

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

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Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 2, Senedd

Meeting date: 1 February 2024

Meeting time: 09.30 – 12.30

For further information contact:

Lleu Williams, Committee Clerk

0300 200 6565

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

## Hybrid

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### Pre-meeting registration

(09.15 – 09.30)

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

(09.30)

### 2 Six Nations rugby broadcasting rights: evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union (1)

(09.30 – 10.30)

(Pages 1 – 27)

- Abi Tierney, Chief Executive Officer, Welsh Rugby Union (WRU)
- Nigel Walker, Executive Director of Rugby, Welsh Rugby Union (WRU)

#### Attached Documents:

- Research brief: Six Nations rugby broadcasting rights
- Legal advice note: Six Nations rugby broadcasting rights
- Evidence from the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU): Six Nations rugby broadcasting rights
- Evidence from Six Nations Rugby Limited: Six Nations rugby broadcasting rights



- Evidence from the Association for Commercial Broadcasters and On-demand Services (COBA): Six Nations rugby broadcasting rights

## **Break**

(10.30 – 10.40)

### **3 Six Nations rugby broadcasting rights: evidence session with other stakeholders (2)**

(10.40 – 11.40)

- Dave Chapman, Executive Director in Wales, UK Hospitality
- Huw Llewellyn Davies, former BBC Cymru Wales rugby commentator
- Professor Richard Haynes, Communications, Media and Culture, University of Stirling
- Seimon Williams, Author of 'Welsh Rugby: What Went Wrong'

### **4 Papers to note**

(11.40)

#### **4.1 Welsh Government Draft Budget 2024–25**

(Pages 28 – 37)

Attached Documents:

- Letter to the Deputy Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism from the Institute for the Study of Welsh Estates: Welsh Government Draft Budget 2024–25 – 25 January 2024
- Response from the First Minister: Welsh Government Draft Budget 2024–25 – 25 January 2024
- Response from the Minister for Education and Welsh Language: Welsh Government Draft Budget 2024–25 – 25 January 2024

- Response from the Minister for Economy and the Deputy Minister for Arts, Sport, and Tourism – 29 January 2024

#### **4.2 Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union**

(Pages 38 – 56)

Attached Documents:

- Response from the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) to the Sport Resolutions: Independent review of the Welsh Rugby Union: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union – January 2024

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

(11.40)

#### **Break**

(11.40 – 11.50)

#### **6 Six Nations rugby broadcasting rights: consideration of evidence**

(11.50 – 12.15)

#### **7 Welsh Government Draft Budget 2024–25: consideration of the draft report**

(12.15 – 12.30)

(Pages 57 – 93)

Attached Documents:

- Draft report: Scrutiny of the Welsh Government’s Draft Budget for 2024–25 – 2 February 2024

Document is Restricted

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

Document is Restricted

26 January 2024

F.A.O. Llew Williams

Clerk

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

Welsh Parliament

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

Dear Llew Williams

With gratitude for the opportunity to consult on this subject, we can confirm our continued belief that the current listed sports regime is the one most suitable for Welsh rugby.

We would strongly guard against moving Six Nations Rugby Championship broadcast rights from Group B to the Group A list of sporting events of “national interest” as nominated by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport.

Our primary motivation for making this recommendation is to maintain the balance which currently exists in the broadcasting ecosystem. One which currently retains the interest of all potential broadcast partners in a competitive process.

Put simply, the negative financial implications of moving international rugby matches in the Six Nations Rugby Championship to the protected list could have a devastating impact on the whole of the game in Wales in the medium and long term.

Of course, Welsh rugby holds a unique and special place in our national culture. We are the governing body for the game, and we know its true ownership lies throughout the nation. This is a great strength and it brings with it a keenly felt responsibility to ensure that the game remains accessible to its people.

But we also have responsibility to ensure that both the professional and community games in Wales are sustainable.

As illustrated in our latest Annual Report for the year ending 2023 (which can be found here <https://community.wru.wales/cy/the-wru/reports/>), 65% of the annual turnover of the Welsh Rugby Union Group is derived from staging international matches at Principality Stadium featuring Wales teams and the commercial activities associated with these teams. Coverage of our matches and the corresponding profile of our teams obviously directly influences this commercial activity.

More directly, international broadcast turnover last year amounted to £17.3m in a year when the WRU Group’s turnover, excluding URC/ECPR income, was £93.6m. Over the last five years 26% of the Union’s income has been provided by broadcast rights.



It is vitally important to understand how delicately balanced the Welsh rugby ecosystem is and how reliant it is on the commercial value associated with the fixtures the Committee is discussing.

All the profits made by the WRU Group are fed back into the game in Wales. We have a stated policy of maximum reinvestment into the game annually, rather than retaining profits. We have been able to increase our investment in Welsh rugby by £2.4m, up to £65.3m this year.

The health of Welsh rugby relies heavily upon the income generated by its media rights. This funding fuels the investment in the development and grassroots areas of the game and therefore its long-term sustainability.

Our position is **not that** Six Nations Championship rugby should be moved away from free-to-air television channels. **It is that** to place this restriction on rugby would artificially restrict the market for our media rights and significantly diminish our earning potential to devastating effect on our game.

We need to retain the option to broadcast on subscription services, in order to keep the existing tension in the market. Of course, we do not wish to diminish the reach of our game. To the contrary, we need and want to be seen, but there is a balance to be struck.

The Six Nations Championship has remained on domestic television screens since its inception, not because the unions involved have been compelled to do so but because the tension in the market has resulted in the market delivering a fair price.

There is obviously a balance, for our partners and sponsors and also for us as a governing body intent on driving increased participation in our game, between visibility and access to our senior international matches and the direct value attributable to their broadcast.

The point to emphasise is that it is the WRU and Six Nations Rugby which is best placed to strike this balance and that it is, self-evidently, in our own best interests to do so.

We have already significantly diversified the way in which we communicate with our supporters, in accordance with the fast-changing ways in which they consume their media. We are already changing and we are doing so in the best interests of our game, with all factors considered, so that we remain both accessible and relevant.

The provision of Welsh language broadcast is also a central part of the WRU's contribution to media rights negotiations and always will be. The Welsh language is part of the cultural identity of the game in Wales and its provision is important to our brand, our commercial success and our heritage as the governing body of our game. We will continue to do our utmost to ensure there is Welsh Language coverage of our matches.



In conclusion, we ask the Committee to consider that the position of the WRU Group on this subject is closely aligned to that of Six Nations Rugby: that an open and competitive process is critical to driving fair market value, which in turn enables us to make a balanced decision and deliver the best combination of audience reach to grow the sport, to maintain high quality coverage to engage rugby fans and to create a fair financial return to reinvest into the game.

A broadcast invitation to tender will be issued in the UK later this year for our competitions from the 2026 season onwards, by Six Nations Rugby. It will ensure, as with previous Six Nations Rugby tender processes, that all principal broadcasters (Free To Air and Pay) will have the opportunity to respond. For the benefit of doubt, the opportunity will be made available to UK FTA broadcasters through this process to acquire all or some of the Six Nations Rugby Championships (Men's and Women's).

An open and competitive process is critical to driving fair market value, which in turn enables a balanced decision to deliver the best combination of audience reach to grow the sport, high quality coverage to engage rugby fans and fair financial return to reinvest into the game.

Yours sincerely



**Abi Tierney**  
**WRU Group CEO**



**PRIVATE**

By email only

Mr Llew Williams  
Clerk - Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International  
Relations Committee  
Welsh Parliament

25 January 2024

Dear Mr Williams,

Thank you for your correspondence dated 19th December 2023 and invitation to discuss broadcast coverage of the Men's and Women's Six Nations Championships in the UK, and specifically in Wales.

Firstly, we feel it is important to provide some background and context about Six Nations Rugby Limited's ("**SNRL**") role and responsibilities operating on behalf of and in partnership with each of its six member unions, including the WRU.

In 2020, the six unions agreed for all of their home international rugby media rights to be consolidated in order for SNRL to represent them on a centralised basis. These rights now include the men's Autumn International fixtures (currently the "Autumn Nations Series") and certain other international rugby matches as well as the annual Six Nations Championships (itself encompassing the men's, women's and age-group tournaments).

The rationale behind this is to provide a streamlined calendar and more exciting competition formats for rugby and sports fans of all ages. Within this media strategy, striking the right balance between reach and revenue generation (essential for our unions to reinvest across all areas of the game in their respective countries) is our core principle.

When considering audience reach today, it is important to consider the enormous changes in how fans now consume and enjoy rugby. This now spans live, highlights, clips, docuseries, surround programming, archive, podcasts and other audio to name a few, much of which is available free to view/access across various platforms including

social media. In 2023, social media video views of Six Nations content globally neared 800 million.

A Deloitte report in 2023<sup>1</sup> points to the changing consumption habits of younger sports fans, where 90% of Gen Z fans use social media to consume sports content. In Wales alone, total social media use relating to the Six Nations Championships in 2023 increased 17 percentage points year-on-year<sup>2</sup>, driven by short-form content across various digital and social platforms - half of fans engaged in second screen behaviour whilst watching a Six Nations match.

We are increasingly working with our unions to reach new audiences by meeting them where they choose to consume content. For example, we have recently launched a behind-the-scenes Netflix series ("Six Nations: Full Contact"), revamped our fantasy gaming proposition and increased media exposure activity (i.e. digital creators, influencers and enhanced press access).

### **Broadcast rights represent the largest share of WRU income.**

Based on WRU's 2022 financial statements, 67% of annual turnover was reinvested in the game. This funding fuels the investment in the development and grassroots areas and therefore rugby's long-term sustainability.

Broadcast rights for national team matches typically contribute the largest singular revenue line item in the accounts, averaging 26% of annual revenue over the last 5 years. Any change to that will impact directly on the health of Welsh rugby.

SNRL intends to issue a broadcast invitation to tender ("**ITT**") in the UK in the next 15 months for our competitions from the 2026 season onwards. It will ensure, as with previous Six Nations Rugby tender processes, that all principal broadcasters (Free-To-Air ("FTA") and Pay) will have the opportunity to respond.

SNRL has a duty to the WRU and each of its unions to ensure the optimal balance of promoting the game to a broader audience, driving audience reach and unlocking the revenue generation opportunities that become achievable by way of creating competitive tension for these broadcast rights.

For the benefit of doubt, there is no scenario whereby UK FTA broadcasters will not have the opportunity through the process to acquire all or some of the Six Nations Rugby Championships (men's and women's).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/industry/media-and-entertainment/immersive-sports-fandom.html>

<sup>2</sup> Nielsen consumer research report, Six Nations 2023

An open and competitive process is critical to driving fair market value, which in turn enables SNRL to make a balanced decision and deliver the best combination of audience reach to grow the sport, high quality coverage to engage rugby fans and fair financial return to reinvest into the game.

The decision that follows the ITT process will involve rigorous and transparent consultation with each of our unions as custodians for the sport in their countries and independent SNRL Board members, conscious of the relevance of any decision that is made on the sporting community as a whole.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Harrison', written over a horizontal line.

Tom Harrison  
**CEO, Six Nations Rugby Limited**

## **Listed Sports Regime Inquiry**

**Response from COBA to the Culture,  
Communications, Welsh Language,  
Sport, and International Relations  
Committee**

**January 2024**

## Introduction

1. COBA is the Association for Commercial Broadcasters and On-Demand Services. It represents multichannel broadcasters and on-demand services.
2. COBA members operate a wide variety of services, offering news, factual, children's, drama, music, arts, entertainment, sports and comedy. Their content is available on free-to-air and pay-TV platforms, as well as on-demand.
3. COBA members are arguably the fastest growing part of the UK television industry, and are increasing their investment in jobs, UK content and infrastructure. They make this investment without support from the licence fee or indirect support from statutory prominence.
4. For further information please contact Adam Minns, COBA's Executive Director, at [adam@coba.org.uk](mailto:adam@coba.org.uk).

1. COBA members play an important role in bringing sporting events to a wide audience. Warner Bros. Discovery, Sky, Amazon Prime Video and others have often made major non-listed events free at point of access, including partnering with PSBs themselves. For example, Prime Video partnered with Channel 4 for the US Open Final to offer a simulcast. In some cases, these non PSB services are able to offer events to a wider audience free at point of access than PSBs' comparable services. For example, Sky's Youtube channel is free at point of use and has more subscribers than ITV's online service.
2. The resulting competition for IP rights to sporting events is crucial for investment in grassroots sports. Sky, for example, has been a long-standing partner of the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), with exclusive rights to many matches. This long-term partnership has helped support strong growth in turnover for the ECB, and a substantial increase in the body's investment in grassroots cricket, which is now worth £44m a year, double the comparable amount ten years ago. For its part, Prime Video recently donated £1m to women's tennis.
3. We therefore urge policymakers to encourage competition to bring sports events to viewers. We of course note this must be balanced with making events available to as wide as possible audience, but this is not necessarily mutually exclusive. As we have mentioned, non PSBs have repeatedly demonstrated they can successfully show events free at point of access, as well as via their pay services.
4. Crucially, the Media Bill will end such competition for listed events by prohibiting any service that is not a PSB from showing a listed event even if that service is free and widely available. We therefore ask policymakers to exercise caution when considering recommending that further events be added to the listed regime, especially if the sports in question need investment in order to compete with other sports or countries, or to strengthen their grassroots activities.

5. Beyond sport, we wish to note the vital role of non PSB players in Wales. Thanks to a mixed ecology of non PSBs and PSBs, high-end TV spend in Wales has grown from £31m pa in 2017 to £71m in 2019, making the nation one of the fastest growth areas within the UK screen sector. Over this period, the Welsh screen sector's GVA has doubled (up to £63m pa, or £108m with value chain impacts included). Employment in the Welsh screen sector has also doubled, with 1,200 people now employed in the sector.
  
6. This success story has been driven by a wide range of players, from PSBs such as the BBC's Dr Who series to many non PSBs. For example, the HBO-BBC co-production His Dark Materials is now in season three, while Sky has shot returning series Britannia; season two of I Hate Suzie, starring Billy Piper, with HBO; and A Discovery of Witches, with another COBA member, AMC Networks. Willow, a Disney+ original series, filmed at Dragon Studios in Llanilid, while HBO has partnered with the BBC on Bad Wolf's Industry for a second season. Crucially, such investment is often sustained over multiple series, allowing a creative cluster to form in the area.

# Agenda Item 4 YSTADAU CYMRU INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF WELSH ESTATES

Dawn Bowden  
Deputy Minister for Arts, Sport & Tourism  
Welsh Government  
Cardiff  
CF99 1SN  
Email: Dawn.Bowden@gov.wales

Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Dear Deputy Minister,

## **RE: PROPOSED BUDGET CUTS TO THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE ANCIENT AND HISTORICAL MONUMENTS OF WALES (RCAHMW)**

I am writing on behalf of the Institute for the Study of Welsh Estates at Bangor University to express our significant concerns regarding the cuts to Welsh heritage and historic environment bodies proposed in the Welsh Government's Draft Budget for 2024/25.

Whilst we recognise the extremely challenging budgetary environment conditioning the Welsh Government's spending, we feel obligated to highlight the immense damage that the proposed cuts to the funding of national heritage bodies will inflict on the cultural and intellectual life of Wales.

The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW), National Library of Wales, Amgueddfa Cymru and Cadw, collectively and individually, play an essential role as leaders of the Welsh heritage sector, supporting and facilitating an incredible diversity of activities, initiatives and resources which underpin the cultural vibrancy of our nation and our ability to make sense of our communities, identities, environment and place in today's world. Fundamentally, they are a vital part of the fabric of modern Wales, and should be fully resourced to deliver on the positive long-term contributions they make towards our civic life, wellbeing and future sustainability. The proposed cuts will dramatically reduce their capacity to act as important enablers of the Welsh Government's Wellbeing Goals.

We are especially concerned about the proposed 22% cut the budget of RCAHMW. If this reduction materialises it will unavoidably necessitate staff redundancies that will make the future operation of the organisation unsustainable. In effect, the Draft Budget is signalling the destruction of RCAHMW. This would be a devastating blow to the Welsh heritage sector.

RCAHMW has been an important part of the cultural and intellectual life of Wales for generations, and continues to play a leading role in building knowledge and understanding of our incredible historic environment, right across Wales, for local communities and international audiences. Having worked closely with the brilliant team at RCAHMW, we cannot fail to be impressed by the levels of expertise, commitment and innovation residing within the organisation. The National Monuments Record of Wales (accessed via Coflein) is an important public resource for the people of Wales, which requires continual development and modification by the RCAHMW team. In the sphere of digital heritage generally, RCAHMW is recognised an international leader, a status which allows the organisation to play an important role in showcasing the heritage of Wales to global audiences. The unique expertise residing in the organisation had proved to be of immense benefit to Welsh Universities. Partnership and collaboration with RCAHMW has underpinned several successful grant applications to UK and European funding bodies, thereby bringing funding into Welsh Universities and enabling innovation in research and public engagement. Our own AHRC-funded 'Deep Mapping' project (£0.25 million) was completely reliant on RCAHMW participation. All of this is at risk if the proposed cuts are allowed to materialise.



### **Cyfarwyddwr | Director:**

Dr. Shaun Evans

### **Bwrdd Ymgynghorol | Advisory Board:**

Cadeirydd | Chair:  
Yr Athro | Prof. Robin Grove-White

Yr Athro | Prof. Terence Dooley  
Dr. Raj Parry Jones  
Sir David T. R. Lewis  
Mr. Thomas Lloyd OBE, DL, FSA  
Sir George Meyrick Bt.  
Mr. Michael Tree  
Mr. Einion Wyn Thomas  
Dr. Helen Williams-Ellis

*Ex Officio:*  
Yr Athro | Prof. Peter Shapely

### **#ISWE**

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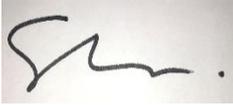


PRIFYSGOL  
**BANGOR**  
UNIVERSITY

We therefore urge the Welsh Government to reconsider the proposed cuts Welsh heritage and historic environment bodies and recognise the broader significance of these organisations to our society, culture and economy. We hope that the Welsh Government will continue to support these organisations, to enable them to deliver positive impacts in line with long-term policy objectives.

Cofion cynnes,

Dr. Shaun Evans

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light background, consisting of a stylized 'S' followed by 'E' and 'A'.

**CYFARWYDDWR | DIRECTOR**

Ccd. Delyth Jewell MS., Chair of the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee (Delyth.Jewell@senedd.Wales)



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

25 January 2024

Dear Delyth,

I am writing in response to your letter of 16 January regarding the 2024-25 draft budget for International Relations.

I have taken the approach of responding to each of your questions in turn which I am pleased to provide below in Annex 1.

Yours sincerely,

**MARK DRAKEFORD**

## ANNEX 1

- **An explanation of the discrepancy of £750,000 as outlined.**
- **Comprehensive breakdowns of planned spending within the BEL including International Engagement and International Offices.**

The £750,000 relates to the funding for 2023-24 for the Overseas Network Activity which has been mentioned within the text of the original letter but omitted in error in the summary calculations.

This funding has now been added back in and the calculations, in line with the draft budget, have been applied to the revised breakdown across the BEL below. The Overseas Operations budget pays for staff and costs associated with the direct running costs for overseas offices, therefore these cannot be reduced. I have also made a commitment to maintain the Overseas Network Activity budget of £750,000, reflecting the impact this relatively small budget makes. This means that only the International Engagement line remains where savings can be made.

International Engagement	£2,658,600
Overseas Operations: including office rent, FCDO platform charges, staff salaries and on-costs	£4,684,400
Overseas Network Activity: activities across the whole network of 21 overseas offices	£750,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£8,093,000</b>

- **Information relating to outputs, outcomes, impacts and value for money for each area of expenditure within the International Relations BEL**

As referenced in my original letter, the work associated with the International Relations BEL directly contributes to the delivery of the International Strategy and two Programme for Government commitments. Work will focus on meeting the three ambitions of the International Strategy, to raise the profile of Wales overseas, grow the economy and establish Wales as a globally responsible nation.

Activities will support priority relationships and we will also deliver activities being developed under the Wales in India year.

Due to the nature of international relations, tangible outputs and outcomes can be difficult to quantify and measure. The publication of our annual overseas network report is just one of the methods that we use to report on our outcomes.

- **Allocations and comparisons with planned spend for 2024-25 against 2023-24**

	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>
International Engagement	£2,837,600	£2,658,600
Overseas Operations	£4,684,400	£4,684,400
Overseas Network Activity	£750,000	£750,000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£8,272,000</b>	<b>8,093,000</b>

- **Information on the apparent increase in the International Engagement budget for 2024-25, including where this money has come from, what activities and outcomes this will deliver.**

The revised figures for the International Relations budget as provided above demonstrate that the £750,000 is in relation to Overseas Network Activity rather than International Engagement.

In line with the reasoning provided to the first question, the full £290,000 savings identified prior to the draft budget have been taken from the International Engagement budget line.

- **Clarification on all spending noted within your written evidence, including projects such as Academi Heddwch.**

Detail of proposed spending were provided in my original letter in line with delivery of the International Relations budget. The details of activities delivered by this funding will be outlined in the annual overseas network report.

Changing global situations can result in the focus of our work and funding changing in-year, therefore we need to remain flexible and responsive.

Strategic partners are currently writing their bids for funding in 2024-25. This includes funding to the Welsh Centre for International Affairs to deliver Academi Heddwch as a Programme for Government commitment. This is included within the International Engagement budget line and does not have a separate budget line.

- **Information on how you have prioritised your spending including what savings you have identified (and the rationale for doing so).**

We have prioritised spend, and therefore savings, based on what we have set out to achieve within the International Strategy and commitments in the Programme for Government.

Officials in International Relations completed a deep dive of the budget requirements for the 2024-25 financial year and £290,000 in savings were identified in addition to the ongoing reduction of £171,000 previously agreed. This resulted in the new budget of £8.093m. As set out earlier, the Overseas Operations budget pays for staff costs and overseas offices are fixed costs and cannot be reduced. I have, therefore, focussed savings on International Engagement given the nature of the budget for the Overseas Operations and reflecting the impact of the work and activities delivered using a relatively small budget for Overseas Network Activity.

- **An outline of further potential challenges and prioritisations you may need to take in future years.**

We know budgets are challenging and will continue to be so; therefore, we prioritise our work to ensure we continue to deliver internationally with those countries and regions where the best outcomes for Wales can be achieved.

Changing global situations can result in the focus of our work and funding changing in-year. We cannot anticipate when, or if, these could occur and consider any such changes resulting in the reprioritisation of funding as they arise. This flexible and responsive approach is taken across all our international activity and has meant that we have been able to respond positively to unexpected opportunities to raise Wales' profile as they arise.

**On the involvement and funding requirements of strategic partners responsible for delivering the International Strategy:**

- **Confirmation of what steps were taken to obtain key financial information from strategic partners during the Draft Budget's development, and prior to its publication on 19 December 2023;**
- **The Welsh Government's contingency plan if strategic partners report in Q1 that the reduced Draft Budget is insufficient to deliver their responsibilities under the International Strategy.**

We regularly engage with all our strategic partners individually to understand their plans and expenditure. Ahead of the announcement of the Draft Budget in December, we met with all strategic partners to outline the Welsh Government's priorities and to begin discussions around how they may be able to contribute to delivery, potentially in an environment where the budget would be greatly reduced. At this meeting, the financial challenges we are collectively facing were discussed.

We have asked strategic partners to submit their draft proposals for the 2024-25 financial year. We will work across government, and with our strategic partners, to continue to support delivery of the International Strategy. We meet regularly with our strategic partners to monitor progress and financial planning and will continue to do so over the coming financial year.

### **A breakdown of planned spending on priority relationships identified in the International Strategy for 2024-25**

The relationships we have developed with our priority countries and regions underpin all of our international work, from events and visits through to securing inward investment and exporting our goods and services.

Work with our priority relationships covers spend across all areas of International Relations, as well as the wider department and across government. This is reflected in different activities undertaken including, for example, hosting representatives from priority regions at Wales Tech Week, visits to regions such as the Basque Country and Silesia, inward visits by representatives and diplomats to Wales and the ongoing work to develop new relationships when appropriate.

- **The rationale for renaming the International Development BEL as the International Sustainable Development BEL, including what difference this has made to the spending under this BEL.**

The rationale for renaming of the International Development BEL was to more accurately reflect the work of the Wales and Africa programme within this BEL. This also reflects the ambition of the International Strategy to establish Wales as a globally responsible nation.

- **Comprehensive breakdowns of planned spending under the International Sustainable Development BEL.**
- **Why the £350,000 MEG to MEG transfer from the International Relations BEL to cover costs of Wales and Africa does not reappear as an incoming transfer on the 2024-25 Draft Budget.**

The International Sustainable Development BEL will fund the following work in 2024-25:

- Size of Wales/Mbale Tree Planting - £450,000
- Hub Cymru Africa - £349,000
- WCVA Wales and Africa Small Grants £210,000
- DEC £22,000
- Mbale Coalition Against poverty (CAP) £12,500

- Safeguarding contract £6,500

For 2024-25, the £350,000 for Wales and Africa has been included in the International Sustainable Development BEL line in the draft budget. It is for the Minister for Social Justice to decide the appropriate use of budget.

- **A list of emergency appeals supported by the Welsh Government in the 2023-24 budget year, where this funding came from, and current plans for support relating to global conflicts in the 2024-25 Draft Budget.**

The Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) has not launched an appeal so far in the 2023-24 financial year. Previous donations have been made from either the International Development BEL or the International Relations BEL by either utilising an underspend or by accessing funds from reserves. There is no dedicated budget to respond to emergency appeals.

Any future funding will be considered on a case-by-case basis working in partnership with DEC to support its appeals.

DEC is a coalition of 15 major aid and development agencies that come together at times of crisis to raise funds and then distribute them quickly and efficiently. It has an excellent track record of informing the UK public of global disasters, and the humanitarian aid that is required, as well as setting up easy ways for donations to be received. DEC has an immediate impact, getting aid to people who need it quickly and efficiently.

- **Information on major/international events, including specific budget allocations for 2023-24, and details of any planned events and current planned spending for 2024-25.**

Major events are led by the most appropriate Welsh Government department, with support from International Relations, where appropriate. For example, the work on the Men's FIFA World Cup was led by Sport, whilst the work on the Rugby World Cup was jointly led by Sport and the International Relations Team in France. International Relations does not have a separate budget line for major events, with the work around the recent Rugby World Cup in France coming under the wider objectives and budget of the Wales in France year.

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



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: MA/JMEWL/3107/23

Delyth Jewell AS  
Cadeirydd  
Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y Gymraeg,  
Chwaraeon a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol,  
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[SeneddDiwylliant@senedd.cymru](mailto:SeneddDiwylliant@senedd.cymru)

26 January 2024

Dear Delyth,

Thank you for your letter, dated 16 January, seeking further information following my draft budget scrutiny session with the Committee on 11 January. I appreciate your time, advice and interest in our work delivering *Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers*.

In your letter, you ask for further information about the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol and the National Centre for Learning Welsh and the possible effect of budget cuts across Welsh Government on the delivery of *Cymraeg 2050*. We have already started to collate the information that you requested and hope to share this with you before the end of February.

Yours sincerely,

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

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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.

Vaughan Gething AS/MS  
Gweinidog yr Economi  
Minister for Economy



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

Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: MA/VG/3064/24

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

29 January 2024

Dear Delyth,

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the draft budget 2024-25 proposals for the Economy Main Expenditure Group at our evidence session on 17 January. Please find enclosed the further information as requested to inform your ongoing budget scrutiny.

### **Prioritising spending to safeguard the national collections.**

My officials continue to work with Amgueddfa Cymru and the National Library of Wales to understand their long-term maintenance needs and any implications for the safety of the national collections. Where additional funding becomes available, I am doing all I can to support these organisations. For example, we are currently considering requests from Amgueddfa Cymru for additional funding to be spent this financial year on capital projects and items, some of which will help address their long-term maintenance issues. I am also providing the National Library with an additional £1.5m across 2023/24 and 2024/25 to help with the redevelopment of one of its storage spaces. This is on top of their grant in aid and the additional decarbonisation funding being given to both organisations.

I acknowledge the challenges that Amgueddfa Cymru and the National Library are facing in maintaining a historic estate and therefore safeguard the collections in its care. I will continue to review some of our current spending commitments, such as for the Museum of North Wales.

### **Remit letters and Culture Strategy**

I remain confident that I can publish strategic priorities for culture by the end of the year. Officials are currently reviewing the content of the draft strategy given the new budgetary context and considering this in consultation with the culture strategy Steering Group. I will balance the need to provide strategic direction and to maintain the long-term vision and ambitions contained in the draft strategy with a pragmatic approach to actions in support of delivering these ambitions that might be taken forward in the short-term.

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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.

As I said to the Committee, I will review Remit Letters in light of the Budget Settlement.

### **Welsh Government Redundancies in arm's length bodies (ALBs)**

Amgueddfa Cymru, the Arts Council of Wales, the National Library of Wales and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales are currently consulting their staff on proposed voluntary redundancy schemes scheduled to conclude this financial year. My officials are working closely and at pace with colleagues at each of these organisations and I am in the process of exploring whether I can make additional funding available this financial year to help with the costs of these redundancy schemes. Until the work underway this financial year has been completed, it is not possible for our Culture ALBs to confirm whether further redundancy schemes will be necessary next financial year. In terms of Sport Wales, it is not currently proposing to run a redundancy scheme. At present, we do not have additional funding available to support redundancy schemes in 2024/25.

### **National Contemporary Art Gallery – Anchor site**

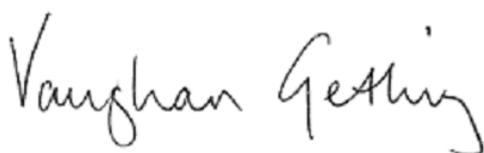
Officials have provided assurance that we will be in a position to take decisions in March 2024, following the completion of the assessment process. Resources will then be made available to support the development of a business case for the site selected during the 2024-25 financial year.

The three stages of the development of the business case will consider design and cost options, making clearer the level of investment that will be required to deliver an anchor gallery. An investment decision would then need to be made at that time based on affordability and wider priorities. Any decisions relating to the level of investment required, will need to be sensitive to the financial climate and the recent reductions to programme budgets supporting the sector.

### **Entrance fees to attractions currently free**

Like all our Cultural arm's length bodies, Amgueddfa Cymru is exploring all available fundraising opportunities and options for further income generation. This includes exploring a range of potential future charging options, only one of which is charging for entry to some or all its museums in the longer term. I have had an initial conversation with Amgueddfa Cymru's Chair and Chief Executive about this during my most recent biannual meeting with them where their intention to consider a variety of potential options was discussed.

Yours sincerely,



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



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

## WRU Independent Review Response January 2024

	Recommendation summary	Recommendation	Initial WRU Board viewpoint on recommendation	Target date for implementation
1	Appoint an oversight body	a. The WRU should appoint an external oversight group of no fewer than 3 people. At least one should be nominated by an outside body and at least one experienced in people management or organisational culture.	We will appoint this oversight group.	31 January 2024
Pack Page 38		b. For the next 3 years the WRU should report quarterly to this group, setting out its goals, actions taken to meet them and how success is measured. We hope that substantial progress will be made in the first year but recommend that the body stays in place for 3 years so it can oversee the constitutional review and changes.	We will report quarterly to this external oversight group (EOG)	Week of 18 January 2024 and each calendar quarter thereafter
		c. The group's remit should be to consider steps by the WRU to implement the recommendations in this report and to create an inclusive environment for staff and for all those involved in rugby in Wales.	We will agree terms of reference for the EOG and include this in the remit	31 January 2024
2	Continue reform of the Board	a. The WRU is a national sporting organisation which is also a large corporate body. Its Board must be an efficient body with clear responsibilities for the governance of all aspects of the WRU and should not be seen as just representing the community clubs. The executive should report to the Board on all aspects of the WRU's work.	We agree – the full new Board has been announced and is in place as at 1 January 2024. The Executive does report to the Board on all aspects of its work. We will ensure the Executive reports on all aspects of work; concisely and effectively.	14 January 2024
		b. The size of the Board should be further reduced to 10 by lowering the number of Council representatives, elected or appointed, to 2 from currently 4. The changes made at the March 2023 EGM should be given time to take	The governance changes which were set out at the EGM on 26 March have been implemented within the specified time period with the number of Council	To be discussed – 31 December 2025

		effect before further reform of the Board, so this change need not be immediate but be developed during the 3 years in which the oversight body operates.	Members elected to the Board reduced to 4. The new Board is in place as of 1 January 2024. We will commission the governance review after there has been a period of operation of the new Board and work with Member Clubs and Council to discuss these recommendations in the light of this review.	
Pack Page 39		c. We recommend that within two years the WRU commissions an external report on governance. That report should consider how the March 2023 reforms are operating and how committees can be streamlined to avoid duplication (along with other relevant matters).	We will commission an external report and review our sub-committees and establish the necessary number to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the relevant subject areas.  The Board Committees have been streamlined and in addition to the Professional Rugby Board ( PRB) and Community Rugby Board (CRB) will include a Finance Audit and Risk committee, and a People, Culture and Governance committee	31 December 2025
		d. Implement a “fit and proper person” test for Council/Board members and candidates for the Council/Board.  Board members, elected or appointed, should be able to show that their membership of the Board would not undermine the reputation of the WRU or make it harder for the WRU to promote rugby in Wales.	A fit and proper person test was introduced for appointments to the Board made over the last 6 months. It was also used for Council elections that took place in 2023..	31 March 2024

		The test should consider honesty, integrity, public statements, experience, any breaches of club or WRU standards, and commitment to inclusion of all in the sport of rugby (for example, a commitment to the standards set out by World Rugby).	We will include a positive inclusion statement in all Council and Board member recruitment going forwards.	
Pack Page 40		e. There should always be a current strategic plan for key areas of the sport, shared with relevant managers and (subject to competitor knowledge) published. This should include professional rugby, community rugby, men's rugby, women's and girls' rugby, rugby for those with disabilities, and broadening inclusion. All plans must be approved by the Board. Staff need to understand what they are asked to deliver.	We commit to this and to make this public. Our new strategic plan conversations have already started and will be completed with the support of stakeholders. This plan will be reviewed at least annually going forwards.  We will produce a WRU Group Strategic Plan ready to be published by 30 June 2024.	30 June 2024
		f. Set up a structured system for reporting to the Board which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Written reports to the Board from the executive at least quarterly and always in good time prior to each Board meeting.</li> <li>ii. Papers to the Board should identify relevant options and include clear decision-making principles or criteria.</li> <li>iii. Each report should include KPIs for individual members of the executive and departments of the WRU which should be monitored and appraised.</li> </ul>	We commit to ensuring that the reports available to the Board are clear, concise and contain the relevant amount of information to inform, discuss or make decisions as appropriate. We commit to ensuring that all Executive KPIs are shared and monitored once they have been thoroughly developed to align with our new strategy. The KPIs will cover all aspects of WRU performance, including People, Operational Performance, Finance, Programme Delivery, Risk and Assurance.	31 March 2024 Executive Board KPIs to initially be short term and then from 30 June 2024 in line with new Group Strategy
		g. The administration of the Board should be streamlined:	We have already hired some immediate support and we commit to ensuring the	14 January 2024

		i. A dedicated support service should be provided to help the Chair, chairs of committees and Board members with their roles.	resources are available to enable us to deliver on this element	
		ii. Each Board member should participate in a skills review, have a skills matrix drawn up on appointment and be encouraged to undertake appropriate development according to needs identified on their skills matrix.	A skills and experience review of the existing Board was carried out prior to the recruitment of the new Board members; this will be populated further with the skills of the new Board members and refreshed every year.	31 March 2024
Pack Page 41		iii. Everyone appointed to the Board should be offered induction training on (i) their duties as a director; (ii) good practice in governance; (iii) equality, diversity and inclusion; (iv) representing the WRU; and (v) the current state of Welsh rugby and the WRU's strategic plans.	Induction training has already been discussed by the Board and a new comprehensive induction programme has already commenced. We will take on board recommendations from throughout this report and integrate relevant points into the induction process. We commit that all Board and Council Members will receive a detailed induction and the development training as identified in the recommendations.	31 March 2024
		iv. The role of executive staff attending the Board should be clarified.	Agreed, this has been done.	14 January 2024
		v. Clarify the fiduciary role of Board members to oversee all the activities of the company, uphold its values and respect one another's skills and experience.	Agreed, this has been a key consideration of the recruitment process for the new Board. The Board has already discussed this and will spend some time in early 2024 discussing this in practice	14 January

3	Council	a. The Council is the key representative body, the forum through which member clubs engage in the WRU. It currently comprises 14 Members elected from the nine Districts and 5 nationally elected Members.	Noted	n/a
Pack Page 42		b. Article 47 of the Articles of Association reads: “The Council shall formulate the strategy for the community game in Wales, such strategy to be submitted to and agreed with the Board of Directors and the Council shall thereafter oversee the execution of that strategy. The responsibilities of the Council from time to time shall be set by the Board of Directors following consultation with the Council.”	Noted	n/a
		c. The Council currently elects 8 of its Members to the Board. Following the March EGM, it may only elect 4 of its Members to the Board and may have up to 6 Members appointed by the Board. It will then have a maximum 25 Members.	Noted	n/a
		d. The Board has a sub-committee, the Community Rugby Board, which also comprises the 14 Members elected from the nine Districts and the 5 nationally elected Members, plus a maximum 2 Executive Board members. “It is responsible for managing and delivering the execution of the strategy for community rugby as set by the WRU Council and approved by the WRU’s Board from time to time.” (WRU website)	Noted	n/a
		e. In view of the duplication of Members between Council and Community Game Board, the shared responsibility for establishing the strategy for community rugby, seeking Board approval and then delivering the approved strategy, the constitutional	This will require the consent of member clubs and Council as this structure is embedded in our Articles. We will consult on these recommendations with these bodies, understand in more detail	To be discussed – 31 December 2025

		structure should be streamlined and simplified in a single entity. It could perhaps be described as the Community Council. It should be expanded to include a wider group of stakeholders.	the concerns behind the current structure and develop a plan.	
		<p>f. To fulfil this role the Community Council should be drawn from a broader base of those involved in rugby in Wales:</p> <p>i. Membership of the Community Council should be a maximum 16 (Currently we understand the Council has 19 members: 5 National Council members and 14 District Council members – 2 each from Districts A – E and 1 each from F, G, H and J. Following the EGM in March 2023 the Board may appoint up to 6 Council members.): 9 elected from districts, 1 elected nationally and 6 representing other rugby community interests, as set out below.</p> <p>ii. The six new places on the Community Council should be for people representing (1) schools rugby; (2) rugby in colleges and universities; (3) community rugby players (The WRU will need to consult and draw up a definition. We recommend a broad definition. One option is election by captains of teams that play in leagues in Wales other than the regional sides in the United Rugby Championship. However, the exact approach we leave to the WRU.); (4) women’s and girls’ rugby (5) rugby for players with a disability and (6) officials. Where possible these should be elected but it might be difficult to identify an electorate and arrange elections at a reasonable cost in all these areas. If so, the WRU should run a competitive</p>	<p>Noted. Again, the constitution of the current Council is included in our Articles so we will consult with Council and we will need the support of member clubs to implement this. The Articles post-EGM March 2023 provide Board with the ability to appoint six additional Council Members, the intention being that this would broaden the base of representation. The Articles do not specify who these need to be, so there is discretion for the Board. There would need to a change in the Articles to reduce the number of Council Members.</p> <p>We will consult with clubs and council on these proposals whilst understanding in more detail the concerns from the Independent Review to develop a plan.</p>	To be discussed – 31 December 2025

		<p>appointment process according to a person specification it should draw up.</p> <p>iii. Members of the Community Council should be limited to 3 consecutive terms of 3 years (with the possibility of re-election after one fallow period).</p> <p>iv. The individual elected nationally should chair the Community Council and have a seat on the Board. The other Board member should be elected by the Community Council.</p>		
Pack Page 44		<p>g. We recommend above that the Board should approve and maintain the strategy for all areas of the game, including the community game. The Community Council should be a representative, not a management, body and should not direct management or set strategies or budgets.</p>	<p>Noted. The Board does have responsibility for all aspects of the game. We will consult with clubs and council on these proposals whilst understanding in more detail the concerns from the Independent Review to develop a plan.</p>	<p>To be discussed – 31 December 2025</p>
		<p>h. Membership of the Community Council should involve at least induction training on representing the WRU, its inclusion and diversity policies, its current strategic plans and their implementation.</p>	<p>We agree. We commit to ensuring that Council Members receive thorough induction training relevant to their role and representing the WRU. We will use the recommendations in this report to improve the induction programme.</p>	<p>31 March 2024</p>
		<p>i. Clubs should not see these changes as a diminution of their role. They will continue to elect or appoint Board members, attend and vote at the Annual General Meeting and have a representative forum in the Community Council.</p>	<p>Noted. Clubs are our members, and we will consider what further communication and reporting mechanisms we can put in place to assist with any changes.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
		<p>The recommended transformation of Council and of the Community Game Board would be fundamental to governance, requiring amendment to the Articles. It should thus be considered within the external report on governance, recommended in paragraph 2(c) above, and</p>	<p>Noted; we will include this within the terms of reference and consult with member clubs on this.</p>	

		would probably accelerate that report's commissioning within the next two years.		
4	Take steps to become more transparent	a. Draw up a transparency policy setting out when the WRU will give information to the public, the rugby community and employees based on the principle of sharing as much as possible. The primary reasons for withholding information should be (i) competitor knowledge; and (ii) legal obligations.	We agree. Over the next 6 months the WRU will engage with other bodies and institutions to establish best practice in this area and bring a policy, statement or framework proposal forward to the Board.	30 June 2024
Pack Page 45		b. Publish the privileges associated with membership of the Board and Council, and for senior staff (distinct from, for example, attending matches as a host in a working role). The grounds for reduction or removal should also be set out.	We agree. A review of this will be carried out and published shortly for transparency.	31 January 2024
		c. When terminating employment, the WRU should only use non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) for an express purpose, not as a matter of course. This does not preclude the use of confidentiality clauses about the terms of a settlement agreement.	We agree. Settlement Agreements will continue to be used only on a case-by-case basis and not as a matter of course.	Immediate – 14 January
		d. When reports are commissioned about general matters (rather than specific employees) they should be published unless there is a particular and agreed reason not to do so. If publication is not appropriate, the authors should be asked to write a brief summary of the issues, and their conclusions, for publication The WRU would have been in a better place at the start of 2023 had it been known that it had commissioned reports into women's national rugby, governance, and equality, diversity and inclusion which recommended significant change.	We agree that where appropriate either a summary disclosure or full disclosure of any report commissioned should be shared. This is something we will also consider within the recommendation regarding a transparency policy (as per recommendation 4(a)).	Immediate – 14 January

		<p>Debate about the organisation and funding of Welsh rugby should be actively encouraged and the WRU should seek to share information to engage people's productive participation in a structured, not speculative, way. Underlying this is greater acceptance of constructive criticism with a view to improvement. A number of people commented on the WRU seeking to control the rugby environment too much.</p>	<p>We agree and consider this a part of the strategy process that has just commenced.</p>	<p>30 June 2024</p>
5 Pack Page 46		<p>Align the WRU clearly and publicly with inclusion and diversity, demonstrating visible and vocal leadership on equality, diversity and inclusion. The WRU's commitment to inclusion and its opposition to abusive behaviour, exclusion and discrimination need to be unambiguous.</p>	<p>We commit to doing this authentically and openly.</p>	<p>30 June 2024</p>
		<p>a. Amend the WRU's statement of values to include one related to diversity and inclusion.</p>	<p>A values review will be a part of the strategy exercise and we will prioritise the identification and roll out of our values as a part of the output of the strategy.</p>	<p>30 June 2024</p>
		<p>b. Give greater publicity to women's rugby and rugby for people with disabilities.</p>	<p>Our EDI plan is aligned with this, we agree we need to invest more into this area.</p>	<p>30 Sept 2024</p>

		c. Respond robustly to discrimination and hate crime in stadia and online.	In line with our zero tolerance approach to discrimination, we agree that we need to improve our reporting mechanisms and ensure our process for dealing with reports is efficient and effective. We will further improve on the stadium reporting system by regularly publicising anti-racism and discrimination messages on the concourses and stadium TV systems and emphasise the need to report this type of behaviour to Principality Stadium personnel on event days.	31 March 2024
		d. Express clearly and publicly the WRU's commitment to the inclusion of all members of Welsh society both in rugby and in its own staff group.	We will make our clear and unambiguous statement public as a part of our strategy.	30 June 2024
		e. Have a clear equality, diversity and inclusion strategy underpinned by a delivery plan.	The WRU's EDI policy has been revisited over recent months and approved by the Board. Women's rugby is at the heart of this document. We agree that we need to work harder and move more quickly on our Inclusion delivery plan. We will develop a clear EDI delivery plan to underpin our strategy.	30 June 2024 for EDI Plan - in line with strategy 30 September for EDI Delivery Plan
		f. Work collaboratively with the EHRC, should the EHRC take any steps in relation to WRU.	We commit to working with the EHRC.	TBC once initial scope and process is agreed with EHRC.

6	Financial support to clubs	<p>Reform financial support to clubs with a view to achieving key goals reflecting the WRU's strategy for the community game. These should include all facilities for women and girls (including training and club house facilities), steps to broaden access to rugby for all communities, proper disciplinary policies and procedures in clubs for responding to unacceptable behaviour (including discriminatory behaviour) off the pitch.</p>	<p>We have recently rolled out a suite of services under the heading WRU Dysgu which are learning tools and tips for clubs to make their club houses and facilities welcoming to all sectors of society. How to take appropriate action should unacceptable behaviour be identified or witnessed is an element of this service.</p> <p>Dysgu is a re-education programme where we will be expecting all clubs to have an EDI plan by the end of 2024.</p> <p>A working group has been established to look at how investment is distributed.</p> <p>We have rewritten the payment of players (Integrity Statement) and reviewed our approach and policy in relation to our core grant.</p> <p>A self-assessment tool has been approved for clubs. The club development team will guide clubs in Wales through this process in 2024. Attached to this are supportive tools which will support the discipline procedures to enable clubs to address all behaviour which falls short of acceptable standards.</p>	<p>Already started; quarterly reviews Strategy agreed 30 June 2024 Implementation 30 June 2025</p>
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			<p>Aim to align all funding to safe, inclusive and compliant clubs across the country.</p> <p>We agree that we need to do more in this space, linking financial support for clubs to our strategic aims around safe, inclusive, welcoming clubhouses. We will need our clubs support to move forward with changes to funding to support our ambitions. We will carry out a review of how we deliver support to our clubs and what the appropriate linking mechanism is as a part of our strategy process.</p>	
7 Pack Page 49	Invest in the women's and girls' game:	<p>a. Analyse the expenditure on the women's and girls' game in light of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) income and expenditure of other unions;</li> <li>(ii) growing sponsorship, broadcast revenue and attendances at women's matches; and</li> <li>(iii) the need to invest to develop the game so that funding for women and girls is benchmarked and expressly managed based on data. Spending should be in line with other unions and with spending on men and boys and appropriate to a growth and investment phase.</li> </ul> <p>This analysis will require decisions about allocating income (For example how does one allocate general sponsorship? The sponsor will want the exposure from large TV audiences currently obtained by the men's first team. That will affect how much they pay. However sponsors will pay nothing to an organisation the public sees as excluding groups in society.) and expenditure and is not intended to be an exact exercise but to</p>	<p>We have made progress in this area but we know more needs to be done. We commit to the recommendations to support further development. We will look at areas that require investment and ensure we align that with identified sponsorship opportunities. We will review our spending and ensure that it is comparable with other competitors and our own comparable investment in the men's and boys' game, appropriate to growth.</p> <p>Detailed work has been done on establishing a strategy for women's and girls' rugby and this now needs to be integrated into the overall WRU strategy. This will be published by not later than 30 June 24. The appointment</p>	30 June 2024 to publish strategy and an update on all other matters

inform decisions. The analysis should include support for the community game as well as player development and national squads.

of a board member who has expertise in the women's game, Amanda Bennett is a key development. Amanda has played a key part in the development of the strategy to date as a member of the Women's Strategy Group. The WRU has increased its investment in women's rugby considerably over the last two years both in the community and at the top of the performance pyramid. An assessment of our competitors' spend and our own individual needs were central planks to the focus of this additional investment. The WRU's partnership with Vodafone is an excellent example of a targeted approach, regarding sponsorship investment, improving the opportunities available in the girls' and women's game at all levels.

Initial professional contracts commenced on 1 January 22 with the total number and the quantum of the contracts increasing for the second round based on what our immediate rivals were paying and the desire to raise performance levels by giving the women's squad coaches greater access to their players. There are currently 31 contracted players with 32 budgeted for. In addition, there are 2 Hybrid contracts with GB7s. For WXV there were also 5

			Fixed Term (FT) contracts, and the intention is to have 3 FT contracts for the Six Nations in 2024.	
		b. Keep the salary for professional female players at a level competitive to other careers and other nations and ensure the number of contracts is sufficient to support full national teams.	The level of payment and the number of players contracted will be kept constantly under review to ensure that it is competitive, fair and in line with other careers. It should be noted that the senior squad has risen to 6 in the world rankings over the last two years and that immediately beneath that level Wales will have two teams taking part in the Celtic Challenge with U20 and U18 teams also being established in the past 18 months too.	30 June 2024 – subject to an annual review -
Pack Page 51		c. Embed a player pathway for women and girls by completing development of the hubs offering support to players in Wales and by continuing outreach support to players at clubs in other nations. The specific approach might change but the WRU should continue to provide professional staff to support the pathway in women's rugby.	Further down the player pathway 3 player development centres have been established in East Wales, West Wales and in North Wales supported by player hubs. A Women's Pathway Physical Development Lead has been appointed who will oversee, all pathways' programmes and develop a curriculum for the physical development of our female pathway players. This position is seen as critical to the evolution of the Women's Pathway programme and underpins both our performance and injury prevention strategies  We will increase investment in our women and girl's pathways going forwards	30 June 2024 – subject to an annual review

		<p>d. Ensure the women's team has (as a minimum) current levels of support staff and access to sufficient gym time with required equipment. If sharing resources with men, the division of time should be made clear.</p>	<p>The management team which supports the Senior Women's programmes, is consistent with that of our competitors in terms of number, quality and experience of staff. The men's and women's senior team managers meet regularly to discuss utilisation of the NCE facilities. If there are any queries/issues these are brought to the attention of the PD to ensure performance and equity is at the heart of decision making.</p>	<p>Already in place – report 14 January 2024</p>
Pack Page 52		<p>e. Develop a maternity strategy for professional, or soon to be professional, players. This might involve additional funding to cover maternity and advice on return to work.</p>	<p>The maternity policy for our players was included in their contracts issued in January 2023 with all players entitled to the same benefits as other employees of the WRU.</p> <p>We will consult with our women players on the current maternity policy and support and make appropriate adaptations to support their needs where possible.</p>	<p>Already in place</p>
	8	<p>Continue to improve employment practices</p>	<p>a. Regularly measure staff and player experience, separately considering players, coaching/ managing staff and administrative staff. A range of approaches should be used to include individual interviews and anonymous online surveys.</p>	<p>Players, coaches and support staff have completed two surveys over the past 18 months with year-on-year analysis being monitored. All data is collected anonymously and discussed across a range of groups.</p>

			<p>We will consult with players to understand how best to feedback on player experience</p> <p>We will consider the use of other approaches in addition to anonymous surveys to gain feedback on employment practices.</p>	
Pack Page 53		<p>b. Expand appraisals for senior staff to include 360-degree feedback - a structured approach to listening to those at and below their level of management - from people not chosen by the manager. Managers should be helped to a sense of how they are perceived by others.</p>	<p>KPIs for senior staff are currently being used. A Senior Leadership Group (SLG) was introduced in 2023 to improve communication and inter-departmental working throughout the organisation.</p> <p>We will implement 360 appraisals for all Executive and Senior Managers</p>	30 September 2024
		<p>c. Offer mentoring and reverse mentoring. Each will best be used for limited groups and defined periods given the time commitment of proper mentoring.</p>	<p>We recognise that a new systemic offer needs to be created across the whole WRU.</p>	30 June 2025
		<p>d. Include as KPIs for senior staff to be assessed in performance reviews (1) co-operation with managers at an equivalent level; (2) breaking down departmental barriers/ 'silos'; (3) adopting a collegiate management style towards junior colleagues.</p>	<p>We will include these as KPIs in the next iteration of our assessment process.</p>	30 September 2024
		<p>e. Annual training in equality, diversity and inclusion should take place for all staff. This should be as broad as possible so it is delivered in different ways and different places. There are more engaging approaches than an annual zoom lecture.</p>	<p>Annual training was undertaken in 2021 and modular training offered to Board, Council and Exec in 2022. 2023 has seen EDI training made available to all staff with Show Racism The Red Card responsible for providing</p>	30 September 2024 delivery

			the training as part of a Welsh Government scheme. Additional training is planned for next year.	
Pack Page 54		f. Adopt a Speak Up approach, with systems to encourage communication and appoint a member of the executive to implement this and a Board member to oversee communication within the organisation.	We have already implemented our “Have a Voice” campaign led by our Director of People, Lydia Stirling; at Board level this will be overseen by our People, Culture and Governance Committee that is chaired by Alison Thorne.	30 June 2024
		g. Designate someone responsible for managing the culture at the National Centre of Excellence. The success criteria should be to make the NCE more inclusive and facilitate frictionless sharing of facilities.	We take note of the comments regarding the NCE and are committed to making the necessary changes to improve the environment to ensure all staff and visitors have the experience they should expect. The Executive Director of Rugby, Nigel Walker, will be charged with improving the culture and will be measured on action taken.	Immediate – Nigel Walker appointed
		a. Implement a zero-tolerance approach to language which excludes others from work or sport. By zero tolerance we do not mean that people must always be dismissed for exclusionary language but that it must always be reported, recorded and dealt with according to an express policy. If ‘banter’ is defined as making a comment which breaks social taboos, and waiting for nervous laughter, staff should be told it is not appropriate for the workplace.	We recognise there is more to do to embed our zero tolerance approach and we are reviewing our policies to make sure that they encourage people to come forward and report any exclusionary language.  We will review our policies and statement of intent on EDI to ensure	In place and ongoing

			<p>that it is clear of a zero tolerance approach.</p> <p>We will continue annual EDI training.</p> <p>We will continue to find ways to support reporting poor behaviour.</p>	
		<p>i. Ensure each team manager has as part of their role an objective of listening to concerns and helping communication. The approach is likely to include 360-degree appraisal and communicating to WRU necessary changes to manage stress, relationships, group and personal concerns.</p>	<p>We will embed this in guidance for WRU employees in the next appraisal and development round.</p>	<p>30 September 2024</p>
Pack Page 55		<p>j. Arrange for someone independent of the WRU to sit in on final interviews for Board members, the Chair and Chief Executive and any members of the Community Council who are appointed (see above), reporting in writing to the Board on whether the appointment followed good practice and the stated process. This should not be an audit or lead to a detailed report but a simple conclusion.</p>	<p>An independent was part of the appointment panel for all Board (including CEO) appointments made in the last 6 months. We are committed to continue with this practice.</p>	<p>Already in place – 14 January 2024</p>
	Disability	<p>Continue to work with disability sports bodies, according to a published strategy.</p>	<p>The WRU has extensive links with a range of disability groups and has attracted major events to the Principality Stadium, such as the European Wheelchair Rugby Championship in 2023.</p> <p>The WRU commits to developing a strategy, in consultation with Sport Wales, to ensure maximum impact in this area.</p>	<p>30 June 2024 as a part of our strategy</p>

			WRU will continue to deliver against the Insport Gold Strategy and support the DSW strategy.	
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