tangible support the Welsh Government will provide to the wider sector – including leisure centres, swimming pools, theatres and the wider arts and culture sector – to help navigate the energy crisis across 2023-24 so that service restrictions and facility closures can be minimised.
- Recognise the unique role that charities and social enterprises play in our economy and for the wellbeing of communities, and prioritise support for high-energy using charities and social enterprises where the sole purpose is social value and delivery of public services for communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our response to the Provisional Local Government Revenue and Capital Settlements for 2023-24. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of any further assistance.

Yours sincerely,



Jennifer Huygen  
Head of Policy and Strategic Partnership, Lead for Wales  
Community Leisure UK

[jenniferhuygen@communityleisureuk.org](mailto:jenniferhuygen@communityleisureuk.org)  
<https://communityleisureuk.org/>

1 February 2023

To whom it may concern

**RE: Provisional Local Government Revenue and Capital Settlements for 2023-24**

The Welsh Sports Association (WSA) is the membership body for the sport and leisure industry in Wales, charged with the task of leading advocacy and developing resilience across the sector. We work with our members including the National Governing Bodies of Sport, Local Authorities, Leisure Trusts, education providers and private businesses as well as other key partners such as Community Leisure UK to provide a collective view of the sector in Wales.

As we have emerged from the pandemic and into the cost of living crisis, pressures on our sporting infrastructure are growing. The buildings and facilities which provide the spaces for us all to be safely active are currently under considerable strain – caused in no small part by increased energy costs.

In November 2022, Community Leisure UK<sup>1</sup> interviewed their members in Wales who provide public leisure services on behalf of Local Authorities. These interviews revealed that up to 80% of these leisure trusts are in crisis or face crisis imminently. This was largely attributed to increased energy costs.

Similarly, the Local Government Association – in a briefing for Parliament<sup>2</sup> suggest that energy costs as a percentage of turnover in leisure services have increased from 10-15% in 2019 to 25-30% in for 2023-24. It is simply impossible for these services to absorb such a significant increase in costs without significant impact on services.

The better than expected Local Government settlement may have alleviated some immediate risks, however we remain concerned that the next financial year will be extremely difficult for non-statutory services as prices continue to rise. Whilst funding has increased to Local Authorities, we anticipate this being prioritised towards statutory services, to the detriment of leisure and physical activity.

We saw examples of this in 22-23. In December 2021 the Minister for Finance and Local Government suggested in her letter<sup>3</sup> that increased funding for Local Authorities should be used to support those sectors still feeling the impact of the pandemic. As far as we are aware, very little was made available to the sport and leisure sector despite continued depressed customer numbers and a slow return to activity.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://communityleisureuk.org/news/82-of-charitable-trusts-in-wales-are-at-risk/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.local.gov.uk/parliament/briefings-and-responses/briefing-note-councils-and-leisure-providers-mitigating-impact>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-12/letter-to-local-authorities.pdf>

In recent weeks, the Leisure sector has also been excluded from the UK Government Energy Bill Discount Scheme, which would have eased some pressure. We are extremely grateful for the Welsh Government's indication of support for bringing leisure into the scheme.

However, without an injection of targeted and specific funding, above and beyond the Local Government settlement, it is difficult to see how Welsh public leisure services will make it through the next financial year intact. We are already hearing of plans to reduce opening hours, close leisure centres, increase fees and charges and continued challenges in recruitment due to levels of pay.

Loss of service, whether through closure, reduced opening hours or 'rationalisation' will harm the nations health and wellbeing, and flies in the face of our commitments under the Future Generations Act to work towards.

If a significant loss of public leisure facilities is experienced it will have an impact on all of our members – fewer children will learn to swim, there will be less space available for community and grassroots sport to take place, and safe affordable spaces to stay fit and active, especially in winter will be harder to access.

We already know from work undertaken by Sport Wales and ComRes that Welsh people are doing less sport and physical activity due to cost pressures. If public provision of leisure services continues to come under pressure and is reduced this will only be exacerbated – in the long run increasing costs to the NHS and other public services.

In short, the current Local Government settlement, though better than expected does not seem to tackle the problems we know are building in the sport and leisure sector.

Faithfully

*Andrew Howard*

*Chief Executive Officer, Welsh Sports Association*

Dawn Bowden AS/MS  
Dirprwy Weinidog y Celfyddydau a Chwaraeon, a'r Prif Chwip  
Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport, and Chief Whip



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref Petition P-06-1323  
Ein cyf/Our ref DB/00037/23

Jack Sargeant MS  
Chair - Petitions committee  
Senedd Cymru  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

7 February 2023

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your correspondence of 23 January about petition P-06-1323 and the request that the Welsh Government step in and purchase St David's Hall in Cardiff. The Welsh Government would like to see it continue to welcome diverse performers and audiences to its unique surroundings.

The future of the venue is an issue for Cardiff Council. The Council is not immune to the immense financial pressures faced by all local authorities in Wales, and while the best is being done to protect its budgets, the Welsh Government is aware that very difficult options must be explored.

Cardiff Council is mindful of the status of the building as a multi-purpose cultural venue and the need to maintain the integrity of the acoustics in the Hall and has committed to ensuring the venue retains its place as the National Concert Hall of Wales. If Cardiff Council choose to progress the deal with AMG, I would strongly encourage them to reflect this commitment in the contractually binding terms, including appropriate safeguards, to ensure the venue's cultural standing in Wales is maintained and protected for years to come.

With the cost-of-living crisis, spiralling energy costs and the slow recovery from Covid, it is a difficult time for theatres and arts venues. Venues are having to explore how they can be more resilient and sustainable. However, St David's Hall, with its exceptional acoustics, has a very important role in orchestral and classical music provision in the capital. It also hosts many community-based activities across a broad spectrum of interests, abilities and ages, and we are keen to understand how such programmes are to be protected or developed in any new proposal.

Cardiff Council has already engaged with the Welsh Government and with the Arts Council of Wales (ACW) about the venue's future. Cardiff Council is also engaging with the buildings

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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.

key stakeholders about their concerns and requirements, should AGM/Live Music take over the building's operation, and I have urged Cardiff Council to continue those discussions.

The Welsh Government only received a request for funding from Cardiff Council on 22 December, subsequent to the in-principle agreement from Cardiff Council to progress with the proposal to hand over the running of St David's Hall to AGM/Live Music, which was given on 15 December. Any funding request to the Welsh Government would need to be considered through the submission of a full business case and with the support of ACW.

Given the significant level of funding required, the Welsh Government is not in a position to pay for the repairs or subsidise the ongoing operation of the building. Any decision on funding would require a full five case business model to be submitted.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dawn Bowden'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'D' and 'B'.

**Dawn Bowden AS/MS**

Dirprwy Weinidog y Celfyddydau a Chwaraeon, a'r Prif Chwip  
Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport, and Chief Whip

Delyth Jewell MS,

Chair,

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

9 March 2023

Annwyl Delyth,

### **Inquiry into local authority leisure and library services**

The Local Government and Housing Committee has agreed to undertake an inquiry into local authority leisure and library services.

The terms of reference for the inquiry are to look at:

- The current state of local authority leisure and library service provision;
- The financial and operational challenges facing local authorities to maintain these vital community services;
- Local authority arrangements and exit strategies where alternative delivery models utilised are unsuccessful;
- How the provision of other services provided by local authorities interact with leisure and library services;
- How local authorities use alternative models of service delivery in Wales, and the perceived benefits associated with them;
- Good practice to ensure sustainability of local leisure and library services for future generations.



We recently launched a [call for evidence](#) and will be undertaking visits to library and leisure facilities in north east Wales and south Wales on Thursday 16 March, before starting oral evidence sessions on 23 March.

I have asked the clerking team to keep the clerk of your committee updated on the progress of this work.

Yours sincerely,



John Griffiths MS

Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

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