

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

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 3 – Senedd

Meeting date: 9 October 2024

Meeting time: 09.15

For further information contact:

Lleu Williams

Committee Clerk

0300 200 6565

SeneddCulture@senedd.wales

Hybrid

Pre-meeting registration

(09.00 – 09.15)

At its meeting on 26 September 2024, the Committee agreed under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the first item of today's meeting

Private

1 Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill: Rapporteur update

(09.15 – 09.30)

Public

2 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

(09.30)



3 Impact of funding reductions for culture and sport: Evidence session with Sport Wales (4)

(09.30 – 10.30)

(Pages 1 – 40)

Brian Davies, Chief Executive Officer

Baroness Grey-Thompson, Chair

Attached Documents:

Research brief

Sport Wales consultation response

Appendix Written evidence from Sport Wales

[Economic Value of Sport report](#)

Break

(10.30 – 10.40)

4 Impact of funding reductions for culture and sport: Evidence session with the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monuments of Wales (5)

(10.40 – 11.40)

(Pages 41 – 45)

Hayley Roberts, Deputy Chair

Christopher Catling, Chief Executive Officer

Attached Documents:

Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monuments of Wales consultation response

5 Paper(s) to note

(11.40)

5.1 Allegations concerning bullying at S4C

(Pages 46 – 49)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the interim Chair and Chief Executive of S4C: Providing an update on matters of interest to the Committee – 17 September 2024

5.2 Books Council of Wales magazine funding model

(Pages 50 – 52)

Attached Documents:

Letter from Emily Trahair, former Editor of Planet Magazine: Responding to points raised by Books Council Wales in its letter to the Committee of 17 September 2024 – 23 September 2024

5.3 Welsh Government consultation on the draft Priorities for Culture in Wales 2024–2030

(Pages 53 – 55)

Attached Documents:

Response from the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership: Acknowledging the Committee's response to the Welsh Government's consultation on the draft Priorities for Culture in Wales 2024–2030 – 1 October 2024

5.4 Culture and the new relationship with the EU

(Pages 56 – 58)

Attached Documents:

Correspondence from the International Cultural Policy Section; Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Ireland: Providing written evidence for the Committee's inquiry into Culture and the new relationship with the European Union – 1 October 2024

5.5 Welsh Government international relations

(Pages 59 – 62)

Attached Documents:

Response from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning: Providing an update on the Welsh Government's international strategy and Cardiff Airport – 2 October 2024

5.6 Impact of funding reductions for culture and sport

(Pages 63 – 66)

Attached Documents:

Letter copied for information from Gwasg y Bwthyn to the Welsh Government and Senedd Members representing Gwynedd and North Wales: Expressing concerns about the financial support for the publishing sector in Wales – 2 October 2024 (English Translation by Senedd Commission)

Letter from Angharad Price, Professor of Welsh and Creative Writing, Bangor University: Expressing concerns about the financial support for the publishing sector in Wales – 3 October 2024 (English Translation by Senedd Commission)

6 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the remainder of this meeting

(11.40)

Private

7 Impact of funding reductions for culture and sport: Consideration of evidence

(11.40 – 12.00)

Document is Restricted

IFRCS41 Steve Williams, Senior Policy & Engagement, Sports Wales

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

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

[Effaith Gostyngiadau Cyllid ar Ddiwylliant a Chwaraeon | Impact of Funding Reductions for Culture and Sport](#)

Ymateb gan: Steve Williams, Uwch Arweinydd Polisi ac Ymgysylltu, Chwaraeon Cymru | Evidence from: Steve Williams, Senior Policy & Engagement, Sports Wales

Sport Wales response to the CCWLSIR committee's inquiry into budget reductions

Sport Wales is the national organisation responsible for developing and promoting sport and physical activity in Wales at both community and elite levels. We are financed by annual funding from the Welsh Government and from the National Lottery. We are the main adviser on sporting matters to the Welsh Government and are responsible for distributing Government and National Lottery funding to sport in Wales.

Sport Wales is one of the smallest public bodies in Wales and our budget is comprised of running costs, grant funding for National Governing Bodies, national partners and local authorities to deliver sport, but also community sport – investing and growing local opportunities for clubs and societies to serve the needs of their local communities.

We are one of the 48 public bodies in Wales which are subject to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015; we meet our duties under the Welsh Language Standards and care deeply about our place in Welsh society and culture. We work closely with the Older People's and Children's Commissioners and filter all our work through the lens of equality, diversity and inclusion.

We strive to be the best we can be and give the best we can offer to all people along the sporting pathway, from children starting out, to medal-winning athletes, to a diverse career path in the sporting sector, to older people staying fit, healthy and independent. As the Vision for Sport notes, we want Wales to be an active nation where everyone can have a lifelong enjoyment of sport.

Overview

Sport Wales welcomes the opportunity to respond to the CCWLSIR Committees consultation into the impact of funding reductions on culture and sport. Whilst we realise there are clear **economic challenges (e.g. cost of living, increasing poverty and inequality)** that are affecting the population, participation in sport is already significantly skewed against inequality and people on low incomes, so there is a risk that this situation will deteriorate even further should there be a further reduction in the Sport Wales budget.

Despite in-depth discussions with Welsh Government, in 2024/25, Sport Wales received a 10.5% funding cut. In the lead up to these budget cuts, Sport Wales undertook a series of robust financial cut scenario exercises with various options to manage budget cuts being explored.

In 2024/25, approximately 55% of the budget that Sport Wales receives from Welsh Government is distributed as grants to the sport sector in Wales. This funding is used by the sector to deliver safe, enjoyable and developmental opportunities, which are person-centred and led by need, in order to support everyone in reaching their full potential. Any cut to Sport Wales' budget has a compounding effect on communities across Wales and on our ability to support our most talented athletes. Whilst we worked hard to absorb the large majority of the cuts we were subjected to, invariably some of this had to be passed on to the sector with eventually 3% of budget cuts being passed on to partners.

In this response, we will run through the economic impact of sport whilst also highlighting the recent work done around our [social return on investment](#).

Whilst our entire response will touch across the Committee's terms of reference, we will also focus-in specifically on each one individually. We will highlight some of the significant progress made by the sector during the last year, most of which would be severely impacted on, depending on future funding cuts.

What would Sport Wales like to see happen as a result of this inquiry?

- We want to highlight the potentially devastating impact across the sector of any future funding cuts. Cuts to Sport Wales will directly impact on grants distributed to partners and consequently the number of opportunities for the people of Wales to benefit from sport.
- We wish to highlight that the £2.5m cut to the Sport Wales budget in 2024/25 is a false economy. This budget reduction is estimated to have led to a significant loss of £11.1m of social return on investment.

- We want to see the multitude of benefits that sport provides maximised across Government portfolio areas, and that the unique benefit sport can play in delivering for Wales is understood and positively recognised in budget settlements.
- We wish to see health prevention budgets consider sport and physical activity as a method for delivering their outcomes and aligning budgets where others are better placed to deliver activity.
- We believe there is a need for a continuous long-term view on budgeting, with a bigger focus on prevention, and would like the committee to highlight this. As a minimum, we would ask that a recurring 3-year indicative budget be reintroduced for Sport Wales as an effective tool to Managing Welsh Public Money.

What is the insight telling us?

Wales Activity Tracker

Back in 2020, Sport Wales teamed up with [Savanta](#) to get an insight into the nation's activity habits and behaviours. Established to track activity levels during the Coronavirus pandemic, the survey has usefully continued to regularly check activity levels in Wales.

The surveys, run at four fixed points throughout the year, provide a snapshot on physical activity and sport, as well as behaviours and attitudes of people in Wales surrounding exercise.

The data has been weighted to be demographically representative of Welsh adults 16+ by gender, age and the estimated households with children under 16.

The latest data from the recent wave of the ['Wales Activity Tracker'](#) shows that the majority of people who responded think that the Government should be prioritising sport and physical activity.

The survey also gave a glimpse into how sport plays a key role in people's everyday lives with a number of people for example inspired to take up a sport after watching a major sporting event.

Some of the findings included:

- More than half (54%) of adults think it is important that the newly elected government prioritises sport and physical activity.

- 70% of adults have watched a major sporting event in the past three months.
- Approx 1 in 3 (35%) of those who watched a major sporting event were inspired to take part in physical activity.
- Of those that were inspired, 74% intend to continue doing this physical activity in the long-term (i.e. for more than six months).
- Of those that were inspired, 22% were inspired by the Euros; 20% were inspired by the Olympics; 5% were inspired by Wimbledon; 4% by London Marathon.

The data also highlights the benefits that people see in sport in relation to their health. Of those who have participated in sport or physical activity in the last three months, three in four (75%) say they were motivated by being physically healthy. Nearly three in five adults also agree that they exercise to help manage their physical health (58%) or to help manage their mental health (59%).

School Sport Survey

The [School Sport Survey](#) is one of the world's biggest surveys of young people and gives us and the sector a rich insight into participation levels, behaviours and attitudes.

Thanks to the hard work of schools, local authorities, and others across the sport and education sector, we were able to listen to the voices of over 116,000 pupils, and almost 950 teachers on sport and wellbeing in Wales through the 2022 School Sport Survey.

The depth of evidence means that we, and our partners, can make more informed decisions about future investment resources. We can analyse emerging trends and develop sport in a format that motivates children and young people today. It also allows us to examine under-represented groups, and we use the evidence to tackle some of the barriers that prevent children and young people taking part.

Further along in this response we will touch on the work done by Welsh Boxing to make the sport more inclusive, using results from the School Sport Survey.

There is a strong concern that any future funding cuts to the sector will lead to sporting organisations being unable to develop their offers for young people, ultimately leading to a drop in standards and reduced community reach that the sport sector will have difficulty recovering from.

Sport Wales' Social Return on Investment

In December 2023, Sport Wales published a Social Return on Investment study¹, undertaken by the world-leading Sport Industry Research Centre (SIRC) at Sheffield Hallam University. The study captures the social impact of sport in Wales.

The headline figures from this analysis shows the significant impact that sport has in several areas:

- The total contribution for sport to health is £621m. Demonstrating that investing in sport has a significant impact on the prevention of ill-health, resulting in cost savings to the National Health Service.
- Sport contributes £2.06bn in subjective wellbeing to the Welsh population.
- £2.87bn in social capital is created through sport as a result of the impact of participation and volunteering in sport driving social cohesion and connected community structures.
- That volunteering impact is also realised through a £430m direct impact.

The total contribution as a social return (not counting economic outputs like spend and job creation) to Wales from sport annually is £5.98bn. For every £1 spent on sport here in Wales, there is a return of £4.44. This highlights that any reductions in the investment in sport creates wider impacts in potential increased costs to other services, such as within the health sector, as well as the lost opportunities to develop skills through volunteering, social interaction, create community engagement and positive wellbeing (including life satisfaction). These missed opportunities will impact on the sport sector and beyond and amplify the value of funding reductions far beyond the initial funding change.

The £5.98bn social return on investment that sport provides for Wales equates to a benefit to each person to the sum of £1,929 annually. With any funding cut to the sector, this benefit will reduce. In some cases, it will not be replaced. In others, such as through the need to replace volunteering time, or additional spend on mental health services, this will drive greater financial challenges for individuals and organisations, exacerbating an already difficult financial position that we

¹ <https://www.sport.wales/research-and-insight/social-return-on-investment/>

know through survey data is already reducing the public's ability to take part in sport.

Economic impact of sport

At the start of the pandemic, Sport Wales also commissioned an economic value report of the impact of Sport in Wales. Again, this was undertaken by the research team at SIRC.

The figures produced based on 2019 data captured the significant impact sport had in driving economic activity in Wales.

- The Gross Value Added figure in Wales due to sport was estimated at £1,195m.
- Sport related consumer spend in Wales was £1,260m.
- Sport related employment consisted of 31,100 Full Time Equivalent jobs.

Moreover, these figures had shown that sport as an industry was growing and becoming increasingly more important to Wales, compared to the previous study undertaken in 2016.

This study was part of the evidence which led to the Welsh Government taking positive steps to support the sector during the pandemic, including the innovative Private Provider Fund and Freelancer Funds that Sport Wales administered to support commercial businesses in the sport sector. Undoubtedly, this investment helped maintain the sector during those tough economic periods.

A new report is currently being undertaken in collaboration with all UK Home Sport councils, UK sport and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. Once published, this will provide a more up to date picture of the sector in Wales and we look forward to being able to share that with the committee in due course. However, what is very evident is that any contraction of the sport sector due to funding cuts will impact on the wider economy of Wales.

Much the same as the previously outlined social return on investment impact, there will clearly be a lost opportunity through cuts to sporting services. There will be direct economic impacts with the sporting sector having to consider its activities and employment. However, sport underpins so many other industries, in particular the hospitality and tourism industries and construction.

Cuts to sport will have a wider impact. The 2019 economic value report noted that "Sports' links with other sectors (shown through high multipliers) imply that sport

can be used to restore the economy and especially employment.” This is equally true in the inverse, where cuts to sport will drive challenging economic conditions across other sectors due to the interlinked nature of their reliance.

The Sport Sector’s Progress: (See Appendix A for further information)

Over the past few years, the sport sector in Wales has been increasingly working towards a safer, more enjoyable and more developmental approach. The implementation of the Sport Wales investment model², was specifically designed to fund organisations in line with their capacity and capability to broaden the inclusivity of their sporting offers. There are a range of examples where we are seeing a real change in our partners approach to meet this challenge. Some examples are detailed below, whilst we have also attached (appendix A) a recent partner progress and learning report for a fuller picture of the work.

Participating in sport during Ramadan.

A second Midnight Ramadan event, developed and operated by the Foundation for Sports Coaching, was held at the Sport Wales National Centre (SWNC), attracting more than 400 people over three nights. Using feedback from 2023 to improve the offer this year, there was a dedicated offering for women and girls on Saturday night. The purpose of the programme was to connect with and increase sports participation amongst the Muslim communities in Cardiff and to showcase SWNC as a welcoming place for everyone. Participants took part in a wide range of sports and had the opportunity to experience the high-performance athlete area, with the nutrition team providing a programme geared to the specific needs of participants observing Ramadan. There was a wide-ranging number of partners involved, including many National Governing Bodies, which helped make the event so successful and create pathways for further collaboration beyond the Ramadan period.

Judo Inclusion

Welsh Judo has successfully integrated visually impaired athletes into non-visually impaired events. The ability for Welsh Judo to provide inclusive opportunities at club and events is a positive step forward and supports the inclusion agenda. British Blind Sport produced A Guide on Supporting Visually Impaired Adults and

²<https://www.sport.wales/grants-and-funding/our-approach-to-investment/our-approach-to-partner-investment/>

Children in a Judo Environment³, which provides helpful advice to other contact and non-contact sports and event organisers.

‘I’d do more sport if...’

The 2022 School Sport Survey Report for Boxing notes that of pupils who have unmet demand for Boxing, 5% have a disability or impairment, and 11% have a learning difficulty. To develop their offer, Welsh Boxing needed to:

- Increase awareness of the offer: They attended Disability Sport Wales’ Insport Festival where over 560 people took part in a form of boxing activity.
- Increase access to equipment: Capital investment is being allocated across Wales for wheelchairs, sensory products, visual aids and virtual reality headsets, which enables individuals with a wider range of impairments to take part. This also enables people to connect across multiple sites and share sessions.

These are just a sample of the innovative approaches that are put at risk through funding cuts. There could be a significant undermining of the inclusivity agenda with cuts that have been received, and certainly any further cuts will likely contract the agenda of a broad sporting offer. This is an opportunity cost the sport sector cannot afford given that there is already a recognised underrepresentation by race, religion, ethnicity, gender, disability and deprivation.

Wales on the world stage:

It is noteworthy that Wales continues to punch well above its weight in terms of sporting success, which in turn drives the cultural and international reputation of the nation. The Welsh men’s football team’s presence at the 2022 Qatar World Cup was not only significant in sporting terms, but it provided a platform and catalyst for cultural diplomacy and economic stimulus. As the British Council Wales’ Soft Power report previously demonstrated, sport is the nation’s most important and effective soft power tool and should not be underestimated⁴.

It is noteworthy that at the 2024 Paris Olympic Games, a record breaking 33 Welsh athletes made up 10% of the team that competed as part of Team GB at the Olympics. A further 21 Welsh athletes will compete for Paralympics GB at the subsequent Paralympics. This chance to represent Wales on the world stage is

³bbs_judo.pdf (wcb-ccd.org.uk)

⁴ https://wales.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/wales_soft_power_barometer_2018_0.pdf

under threat because of reduced funding. People aren't born Olympic or Paralympic athletes.

They're developed and shaped by the communities and clubs they meet along the way, and this is considerably less likely in light of reduced funding, and it will also inhibit our ability to further diversify the athlete and coaching population.

Committee's Terms of reference:

1. What impacts has reduced funding had on your organisation and sector so far?

With the news of the Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2024/25, Sport Wales were aware that we would be looking at a difficult landscape as we moved into 2024 and beyond. A 10.5% reduction in Sport Wales' budget had the potential to see an enormous impact, including potential redundancies within the sector, significant programmes being delayed or cancelled altogether, and tough decisions having to be made for many organisations, leading to a disproportionate impact on the nation's most underserved groups.

Many organisations that we fund have had to restructure over the past few years due to budget cuts. Ultimately, we aim to protect as many of our partners as possible, but the impact is already being felt.

Whilst the funding cut of 10.5% in 2024/25 is undoubtedly incredibly challenging for Sport Wales and the sport sector, the bigger concern would be a compounding effect of any further cuts in future years.

Sport Wales will always attempt to absorb as much of any funding cut as possible in order to protect our partners in their ability to retain staff and programmes, but if this trend continues and future financial years see similar reductions, there will be little scope for Sport Wales to protect our partners and this will inevitably have critical consequences for the sport sector in Wales, as well as the range of communities and individuals that they support.

Sport Wales, like many smaller public bodies, has a low proportion of variable/discretionary costs and undertakes significant grant making activities (circa 55% of funding from Welsh Government is distributed in grants to the sport sector). As a consequence, our ability to reduce the cost base is limited. The challenge of inflation (pay and non-pay) also persists for our organisation and our staff.

In any budget reduction scenario, this would invariably mean that effective services to the people of Wales is impacted. Our strategy is built on the [Vision for Sport in Wales](#) and our objectives to see all people have the opportunity to access sport and physical activity no matter their socioeconomic background, ethnicity, age or ability will invariably be impacted. The Vision, and our strategy, recognises that being active regularly is a cornerstone to a healthy life, and everyone should have the ability to be active.

A budget reduction scenario jeopardises the progress that we have made through changes to our investment model. This model prioritises investment into areas of need and focuses upon equality, diversity and inclusion. There are also potential risks to the financial sustainability of valued key delivery partners within the sport sector.

We believe that sport and the work of Sport Wales contributes far beyond the culture and economy brief as evidenced in the social return of investment and economic impact studies. We will continue to push for the need for sport to be considered in all policy briefs and for other portfolios to maximise the impacts of sport and physical activity.

The Welsh Government's forward thinking move to providing indicative three-year budgets was welcomed and clearly gives more opportunity for organisations to plan further ahead. In the context of the indicative budget for 2024/25 published in February 2023, Sport Wales was financially prepared and had planned our activities accordingly.

The challenge emerges when there are significant reductions in these budgets, particularly in the context of the continued high levels of inflation. We would welcome the publication of three-year rolling indicative budgets to aid planning. 2024/25 was the final year of the indicative three-year published budget and we would wish to see an updated and recurring indicative three-year budget as annualised budgets are not helpful and hinder planning.

With a term of Government remit letter, it is likely that certain deliverables required of us may not be possible, and budget uncertainty for 2025/26 and beyond means that we cannot plan as robustly as we might otherwise have been able to do.

In light of the evidence of our previously mentioned SROI, Sport Wales is concerned at the longer-term impact of any budget reduction on the health and wellbeing of the population of Wales and the corresponding impact on health services. Similarly, in the short-term, reduced opportunities to participate in sport

may have a corresponding adverse impact on illness (mental and physical) and inequality.

2. What measures have you taken in light of it, such as changing what you do and how you do it?

We are taking a prudent approach to in-year budget management and are continuing with quarterly budget reviews with all Heads / Assistant Directors to understand performance against budget and future forecasts.

After allocating funding to partners and staff costs, the remaining discretionary budget is relatively small, and of this, some is committed due to contracts in place. We will continue to pursue internal opportunities to reduce costs where possible, such as careful consideration of future spending and income opportunities.

Three-year forecasting is in place to model various scenarios depending on future funding received.

3. To what extent will these impacts be irreversible (e.g. venues closing, or specialist skills being lost rather than a temporary restriction in activities)?

From our initial assessments, the significant reliance on public funding means that National Governing Bodies (NGBs) of Sport are heavily impacted by any funding reductions. At least 16 NGBs are reliant on 50% or more of their finances via public funding. Even those below that threshold of 50% still have staffing and programmes, particularly those aimed at tackling the inequalities in their sports, which can only be supported due to the necessary public funding they receive.

Cuts in public funding hit participation engagement more historically than performance settings, as most of the exchequer investment is aligned to staffing and not programmes. This public funding traditionally supports investment in participation, tackling inequalities, safeguarding, governance (including inter-sectional equality issues, complaints, integrity, etc.).

We are already aware of partners who are struggling with meeting minimum requirements to receive public funding, especially those small to medium size sports. Any further cuts, directly or in real terms through inflation, may mean that the NGB are able to do very little development work and are only able to maintain their basic legal duties.

Early estimates suggest that even within only those NGBs who are reliant on Sport Wales for 50% of their funding, as many as 60+ roles would be put at significant risk through future budget reductions. However, those NGB partners with more of a financial distribution of income are also not immune from this challenge. There is also a concern that future reductions in budgets could lead to redundancies across the local government sector, because of a reduced Sport Wales investment into geographical partnerships.

The wider sport and leisure sectors are also heavily dependant on the investment received from Local Authorities. Any pressures on the block grant that local authorities receive from the Welsh Government will undoubtedly have an impact on the availability and usage of sporting facilities and programmes. This is a particular concern for the leisure centre and community facilities infrastructure in Wales.

Further to this, one of the areas of support that Sport Wales has been able to drive in recent years is in reducing costs for the sporting network in Wales. This has been done through our innovative Energy Savings Grant to the community club network, as well as capital grants accessible to National Governing Bodies and Local Authority partners. A large aspect of these schemes has invested in more energy efficient facilities, including solar panelling. This has led to significant reductions in energy costs to the sector, as well as importantly aiding sport facilities to reduce their carbon emissions as part of the sectors contribution to Net Zero targets. The vision the Welsh Government had in identifying a £24m three-year capital funding programme has been well received by the sector. However, currently there is no resource identified beyond the 24/25 financial year, and so there can be no certainty that future capital investments to support the sector can be made. This will have an impact on both the availability and suitability of sporting facilities and their financial and environmental sustainability.

4. What interventions would you like to see from the Welsh Government, beyond increased funding?

We want to see sport maximised across Government portfolio areas, and the unique benefit sport can play in delivering for Wales to be understood and reflected within the budget. We also want to ensure that sport's ability to protect the health service's scarce resources, both from a prevention and from a recovery and strengthening tool, is realised and utilised by the health service and Government.

We believe that sport and physical activity has a crucial role to play in improving the health of the people of Wales. A myriad of studies have shown the positive impact sport can have on people's physical and mental wellbeing, and whilst we're glad to see the health budget protected and increased, we are eager to see a joined-up approach to ensure the health sector is not just spending more and more to keep up with ill- health but also ensuring that its budget is being used effectively as a preventative tool and to help re-adjust how its services are needed in the future.

Sport and physical activity is a key policy area which comparatively is a very small part of the health budget. We believe that investing to see health prioritised is crucial to the long-term health of the population of Wales, anything otherwise as a result of reductions in financial support is a false economy.

Contrary to cutting our budget, we believe that investing in physical activity as a preventative approach is the best way to achieve a significant population level impact and to have a major positive impact on the health service, which is at breaking point.

As noted in the ['Exercise: The Mircale Cure'](#) report by the academy of medical royal colleges:

*"There is mounting evidence that physical inactivity is a major causative physical link between social inequality and poor health. There is also evidence that tackling physical inactivity should be a major focus to improve health across different groups (APCOPA, 2014). **There is no other viable intervention which has the potential to improve health in the UK on such a scale.**"*

We know from experience that the wider public sector recognises that sport has an ability to touch the lives of individuals in Wales like few other sectors. We are fully committed to sport being harnessed to deliver the Welsh Government's ambitious public health, equality, child poverty and social justice programmes, as we are a proven deliverer against these vital agendas. We would want to see investment in sport sustained that enables our sector to continue to deliver on these outcomes. We firmly believe that Sport Wales can be a champion for modernisation and delivery of the Well-being of Future Generations Act for the wider Welsh public service.

5. To what extent do the impacts you describe fall differently on people with protected characteristics and people of a lower socioeconomic status?

An integrated impact assessment was completed to assist in understanding the effect of applying a reduction to partner funding. This follows previous impact assessments for the data driven investment model and principles driven investment approach that Sport Wales operates with our partner network. Both models were designed to address inequalities and enable the sector to better respond to need.

Whilst the integrity of both models is preserved, a funding reduction will inevitably slow progress in the following key areas:

- Age, disability, race, sex and socio-economic disadvantage; these areas were more heavily weighted in the investment model.
- Welsh language: Sport Wales specifically funds the Urdd, a national Welsh medium youth organisation who would receive a percentage budget reduction, compromising Welsh language opportunities in sport.
- Well-being of Future Generations goals; for example, a prosperous Wales (due to potential redundancies in the sector), a healthier Wales (reduced opportunities for participation in sport and physical activity and reduced social return on investment), a Wales of cohesive communities (reduced grassroots sport funding) and a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language (fewer opportunities to participate in sport through the medium of Welsh).

As a result of the equality impact assessment findings stated above, the budget reduction will adversely impact on the goal to deliver a more equal Wales.

At Sport Wales, we recognise that children, young people and their families living in poverty experience disadvantage in many ways. For them, poverty is not just about not having enough money or clothes; access to play and leisure, regular balanced meals, access to services and support are all areas where they face potential disadvantage.

These are just the manifestations of poverty. However, the outcomes of these issues are that child poverty limits aspiration, curtails life experience and results in fewer opportunities for the future.

Children growing up in poverty experience worse health outcomes, educational attainment and economic prospects than their more affluent peers. We also know

that they are less likely to participate in sporting activities. Addressing poverty and inequality among children and young people is crucial not only to their own opportunity to make the most of their lives but to what they are able to contribute to wider society as adults.

In line with Welsh Government's refreshed Child Poverty strategy, we are in the process of formulating our new response to child poverty which will aim to further develop our work with the sector and partners in ensuring that every young person in Wales has the opportunity to participate in sports and physical activity, no matter their economic background.

We believe that sport needs to be recognised for the crucial role it can play across policy areas, and that sport needs to become a regular part of the conversation in delivering health and education outcomes as well as part of the discussion when looking at positive solutions to transport issues and seeing community facilities being open and available to all.

Whilst these arguments are recognised across Government, sport still represents such a small amount of Government's budget. If collaboration and outcomes using sport were agreed, we might see a much greater return on investment in the wellbeing of people in Wales.

In terms of socioeconomic challenges, the cost-of-living crisis and growing inequalities, Sport Wales has adapted investment streams to focus on these areas, for example the recent energy saving grant <https://www.sport.wales/grants-and-funding/energy-saving-grant/> which offered sport clubs in Wales a unique opportunity to make energy saving improvements whilst also helping to tackle the climate and nature emergencies. The Be Active Wales fund <https://www.sport.wales/grants-and-funding/beactivewalesfund/> promotes equality, sustainability and innovation in sport and in addition, our Crowdfunder stream <https://www.sport.wales/grants-and-funding/crowdfunder/> that has targeted work in terms of tackling growing inequalities with 50% of a project able to be matched funded if they are based in one of the most deprived areas of Wales, as identified by the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) data.

Recent statistics from the latest Wales Activity Tracker show the impact the cost-of-living crisis has on sport and physical activity, such as the fact that 40% of respondents to this representative survey agree that the cost-of-living crisis has had a negative impact on their ability to be active. Those under 55, women and parents are most affected, either needing to switch to cheaper or free activities, or becoming less active.

Summary

Sport Wales and its partners has risen to the challenge presented by Welsh Government in its Term of Government Remit letter. We understand that the financial landscape is difficult, but we believe the Welsh Government can create longer term savings through actually investing in the delivery of the sport and aligning this on a regional basis alongside overseeing greater collaboration with the Health and Education sectors. We, at Sport Wales, are leading the way in developing these relationships for the good of every community in Wales. We would like the committee to recommend..

Sport and physical activity have a unique and critical role in preventative health and enabling every child to acquire the skills and confidence to lead a healthy life. Tackling physical inactivity and lifestyle related illnesses must be a collective effort. Sport has a central role to delivering these objectives which are priorities for Welsh Government. Currently, we continue to work closely with colleagues in Education and Health to ensure Wales achieves all of the well-being goals outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Moving forward, we believe that further dialogue across government's portfolios could mitigate any redundancies that might happen across the sport sector and ensure that we can continue to jointly deliver our ambitious outcomes. Through further discussion, we would be able to strategically manage and commission existing schemes which have a proven track record of delivery as these schemes are scalable and sustainable in terms of their delivery.

Finally, we believe that any future reductions for Sport Wales and the sport sector will actually make a very small, if not insignificant, contribution to the overall budget challenge faced by Welsh Government. However, the impact on sport in Wales is very significant as highlighted above. It will reduce funding to support our most underserved communities, significantly impact on partners' delivery plans, as well as impacting on industrial relations and staff morale.

Partner Progress and Learning #3

Introduction

This document provides an overview of partner practice and emerging themes that have been identified through examining the partner learning and accountability logs (January – March 2024). It aims to highlight notable practice - not everything. As well as identify sector themes and challenges.

Themes have been drawn from the information that has been gathered. This edition identifies shared practice in the following areas:

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

- Underrepresented communities in sport
- Disability Sport
- Youth

Partnerships outside of Sport

- Bowls Wales and the Stroke Association
- Welsh Athletics and Mind Cymru
- UDOIT Dance and Girlguiding Cymru

Other examples of notable practice

- Prioritising sporting offers based on data and insight
- Removing barriers to pathway and performance

January - March 2024 Sector Trends

- Considering cost to participation; What Next After the Cost-of-Living Grant?
- Attracting and retaining young coaches
- Connectivity: Digital or In Person coach education?
- Environmental Sustainability

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

Underrepresented communities in sport

- Participating in sport during Ramadan.
This was the second Midnight Ramadan event, operated by Foundation for Sports Coaching held at the Sport Wales National Centre (SWNC) which attracted more than 400 people over three nights. Using feedback from 2023 to improve the offer this year, had a dedicated offering for women and girls on Saturday night. The purpose of the programme was to connect with and increase sports participation amongst the Muslim communities in Cardiff, and to showcase SWNC as a welcoming place for everyone. Participants took part in a wide range of sports and had the opportunity to experience the high-performance athlete area with the nutrition team providing a programme geared to the specific [needs of participants](#)

[observing Ramadan.](#)

There was a wide ranging number of partners involved, including many National Governing Bodies, which helped make the event so successful.

Disability Sport

Many of our funded partners have prioritised the development of disability sport offer, using the [Sport Wales 2022 School Sport Survey](#) to understand the level of demand for sport and to improve accessibility. [Disability Sport Wales](#) work closely with many of the partners and helpfully share insight and resources on their website. Over the last quarter examples of partner work include:

- **Inclusion as standard**

Welsh Judo has successfully integrated visually impaired athletes into non-visually impaired events. The ability for Welsh Judo to provide inclusive opportunities at club and events is a positive step forward and supports the inclusion agenda. British Blind Sport produced [A Guide on Supporting Visually Impaired Adults and Children in a Judo Environment](#), which provides helpful advice to other contact and non-contact sports and event organisers.

- **'I'd do more sport if...'**

The 2022 School Sport Survey Report for Boxing notes that of pupils who have unmet demand for Boxing, 5% have a disability or impairment, and 11% have a learning difficulty.

To develop their offer, Welsh Boxing needed to;

1. **Increase awareness of the offer** – they attended Disability Sport Wales' Insport Festival where over 560 people took part in a form of boxing activity.

2. **Increase access to equipment** - Capital investment is being allocated across Wales for wheelchairs, sensory products, visual aids and virtual reality headsets, which enables individuals with a wider range of impairments to take part. This also enables people to connect across multiple sites and share sessions.

- **New game formats**

Cricket Wales delivered its first disability table cricket event and increased awareness of volunteering roles in sport to youth audience.

As a fully inclusive offer of the sport, up to eight people can play on the converted table tennis table, with movable sides which is controlled by the 'fielders'. Cricket Wales worked with a local High School to provide young people who are less engaged in education with volunteering opportunities and event experience.

- **Disability inclusion training as standard**

Newport Live has gained the [Insport Gold](#) accreditation, and have introduced disability inclusion training as standard for all participants in the Playmaker Award. They have also ensured that every member of staff have responsibility for inclusion,

rather than responsibility being with one person.

Youth

Over the last quarter the development of young leaders has been particularly prevalent.

- **Rural Areas**

Developing future leaders & increasing activity in schools: [Young Ambassadors](#) in Powys. 156 young people across Powys primary schools have become Bronze Young Ambassadors (78 boys and 78 girls) through the Youth Sport Trust's programme. Nearly all of the primary schools in have engaged in the programme. This is particularly significant in a rural area, where there is a heavy reliance on extra curricula school provision to enable young people to access sport and physical activity opportunities.

- **Supporting neurodiversity in sport**

Young Ambassador, Lily Morgan, for Hockey Wales has been instrumental in the development of coach development training and resources, to make the sport of hockey more inclusive to young people who are Neuro Diverse. Lily recently launched her own website, neurodiversityinsport.com, as a base for informative videos, a monthly newsletter, and webinars around neurodiversity in sport. The project, which is being driven by Lily, Hockey Wales and Cardiff Met was presented at the [General Hockey assembly in Germany](#).

- **Voice of youth in programme creation**

Street Games and Welsh Netball have worked together to create a young activators course called 'Blitz Netball Activator' – 20 young advisors in North Wales have shaped the programme and piloted it. This is a good example of partners involving young people to shape their programmes and activity. The involvement of young people was key to this being successful. Other sport [Activator Workshops](#) are available on Street Games' website.

- **Increasing opportunities for younger leaders**

Torfaen Council have worked with University of Wales Trinity Saint David to deliver a 'Building Foundations Course' for year 10 (14-15 years) Sports Leaders as a trial for a younger cohort, with feedback leading to the course now being trialled by the Young Ambassador steering group.

Partnerships outside of sport

Several organisations have developed partnerships with organisations outside of sport. This has enabled them to leverage support and investment from other sectors, and to demonstrate the power of sport, and the wider health benefits it can bring. Importantly, these partnerships have been driven by data and insight. Some notable examples are:

- Returning to better health following Stroke**
 Bowls Wales has entered a [partnership with the Stroke Association](#), to put stroke survivors in touch with their local bowls club to learn the sport – and take more steps on a return to better health. Working with local clubs, Bowls Wales ran sessions throughout Wales in both traditional settings but also new and non-traditional settings such as Women’s Institute (WI) groups to break stereotypes and engage with new audiences. Ogwr Indoor Bowls club applied to the [Be Active Wales Fund](#) to help with facility hire and equipment to support the sessions with the WI, which now frequently see 20 women playing Bowls.
- Improving mental health with running**
 Welsh Athletics has developed a two-year [partnership with Mind Cymru](#) aimed at improving mental health through the power of running. The aim is to normalise and embed healthy dialogue across Welsh Athletics’ club settings and, initially, 12 champions are being recruited.
- Addressing latent demand with Girl Guiding**
 49% girls in school years 3-6, and 31% in years 7 -11 want to do more dance according to the School Sport Survey so a natural link between [UDOIT Dance and Girlguiding Cymru](#) has become an official partnership. The partnership has produced a street dance challenge pack which has been downloaded 10,000 times by girl guide units. The next step is to create an information pack is being to help communities set up regular street dance clubs.

Other examples of notable practice

- Prioritising sporting offers based on data and insight**
 School Sport Survey data identified a demand for cycling and basketball in the Gwent area. Sport Wales has stimulated a collaboration project with Local Authorities and Basketball, which has been particularly successful and an example of good sports development. Working collaboratively has had a very positive effect on participation opportunities (through school, extracurricular, community and clubs offers), and future workforce by upskilling staff and volunteers.
- Removing barriers to pathway and performance**
 Following recommendations from the ‘Independent Commission for Equity in Cricket’ (ICEC) report, Cricket Wales has been reviewing its pathway selection methods to address challenges around perceived barriers. Pathway innovations include the opportunity for individuals to use digital material to submit performance videos ahead of trials.

January – March 2024 Sector trends

- Considering Cost to Participation; What Next After the Cost-of-Living Grant?**
 Many partners have used cost of living funds from Welsh Government (via Sport Wales) to provide subsidised offers to those where cost is proving a barrier to participate in sport and physical activity. This funding was one off, and in some cases, partners plan to maintain some level of subsidised offer using their own funds. There is a risk that some may not continue this, and therefore it’s not been a

sustainable offer. There is the opportunity for schemes like this to attract sponsorship, and if it could be done across multiple partners it could be an attractive proposition.

- **Attracting and Retaining Young Coaches**

It has emerged that many entry level coach education courses have a minimum attendee age of 16 years. Many young people embark on their leadership journey at the age of 14, and so there is a risk that if they have to wait until the age of 16 to be able to take their first formal coaching qualification, they may lose interest and leave. We need to better understand the reasons and to challenge whether any barriers can be removed.

- **Connectivity: Digital or In Person Coach Education?**

Covid saw the widespread introduction of online coach education courses, and in many cases this has continued. It offers many benefits - accessible, flexible, more sustainable – both financial and environmental. The challenge is that online coach education may result in candidates being less ‘connected’ to the sport. This is only anecdotal, but there is a growing perception that if a candidate feels connected to the sport, they are more likely to give more and become more engaged. There is a risk that sport could lose valuable volunteers if they feel less connected to the sport they are volunteering in.

- **Environmental Sustainability**

A number of partners have identified that they have an interest in, and are working, on environmental sustainability as part of their strategies or workplans. Sport Wales’ business plan focusses on internal work this year. However, as partner’s start to increase activity in this area, we can share and celebrate best practice.

ENDS

Sport Wales National Centre

Canolfan Genedlaethol Chwaraeon Cymru

Sophia Gardens | Gerddi Sophia

Cardiff | Caerdydd

CF11 9SW

0300 3003123

www.sport.wales | www.chwaraeon.cymru

CEO | Prif Weithredwr: Brian Davies OBE

Chair | Cadeirydd: Baroness, Y Farwnes Tanni Grey-Thompson DBE, DL

Delyth Jewell AS/MS

01.10.2024

Senedd Cymru
Pierhead St,
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Annwyl Cadeirydd/Dear Chair

Yn ddiweddar, ymatebodd Chwaraeon Cymru i ymgynghoriad y Pwyllgor ar effaith toriadau yn y gyllideb ar y sector chwaraeon ac edrychaf ymlaen at y cyfle i ymddangos gerbron y Pwyllgor maes o law fel rhan o'r broses honno.

Wrth i ni ysgrifennu ein hymateb, roedd Chwaraeon Cymru wedi comisiynu astudiaeth Gwerth Economaidd Chwaraeon newydd sbon, ochr yn ochr â holl gynghorau chwaraeon y gwledydd cartref, UK Sport a'r Adran dros Ddiwylliant, y Cyfryngau a Chwaraeon. Mae'n bleser gennyf roi'r wybodaeth ddiweddaraf i'r Pwyllgor bod yr adroddiad pwysig hwn wedi cael ei gyhoeddi heddiw. Mae'r adroddiad, sydd wedi atodi, nid yn unig yn nodi effaith uniongyrchol chwaraeon ar GVA a ffigurau cyflogaeth y genedl, ond mae hefyd yn dangos eu pwysigrwydd yn anuniongyrchol i sectorau eraill gan gynnwys twristiaeth, lletygarwch a'r diwydiant adeiladu. Yr hyn sy'n allweddol o ran effaith chwaraeon yw'r gwariant ychwanegol y mae'r diwydiant chwaraeon yn ei greu mewn sectorau eraill. Mae'r effaith lluosydd yn dangos sut mae gwariant o fewn y diwydiant chwaraeon yn rhaeadru drwy'r economi, gan effeithio ar sectorau amrywiol y tu hwnt i'r pwynt gwariant cychwynnol.

Fel y gwelwch chi, mae chwaraeon yng Nghymru yn helpu i ddarparu **£1.9bn** mewn GVA yn uniongyrchol i economi Cymru, gan sicrhau **38,345** o swyddi cyfwerth ag amser llawn. Pan edrychwn ar yr effaith ehangach, gan gynnwys eu heffaith anuniongyrchol, mae'r ffigurau hynny'n cael eu cyfrif fel **£2.9bn** a **58,997** o swyddi. Mae'n amlwg felly bod chwaraeon yn hollbwysig i botensial economaidd Cymru. O gymharu hyn ag astudiaethau blaenorol a gynhaliwyd, gallwn hefyd weld bod y sector yn ddiwydiant sy'n tyfu yng Nghymru, gan adeiladu ar y gwaith rhagorol a wnaed mewn cydweithrediad â Llywodraeth Cymru yn ystod pandemig Covid-19 i sicrhau ei fod yn wydn ac yn cael ei warchod.

Mae stori bwerus chwaraeon fel sbardun economaidd a ddangosir yma hefyd yn cael ei hategu gan yr effeithiau hysbys y mae chwaraeon yn eu cael hefyd ar iechyd a lles y genedl.

Fel rydych chi wedi gweld yn flaenorol efallai, cyhoeddodd Chwaraeon Cymru astudiaeth Elw Cymdeithasol ar Fuddsoddiad (SROI) ar ddiwedd 2023, a gynhaliwyd gan Ganolfan Ymchwil y Diwydiant Chwaraeon, canolfan flaenllaw yn y byd ym Mhrifysgol Sheffield Hallam, a gadarnhaodd farn Llywodraeth Cymru mai chwaraeon yw'r adnodd iechyd ataliol sy'n cael yr effaith fwyaf yng Nghymru.

Yn y data iechyd yn unig roedd **£621m** o fudd cydnabyddedig drwy atal mwy na **113,000** o achosion o afiechyd. Y tu hwnt i hyn, amcangyfrifwyd yn yr adroddiad bod cyfanswm elw cymdeithasol ar fuddsoddiad chwaraeon i Gymru yn **£5.98bn** y flwyddyn, sy'n golygu bod pob **£1** sy'n cael ei buddsoddi mewn chwaraeon yn dod â **£4.44** yn ôl i'r cyhoedd a'r Llywodraeth.

Gellir gweld manylion llawn yr adroddiad SROI hwnnw [yma](#), a byddem yn falch iawn o gwrdd â chi i drafod y ddau ddarn hollbwysig yma o ymchwil yn benodol.

Wrth i Lywodraeth Cymru adeiladu tuag at y cylch cyllidebol nesaf, rydym yn credu ei bod yn hynod bwysig deall ac ystyried yr effaith y gall chwaraeon ei chael, o ran lles corfforol a meddyliol y genedl, yn ogystal â datblygu sgiliau a chyfleoedd economaidd ei phoblogaeth. Mae'r sector wedi wynebu heriau ariannol eithriadol anodd yn ystod y blynyddoedd diwethaf o ostyngiadau yn y gyllideb. Rydym, wrth gwrs, yn gwerthfawrogi'r penderfyniadau anodd y mae Llywodraeth Cymru wedi gorfod eu gwneud yn erbyn y pwysau ariannol mae'n ei wynebu. Fodd bynnag, mae'r dystiolaeth yn glir bod buddsoddi mewn chwaraeon yn ymrwymiad i'r agenda iechyd ataliol yn ogystal ag economi fywiog, lewyrchus. Bydd unrhyw doriadau yn rhoi'r effeithiau cadarnhaol hyn mewn perygl ac yn cael effaith lluosydd niweidiol ar draws portffolios iechyd ac economaidd. Yn wir, mae'r achos yn glir dros weithredu yn gwbl groes i gyflwyno toriadau.

Edrychaf ymlaen at y cyfle i drafod yr adroddiadau pwysig hyn, a'r heriau a'r cyfleoedd ehangach mae'r sector chwaraeon yng Nghymru yn eu hwynebu, yn y sesiwn pwyllgor sydd i ddod.

Sport Wales recently responded to the Committee's consultation on the impact of budget cuts to the sport sector and I look forward to the opportunity to appear before the Committee in due course as part of that process.

At the time of writing our response, Sport Wales had commissioned a brand-new Economic Value of Sport study, alongside all home country sport councils, UK Sport and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. I am pleased to update the Committee that this important report has today been published. The report, which is attached, not only identifies the direct impact of sport on the nation's GVA and employment figures, but also demonstrates its importance indirectly to other sectors including tourism, hospitality and the construction industry. Key to the impact of sport is the additional spend the sports industry induces in other sectors. The multiplier effect illustrates how spending within the sport industry cascades through the economy, affecting various sectors beyond the initial point of expenditure.

As you will see, sport in Wales is helping to directly deliver **£1.9bn** in GVA for the Welsh economy, securing **38,345** full time equivalent jobs. When we look at the broader impact including its indirect effect, those figures are calculated at **£2.9bn** and **58,997** jobs. It is therefore clear to see that sport is paramount to Welsh economic potential. Comparing this to previous studies that have been conducted we can also see that the sector is a growing industry in Wales, building on the excellent work that was done in collaboration with the Welsh Government during the Covid-19 pandemic to ensure it was resilient and protected.

This powerful story of sport as an economic driver is also complimented by the known impacts sport has on the nation's health and wellbeing. As you will have previously seen, Sport Wales published a Social Return on Investment (SROI) study in late 2023, undertaken by the world leading Sport Industry Research Centre at Sheffield Hallam University, which confirmed the Welsh Government's view that sport is Wales's most impactful preventative health tool.

Within the health data alone there was a recognised **£621m** of benefit through the prevention of over **113,000** cases of ill-health. Beyond this, the total social return on investment of sport to Wales was estimated within the report to be **£5.98bn** annually, which means that for every **£1** invested in sport there is a **£4.44** return to the public and Government.

The full details of that SROI report can be accessed [here](#), and we would be delighted to meet with you to specifically discuss these two critical pieces of research.

As the Welsh Government builds towards the next budget round, we believe it is incredibly important that the impact sport can have, both in terms of the nation's physical and mental wellbeing, as well on the skill development and economic opportunities of its population, are understood and considered. The sector has faced incredibly difficult financial challenges through recent years of budget reductions. We of course appreciate the difficult decisions that the Welsh Government has had to make against the financial pressures that it faces. However, the evidence is clear that investing in sport is a commitment in the preventative health agenda plus a vibrant, prosperous economy. Any cut will put these positive impacts at risk and have a detrimental multiplier effect across health and economic portfolios. In fact, the case is clear for the opposite.

I look forward to the opportunity to discuss these important reports, and the wider challenges and opportunities faced by the sport sector in Wales in the upcoming committee session.

Yours Sincerely,



Brian Davies OBE
Prif Weithredwr/Chief Executive
Chwaraeon Cymru/Sport Wales

IFRCS40 Christopher Catling, The Secretary (CEO), Royal Commission on the ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

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

Effaith Gostyngiadau Cyllid ar Ddiwylliant a Chwaraeon | Impact of Funding Reductions for Culture and Sport

Ymateb gan: Christopher Catling, Yr Ysgrifennydd (Prif Weithredwr), , Comisiwn Brenhinol Henebion Cymru | Evidence from: Christopher Catling, The Secretary (CEO), Royal Commission on the ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales

On 17 December 2023, Dawn Bowden, then the Deputy Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism Culture, and Tourism, announced that Cadw and the Royal Commission were to have their budgets cut for the 2024-25 financial year by 22 per cent. We are very grateful indeed to the members of this Committee and to several Plaid Cymru Senedd members for helping us to secure a reduction in this cut to 10.5 per cent.

Even so, a cut of 10.5 per cent meant that we had to institute a voluntary redundancy programme during the period December 2023 to March 2024, which led to the loss of five staff, including two senior managers. In addition, two members of staff with transferable skills (our Finance and HR managers) left us as a direct result of the uncertainties caused by continuous budget cuts. In all, we lost 23 per cent of our total staff complement.

As a result of these cuts, we now have 27 staff (24 FTE), which will reduce to 24 (21 FTE) at the end of December 2024 when the contracts come to an end of the staff taken on to deliver our Welsh Asian Heritage project. By comparison, we had 45 FTE staff in 2014.

Through voluntary redundancy and by freezing posts, we have been able to stay within budget this year, but we know that we will lose a further £110,000 next year when the co-operation agreement funding agreed between Plaid and Welsh Labour comes to an end.

It should be noted that this reduction in capacity is not a one-year event. The last decade has seen a slow attrition of our budgets, starting with the substantial in-

year cut of in 2014-15, which led to the loss of 14 posts, and continuing with flat budgets every year until this year's deeper cut of 10.5 per cent.

Flat budgets are cuts, in effect, because our salary and IT costs (in particular) have continued to rise: Cyber Security certification, for example, now costs c. £10,000 p.a. compared with just £1,000 p.a. five years ago, and the rises in pay and pension contributions for staff also mean that 90 per cent of our annual budget is dedicated to salary and pensions, leaving little for essential fieldwork activity, aerial photography, training and community engagement. In addition, pressures on our capital budget mean that we have not been able to update essential survey equipment.

Reductions in service delivery

The effect of this nearly 50 per cent reduction in staff over ten years is that we have had to make substantial reductions in service delivery. For example, we are required under the terms of our Royal Warrant and the Historic Environment (Wales) Act to make a photographic and written record for posterity of the many significant buildings that are subject to wholesale or partial demolition in Wales, but we are only able in reality to record a fraction of these.

Our annual reports give details of the many well-known buildings across Wales that we have recorded in recent years, including the BBC Studios in Llandaff, the Rhyl Sun Centre, Wrexham Civic Centre, Colleg Harlech and numerous historic schools, churches and chapels. We anticipate a large increase in the number of buildings that should be recorded over the next decade as a result of the forthcoming closure of up to a third of the places of worship in Wales, but we lack the capacity to record these buildings before their interiors are stripped, the buildings converted to other uses and their archives lost.

Equally we struggle to meet the demand from planning officers, consultants and such bodies as Natural Resources Wales for information about upland archaeological sites in Wales to underpin decisions about afforestation as a carbon offset measure, or the location of windfarms and solar arrays, and we are some way behind where we should be in work to record sites in the slate World Heritage landscape prior to conservation.

Our much-valued Library and Enquiries service, which handles scores of enquiries each week from planners, consultants, researchers, teachers, publishers and journalists and members of the public, now has just two staff remaining out of five who were previously employed in handling enquiries. This has resulted in longer waiting times for a response to user enquires (recently, 91.4 per cent of our

enquirers received an initial response within our target time of fifteen working days, down from 99 per cent in 2022–23 and 100 per cent in 2021–22). We have also had to suspend our paid-for priority services, much to the dismay of the planning consultants who are regular users of this service,

We have had to reduce to three days a week the number of days when the search room is open to the public, enabling the other two days to be used for responding to online, telephone and written enquiries. When one member of staff has to retrieve records from our archive store, the other must invigilate the search room. This becomes impossible if one of the two Search Room staff is on leave, or is absent through sickness or simply taking a lunch break.

Other staff are helping to resolve this problem by volunteering to invigilate and we have greatly benefited from the flexibility and goodwill of staff who have added the Finance and HR manager roles to their existing jobs, but these are not sustainable long-term solutions. Everyone's workload has increased and this is imposing a considerable amount of stress on all staff, including those members of staff who perform unique functions in Wales and who are shouldering heavy burdens of work – for example, in the areas of maritime and aerial archaeology, the historic placenames register, community engagement and maintaining the Coflein digital platform that is the online access point for heritage information in Wales.

External funding

To compensate for the loss of core funding we have worked hard to win external funding, and it is only because of our successes in this area that we are able to fulfil our Government remit. In the last five years, for example, the Royal Commission has led the high-profile CHERISH climate change project, with €6m of EU funding (shared with various partner institutions in Wales and Ireland), studying the impacts of climate change on coastal heritage.

With National Lottery Heritage Fund grants we have delivered the U-boats War project, which included the recording of U-boats and ships sunk off the Welsh coast during World War I; and the Unloved Heritage project, engaging young people in heritage activities. We have just completed a project to work with the community in Penparcau to excavate and improve access to the Pendinas hillfort that rises between that village and the coast, a project that has engaged schools in the area with creative arts projects and that is being nominated for an Archaeological Achievement Award at the ceremony to be held in Cardiff in November.

We have also delivered several smaller projects funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, including Unpath'd Waters, bringing maritime heritage records into line with those of Historic England, and Deep Mapping, which led us to develop an award-winning method of showing how the historic environment has changed over the last 500 years.

Finally, we have secured a two-year grant from Welsh Government's Anti-racist Wales Action Plan for our Welsh Asian Heritage project, which concludes in November and December 2024 with a Senedd exhibition showcasing the results of our work - the only heritage project in Wales to be funded by the ArWAP scheme, and a further example of the Royal Commission's creativity in responding to Welsh Government priorities.

It needs to be emphasised that we have demanding KPIs from Welsh Government that relate to the climate emergency, community engagement, social justice, education, health and wellbeing, engaging with young people and more but our core funding is not sufficient to enable us to deliver any of these. We are not funded adequately for the work that Welsh Government expects us to undertake on its behalf, and to meet our KPIs and respond positively to our remit, we are reliant on these non-Government grants, which are increasingly hard to obtain, especially now that we are no longer eligible for EU funding.

The future

In sum, the Commission's work is not just a 'nice to have' luxury: we are striving to deliver against our Government remit, the requirements of our Royal Warrant and our statutory duties under the Public Records Act, the Historic Environment Act, Planning legislation and international treaty obligations (World Heritage Site conservation, for example), as well as the Future Generations Act and Welsh Language commitments. We have been delivering our services to the best of our capacity during a period of managed decline in which we have only been able to stay within our very small budget by not renewing posts as they have become vacant, a process that has now led to a serious capacity crisis.

It is against this background that we have been encouraged to work more closely with our sectoral partners. For many years there have been discussions about how the sector could work together more effectively, and frequent reference has been made to theoretical efficiencies to be made by sharing 'back-office' functions. Our recent attempts to engage with Welsh Government, Cadw, the National Library and Amgueddfa Cymru over shared HR and financial services has shown that this is not feasible in practice and that there are no savings to be made - we are all

operating very lean operations that are barely adequate to meet the needs of our individual institutions, without spare capacity to share with others.

We are now about to enter formal discussion with Cadw to explore areas of common interest, potential synergies and better ways of delivering our services, from more closely aligning our work programmes to full merger. If Cadw and the Commission are to amalgamate, it should not be because we are forced to do so as a result of the burning platform of budget cuts. It should be because this would be in the best interests of the people and the historic environment of Wales.

And whatever new arrangements for delivering the nation's historic environment services are agreed as a result of such a review, there will still be the need a more sustainable level of funding.

We hope that this inquiry on the part of the Senedd Culture Committee will result in a decisive shift of focus: for too long the sector has been trying to manage the impacts of cuts and we need now to focus on growth, so as to realise the enormous potential of the heritage sector to contribute to the economy, health, wellbeing, community cohesion and educational opportunities for the people of Wales.

Agenda Item 5.1

S4C

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

17 September 2024

An update from the interim Chair and Chief Executive of S4C

Annwyl Delyth,

At the beginning of a new Senedd term, and following your work during the last term, we wish to update the Committee on matters of interest to you which relate to S4C.

Media Act 2024

In March this year, your Committee published a '*State of play*' report on public service broadcasting in Wales, which emphasised the significance of the UK Government's Media Bill. As you can imagine, we at S4C were very pleased to see the Bill being passed in May with broad cross-party support. The new Media Act is an important milestone and provides S4C with the footing required to continue evolving in an ever-changing media ecosystem.

We look forward to working with DCMS, Ofcom, and other stakeholders over the coming months to ensure the effective implementation of the Act's provisions. That work will also reinforce Ofcom's five-year review of public service media, as well as the BBC Royal Charter review process, which is on the horizon.

S4C Board Appointments

Prior to the General Election, UK Government officials had commenced a public appointments process for the next Chair of S4C. As you will know, this process was subsequently postponed.

We understand that this process will shortly resume or recommence. We expect the UK's Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport to provide an opportunity for select committee scrutiny of her preferred candidate for the next S4C Chair in due course.

Furthermore, we expect the process to appoint the S4C Chair to be complemented with a process to appoint new non-executive members of the S4C Board. Currently, the S4C Board has five non-executive members, out of a possible nine; three members' terms are due to end before 1 April 2025. Alongside the statutory certainty provided by the Media Act 2024 with regard to S4C's governance arrangements, we believe that certainty about the future non-executive membership of the Board will be beneficial for S4C.

Independent Report into S4C's Working Environment and Subsequent Action Plan

It is fair to say that 2022 and 2023 represented a difficult period for many people associated with S4C. In May 2023, the non-executive members of the S4C Board commissioned Capital Law to undertake an independent fact-finding exercise into the culture and work environment at S4C in response to concerns raised by the BECTU trade union. This led to a published report and the dismissal of the Chief Executive.

For further context and for the benefit of your Committee's newest members, an outline of this process is appended to this letter.

We are committed to ensuring that S4C is a workplace where colleagues feel respected, supported and motivated to perform at their best. Since assuming our respective interim roles in April, one of our main priorities has been delivering on an agreed Action Plan to address remaining issues within the organisation.

We are pleased with the progress that has been made in recent months against this internal programme of work. A progress report is published [on our website](#) following each meeting of the S4C Board. As you may recall, this Action Plan was developed in consultation with key stakeholders, and comprises four themes: leadership, culture, HR policies and procedures, and governance.

We are clear that leadership built on integrity, accountability, cooperation and open communication is key to building a positive future and restoring trust amongst our staff. The S4C Board is pleased to have opened the recruitment process for a new, permanent Chief Executive as of Monday, 2 September. We anticipate a strong field of candidates, who ought to feel confident about S4C's organisational culture and values, and equipped to take S4C boldly into its next chapter.

With regard to internal culture, S4C has commissioned Sycol, a bilingual company specialising in psychology-led consulting, to facilitate a programme of cultural strengthening and organisational development. Over the coming weeks and months, Sycol will continue with workshops for management and staff, and will implement a learning organisation framework to embed positive changes to the culture at S4C.

As we have stated previously, a positive organisational culture and effective HR procedures must go hand-in-hand. The S4C Board has recently reviewed and approved amendments to some of S4C's HR policies and the Code of Practice for Board members. We have renamed the HR department to focus on 'People and Culture' and, moreover, a review of HR best-practice will be conducted in the coming weeks.

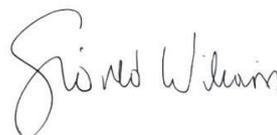
As part of our efforts to ensure that our governance arrangements also conform with best practice, an external review of S4C's governance effectiveness was recently completed, with a particular focus on internal governance arrangements. Its recommendations will be considered by our Board in the first instance, and are expected to result in amendments to our Standing Orders in due course.

We reiterate that S4C appreciates the Committee's interest and support of public service broadcasting in Wales. Should you have any queries relating to the above matters, or indeed any other aspect of S4C's work, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,



Guto Bebb
Interim Chair, S4C



Sioned Wiliam
Interim Chief Executive, S4C

Appendix: The Independent Fact-Finding Process and Report on S4C’s Working Environment – an Outline of Events

02 December 2022	The BECTU trade union writes to the S4C Chief Executive and the Director of Human Resources to request a meeting to discuss “serious complaints about the recent culture at S4C”.
08 December 2022	A scheduled S4C Board meeting is held at the Caernarfon office where the Chief Executive advises that, as part of its response to BECTU, the Management Team are initiating a two-day listening exercise with all S4C staff.
21 December 2022	The Chief Executive and the Director of Human Resources meet with BECTU to discuss their correspondence dated 02 December.
22 December 2022	The Chief Executive writes to the S4C Board Chair, the Chair of the People and Remuneration Committee, and Board Secretary, to report on the meeting with BECTU and advises that BECTU was reassured with the prompt response to their correspondence.
19 January 2023	A scheduled S4C Board meeting is held where the Chief Executive provides assurances that recent dialogue with BECTU officials had been positive, and that the Management Team are preparing a programme of work in response to the key themes raised during the two-day staff listening exercise.
09 February 2023	A copy of the plan developed by the Management Team is presented to the S4C Board’s People and Remuneration Committee. Committee members are advised that the plan had already been shared with S4C staff during a meeting held in late January 2023.
28 April 2023	<p>BECTU writes to the S4C Board Secretary, copied to the S4C Chair and the other five non-executive members of the Board. BECTU’s letter raises serious concerns about the culture within S4C, which it states union members feel is regressing following the staff listening exercise held by the Management Team.</p> <p>In the letter, BECTU requests that a mechanism be put in place to allow staff to discuss their concerns confidentially with an independent investigator.</p> <p>In a meeting of the non-executive members of the S4C Board it is agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the S4C Chair, and the chairs of the Board’s Audit and Risk, and People and Remuneration committees arrange a meeting with BECTU officials; and • That an external law firm is to be engaged to undertake a fact-finding exercise on behalf of the non-executive directors. <p>The S4C Chair advises the Chief Executive of the BECTU letter, and the response agreed by the non-executive directors. The Chair also advises DCMS of the letter, and the steps the non-executive members of the Board intend to take.</p>
02 May 2023	<p>The S4C Chair and the chairs of the Board’s Audit and Risk, and People and Remuneration committees meet with BECTU officials and agree to put a process in place to allow staff to share their concerns confidentially with an independent investigator.</p> <p>Following an initial review of options, Capital Law is engaged to undertake the fact-finding exercise and to advise on related legal considerations. The services of Capital Law are procured in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the company is selected based on their expertise, Welsh-language capabilities, capacity to begin promptly, and their independence of S4C.</p>

	To help safeguard the independence and impartiality of the process, it is agreed that the fact-finding exercise is to be undertaken by one team within Capital Law, whilst the provision of legal advice is undertaken by a separate team within the firm.
12 May 2023	The Terms of Reference for the fact-finding process are agreed by the S4C non-executive directors, and a copy is shared with the Management Team for information.
June - July 2023	The Capital Law fact-finding team conduct interviews with 92 staff members, former staff, and suppliers in the production sector who had initiated contact with Capital Law, and expressed a desire to be interviewed. These interviews are conducted online and in-person across Wales.
August - September 2023	The Capital Law fact-finding team analyse the evidence gathered – both from interview transcripts and written documentation submitted – to identify prominent themes.
16 October 2023	As per the Terms of Reference, the fact-finding team at Capital Law presents its evidence report to the S4C Chair and Board Secretary. The process to consider the findings and obtain appropriate legal advice on next steps commences.
03 November 2023	A comprehensive report – summarising the evidence supported by extensive quotations from interview transcripts, alongside legal advice – is considered by all non-executive members of the S4C Board. Their consideration of the evidence continues through further exchanges and meetings over three weeks.
24 November 2023	The Chief Executive is dismissed following a unanimous decision by the non-executive members of the S4C Board.
06 December 2023	S4C publishes <i>Capital Law's Report Into the Working Environment and Atmosphere at S4C</i> , which summarises prominent themes from the fact-finding process.
29 February 2024	The S4C Board publishes an Action Plan to deal with remaining issues, and Sioned Wiliam is announced as S4C's interim Chief Executive.

Agenda Item 5.2

Planet: the Welsh Internationalist
(Berw Ltd.)

[REDACTED]

23.09. 2024

[For publication]

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

I'm writing to clarify and correct the record re. the points Helgard Krause raised in her letter of 17 September 2024 to the Committee. Many thanks for your continued engagement with and scrutiny of this issue.

1. Krause writes 'The fact that some publishers have been receiving funding over many years may have created the impression that our funding is to support particular businesses and titles, but this is not the case'. Here I would like to reiterate a point I and others have made within *Planet* editorials on these issues, throughout the open letter campaign and in correspondence with yourselves as otherwise this could become rather a red herring to distract from the main issues at hand: we (and other magazines involved in these discussions) don't contest in the slightest that BCW grants should be open, competitive tenders, with no guarantee that existing publications will continue to be funded. The case I have presented doesn't contradict this whatsoever.

If, firstly, another publisher had submitted a stronger application than us to the 2023 tender, which performed better against the tender priorities than ourselves, and consequently there was not enough money in the pot to support all publishers adequately and we had simply lost our funding as a consequence (and if, secondly, there had been no unfair or untrue feedback about us) we wouldn't have contested the decision at all. However, the key thing here is that neither of these things were the case.

We are raising these issues not only for *Planet's* benefit, but for the benefit of all Welsh publications, established and new, as we wouldn't want another publisher to experience what we are undergoing.

2. In July I published on our website a free, expanded version of the editorial in the final issue of *Planet*. This includes additional information about the circumstances behind

us losing our funding and a Postscript with more recent developments. You can read it here: <https://www.planetmagazine.org.uk/planet-online/253/editorial/emily-trahair>

One new section gives full detail about the (extraordinarily unfair, illogical and absurd) ‘rationale’ given for denying us funding. Please see the subtitle ‘What ‘rationale’ was given for *Planet* losing its grant?’ in the link above. The case made to us by BCW in justifying their decision would likely be defamatory if they were to articulate it in the public sphere. BCW termed this ‘the full extent of the sub-committee’s feedback’ regarding panel criticism of *Planet*.

This brings me to another claim made by Krause that ‘unsuccessful applicants to the old tender were welcome to submit applications for new proposals that responded to and met the criteria for the new brief’.

In my letter from 02.07.24 I explained that obviously we as a publisher would not have been able to submit an application as *Planet* as we are neither ‘brand new’ nor a literary magazine (but have much wider remit). I explained that nothing in all our correspondence with BCW since the funding decision was made known to us suggests that we - as *Planet* or as a publishing company more generally - would be eligible, let alone welcome, to apply for this new tender.

Furthermore, if you read the section in the editorial re. the funding decision rationale as indicated above in full, it will become clear that we would not have been ‘welcome’ as a publisher and company to submit applications for the 2024 tender for a different magazine of narrower focus, even if we had wanted to, as we had been – as a company and publisher – criticised so unfairly and absurdly as the rationale for denying funding to *Planet*. (Criticism, which in short, in my opinion amounts not only to victimising us as employees for raising concerns about the impact of successive grant cuts on working conditions, but also victim-blaming us for these very same concerns as were articulated in the open letter campaign, a *Planet* editorial and our grant application.) I believe there was no way we could have received a fair appraisal in the 2024 tender if we had wanted to launch a new kind of magazine.

There also remains the concern that the set of funding decisions deprives Wales of adequate provision for hybrid political-cultural-literary publications that have been so essential for Welsh democracy for centuries, and form a unique part of Wales’s living radical tradition, as is articulated more fully in the updated version of the editorial (under the sub-heading ‘Why independent political-cultural-literary magazines are so vital’).

3. Helgard Krause notified you that the tender process to award the remaining money left over from the 2023 tender has been completed. However, this changes nothing with regard to the need for ongoing scrutiny of the decisions and campaigning for reform of the funding system, reform that so many readers, writers and publishers are desperate for. Our focus will continue to be on proposing constructive root-and-branch reform of BCW and its funding strategy, and restoring sustainable grant levels, to help safeguard all magazine and website publishers (established and new), and to enable a fair and trustworthy funding environment so that *Planet* can consider re-applying for funding in the future. If this proves impossible, to campaign for funding responsibilities for magazines and websites to be transferred to another body.

It would be a great concern if this issue were to be swept under the carpet at this juncture – I continue to be approached by a huge number of people who are deeply alarmed by how *Planet* and *New Welsh Review* have been treated, and the precedent this sets: Whether the

untruth propagated by BCW that *Planet* couldn't receive the minimum £75,500 we applied for due to limitations on the BCW budget and the strength of submissions to the 2023 tender (when in fact there was c. £95,000 left over) and so could not receive any funding; or the 'rationale' given for the decision, which is a reflection of an environment where publishers and their employees increasingly fear losing their grant if they raise awareness about the impact of grant cuts on working conditions.

I'm very grateful for the time taken by the Committee to read through these issues.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Emily Trahair'.

Emily Trahair
(Editor of *Planet* 2012-2024)

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref: AL1717 (EM043)

Delyth Jewell MS
Committee Chair
Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee
Senedd Cymru
Bae Caerdydd
CF99 1SN

1 October 2024

Dear Delyth,

Thank you for your letter to my predecessor, the Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip, which contained the Committee's response to the consultation on the draft Priorities for Culture.

Officials are currently reviewing the consultation responses and are required to prepare and publish a summary report on consultation responses within twelve weeks of the consultation closing date.

We received an excellent response to the consultation, with good representation from across the sectors in scope and more widely. It is early in terms of the evaluation process, but we can already see that responses are very supportive of the draft Priorities.

The former Co-operation Agreement required these strategic priorities to be developed 'from the ground up' and by 'engaging deeply and meaningfully with the arts, culture and heritage sectors'. I am confident that we have achieved this, and the emerging support from the consultation seems to indicate the draft strategy reflects the aspirations of the sectors in scope. Developing new policy in this way, and ensuring a thorough and credible process takes time.

Once the summary of consultation responses has been published, our next steps will be to develop and publish a final version of the Priorities and an accompanying implementation plan. In line with the approach taken throughout, any implementation plan must be devised and agreed with the input of key stakeholders and with the external Steering Group in advance of publication.

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Gohebiaeth.Jack.Sargeant@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Jack.Sargeant@gov.wales

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

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

I note that the Committee is still considering key issues in relation to its enquiry into Culture and the New Relationship with the EU. Given that a report on the consultation findings for the Draft Priorities for Culture should be published by the end of November, it may be difficult to consider the Committee's final recommendations as part of the consultation report. However, I would welcome early receipt of the Committee's report and will consider whether the findings could inform the development of the implementation plan.

You have emphasised the importance of linking the new Priorities for Culture with the Welsh Government's International Strategy, and I can confirm that Culture Division officials worked closely with the Welsh Government's international relations team as part of developing the draft priorities. These close working relationships continue. Draft Ambition 12 states that culture is integrated into how Wales establishes and develops international relationships and given the level of support for the draft priorities and ambitions in the consultation responses, I do not foresee that this ambition will change significantly.

I recognise the impact on children and young people caused by the Royal Welsh College for Music and Drama's (RWCMD) decision to close its weekend music and drama provision. During a Senedd Plenary debate on the closure held on 18 September, the Minister for Further and Higher Education reaffirmed the Welsh Government's commitment to continued engagement with the College. However, as an autonomous body, the RWCMD is responsible for its own academic affairs, including delivery of its courses and decisions on financial management.

The College has advised that it remains fully committed to providing opportunities in music and theatre for young people and to creating pathways into professional training. It intends to undertake a period of review in 2024-25, working with young people, staff, stakeholders and external UK advisors, with an ambition to develop a national talent programme for Wales.

You have also raised concerns about progress against some Programme for Government commitments relating to culture, including the Museum of North Wales and the National Contemporary Art Gallery.

We will not be progressing work on a Museum of North Wales during this Senedd term. In the current financial climate, we must prioritise protecting and preserving our existing cultural institutions and their collections. We remain committed to supporting the redevelopment of the National Slate Museum at Llanberis, which will include opportunities to increase access to Amgueddfa Cymru's collections, including those of direct relevance to North Wales.

Several updates have been provided to the Committee on progress with delivering Celf - The National Contemporary Art Gallery for Wales. This has included written and verbal evidence provided during the Committee's review of this work, the most recent Written Statement issued on 10 July 2024 and verbal evidence on the same day and the written response to the follow up questions received. This has demonstrated the good progress on digitising the collection and delivering the dispersed model across Wales, which is on track to complete by March 2025.

Thank you for your leadership as Chair of the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee. I look forward to working with you and Committee members on these important matters going forward.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "JACK SARGEANT". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends across the width of the name.

Jack Sargeant AS/MS

Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership

Y Gweinidog Diwylliant, Sgiliau a Phartneriaeth Gymdeithasol

Agenda Item 5.4

Input provided for the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee of the Welsh Parliament's inquiry into 'Culture and the new relationship with the European Union'.

International Cultural Policy Section; Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Ireland

September 2024

- As two Celtic nations in close proximity, Ireland's artistic and cultural collaborations and connections with Wales have strong historical roots. These cultural connections remain vibrant today. Ireland and Wales benefit from a rich and often shared cultural heritage which flourishes in each country. Artists play an essential role in both countries, preserving traditional art forms and also re-imagining and representing our current societies through a modern and creative lens.
- The Government of Ireland continues to maintain a close working relationship with the Welsh Government at official and Ministerial levels through, for example, fora such as the **British Irish Council (BIC)**.
- We welcome that Culture and Heritage remains one of the three key pillars of policy collaboration under the BIC. Ireland highly values the ongoing policy engagement with our Welsh counterparts under this pillar on the topics of (i) Creative Industries, and (ii) Indigenous, Minority and Lesser-Used (IML) Languages. The Creative Industries work sector of BIC provides a valuable platform for sharing expertise and learning on policies and approaches to creative industries between Ireland and Wales.
- Ireland and Wales are engaged closely through the BIC in sharing policy information and experience on a number of key areas of policy development for the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sports and Media, including (i) Climate and Culture, (ii) Health and Wellbeing in the Creative Sector, and (iii) Strengthening the resilience of the sector.
- Ireland also continues to collaborate bilaterally with Wales through the **Ireland-Wales Ministerial Forum**. Through this engagement Ireland and Wales have agreed the '[Ireland-Wales Shared Statement and Joint Action Plan 2021-25](#)', under which Culture, Language and Heritage is identified as a key area for cooperation between the two nations.
- Recent examples of this cooperation include:
 - **Other Voices Festival:**

Ireland continues to support and promote the three-year partnership which began in 2019 with Other Voices Festival and Lleisiau Eraill between South Wind Blows, Theatr Mwldan and Triongl TV. Ireland is also seeking to develop opportunities to engage with Ireland's Edge, a multidisciplinary creative event series that makes up a distinct strand of Other Voices festival of music and ideas. A multi-annual support framework was agreed with South Wind Blows in respect of the Other Voices presentations at Dingle and Cardigan in the period 2023-2025. It was further agreed that the achievements of Other Voices at Cardigan would be reviewed jointly by the Welsh and Irish official partners in early 2025.
 - **Horizons partnership and WOMEX:**

Culture Ireland engages with Wales Arts International and Welsh colleagues through participation in the Horizons partnership, a collective of export offices and funding agencies across Scotland, Wales, England, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The Horizons partnership was founded during the 2013 edition of WOMEX held in Wales and spotlights emerging music artists from England, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales – helping talented musicians gain international recognition on the world stage. For 10 years, the Horizons partners have joined

together at WOMEX (Worldwide Music Expo) to ensure our grassroots musicians reach wider audiences by providing advice, funding, showcasing opportunities and assistance at the event. Based on this, Culture Ireland has also worked with Welsh colleagues on coordination of national presences at other international showcase events such as Classical: NEXT.

○ **Other Culture Ireland supports for Irish-Welsh artistic engagement:**

In addition to Culture Ireland's participation in the Horizons Partnership, Culture Ireland also continues to support Irish artists to present at festivals and venues across Wales. Recent projects include:

- Ulster Touring Opera participating with performances of *Nia Ben Aur* in the National Eisteddfod in Pontyprid, August 2024.
- *Beyond Two Shores* presented by Wex-Art and West Wales Arts Centre in Fishguard, August 2024.
- Ceol Connected and Fidget Feet presenting *When the Moon Spun Round* at Opening Doors Festival in Aberystwyth, March 2024.
- Fishamble presenting Irish language work by Eva O'Connor as part of TAIGH TŶ TEACH (HOUSE), a tri-lingual co-production with Theatre Gu Leor and Theatr Bara Caws, in Scotland and Wales, January - February 2024.
- Gaeltacht musician Padraig Jack undertaking a tour of the Welsh Gaeltacht region, February 2023.
- Eoin Colfer and illustrator Celia Ivey presenting *Little Big Sister* at the Hay Festival, Hay on Wye, June 2023.
- Gatehouse performing at The Valley Folk Club, Ponterdawe, Swansea, and the Tredegar House Folk festival, Newport, May 2023.
- Tom Mooney attending *Borderless and Bold*, presented by Wex-Art at West Wales Arts Centre, August 2023.
- 4InaBar performing at Narbeth A Cappella Voice Festival (NAVF), Queens Hall, Narbeth, March 2023.
- Nuala O'Connor presenting her book *Finding Nora* at the Llangwm Literary Festival, August 2022.

○ **Arts Council Ireland collaborations with Welsh and UK-wide partners:**

Finally, the Arts Council Ireland are engaged in a number of projects promoting collaboration with Welsh partners, including:

- The Arts Council of Ireland is joining the *All In* cultural access scheme, which aims to improve the experience of people with disabilities when attending arts and cultural events in the UK and Ireland.
- Ireland is participating in the Northern European Mobility programme, a pilot mobility and exchange opportunity supported by the arts funding agencies of Ireland, Wales, England, Scotland and Northern Ireland and the Nordic Culture Fund.
- Arts Council Ireland is collaborating with British Council Ireland on research designed to better understand the connections that exist between the UK and Ireland in arts and culture.
- Arts Council Ireland has participated in the Beyond Border programme, which aim is to supports the creation, touring and promotion of innovative and high-quality new music across all genres and encourages engagement with audiences across England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland through multiple performances and digital activity.

- However, Brexit has created a number of challenges for arts and culture engagement between Ireland and Wales. For instance, while the Common Travel Area has mitigated mobility issues between the two countries, the Arts Council Ireland have noted that they have seen the

emergence of barriers and tariffs affecting the movement of art goods across borders (e.g. visual arts material, technical equipment, etc.), which has had an effect on individual artists working between the two countries in particular.

- However, perhaps the biggest impact on potential Irish-Welsh cultural collaboration has come from the UK's withdrawal from the EU's Creative Europe programme. While data on specific Irish-Welsh collaborations under Creative Europe is hard to disaggregate, we would note the following Creative Europe strands as areas where collaboration may be negatively affected:
 - **European Cooperation Projects:** Between 2014 and 2019, of the 55 projects funded with Irish organisations under the Creative Europe funding strand 'European Cooperation Projects, 30 projects (56%) involved at least 1 UK-based organisation. 10 of these projects (18%) were led by UK-based organisations. Through these projects, Irish organisations worked directly with 50 UK-based organisations. Unfortunately, as the UK is not currently participating in the Creative Europe programme, this avenue for fostering connections between Irish and UK-based arts organisations is no longer open. Ireland continues to participate in European Cooperation Projects, however, we now have increased focus on fostering and developing relationships with non-UK European partners for these projects. Over time this could have a negative impact on the level of individual and institutional collaboration between Ireland and Wales.
 - **Individual Mobility:** Irish artists travelling to the UK for residencies are no longer eligible to apply for Culture Moves Europe funding such as the Individual Mobility Award. Again, over time this will again have a negative impact on cultural collaboration between Ireland and all UK regions.
 - **Film Distribution and Sales:** Ireland is currently facing particular challenges in accessing funding for film distribution and sales projects under Creative Europe post-Brexit. This is largely due to the fact that the Irish market often relies on UK-based distributors and sales agents who purchase rights for film distribution in the UK and Ireland territories. This has led to a lack of access for Irish stakeholders to Creative Europe calls such as Films on the Move, whereas, previously we benefitted from UK-based company's participation in this scheme.
- Finally, at a policy level, while we have noted the ongoing collaboration through BIC and the Ireland-Wales Ministerial Council above, Ireland notes that previously we had additional opportunities to engage with the UK government through multilateral EU fora such as the Cultural Affairs Committee. Engagement through this European fora is also no longer possible.

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

2 October 2024

Dear Delyth,

INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY AND CARDIFF AIRPORT

Thank you for your letter of 20 August to the First Minister and the then Cabinet Secretary for the Economy, Transport and North Wales regarding the Welsh Government's international strategy and Cardiff Airport. I am responding to you as I am now the Cabinet Secretary responsible for Cardiff Airport.

Firstly, please accept my apologies for the delay in replying, which is related to the need to formally confirm new Ministerial portfolios to the Senedd prior to communicating in my new capacity.

As you know, on 22 July, the then Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Transport and North Wales issued a statement which set out our proposed future strategy for Cardiff Airport. The statement can be found here: [Written Statement: Cardiff Wales Airport – long term strategy \(22 July 2024\) | GOV.WALES](#)

Following the Statement, the Welsh Government submitted its referral to the Subsidy Advice Unit (SAU), part of the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) on 15 August 2024. The SAU acknowledged receipt of our submission is currently preparing its report which will be published this week on 2nd October. The approach set out, using subsidy investment to maximise Cardiff Airport's economic potential, is our current preferred option for supporting the Airport in the long term.

Once we have received the CMA's report, I will deliberate on its findings with Ministerial colleagues prior to a final decision on the future subsidy package. Once we have made a final decision on what form any investment package should take, I will update the Senedd

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Correspondence.Rebecca.Evans@gov.wales
Gohebiaeth.Rebecca.Evans@llyw.cymru

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.

accordingly. The CMA referral process will not conclude formally until the Welsh Government has published its final subsidy proposal on the relevant transparency database and subsequent 30-day window for any potential challenge has closed. With the formal process still underway, I am limited in what I can say about the final shape of any investment into the Airport.

I have set out below what I can say at this time in relation to your questions. I must also point out that should the Welsh Government proceed with the subsidy investment as planned, much of the detail behind the strategy will be of a commercially confidential nature and will remain so even after the CMA process has concluded. To release such information would place Cardiff Airport at a very significant disadvantage when negotiating for potential new business. It may also expose the commercial positions of businesses linked to the Airport.

As set out in the Written Statement, the strategy aims to build on the Airport's unique strengths with two main objectives:

- attracting and growing aviation and aerospace businesses linked to the Airport
- a targeted programme of air service development, with a focus on passenger connectivity to a small number of global air hubs and economic centres of importance to Wales

Maximising the economic benefits that Cardiff Airport can bring to Wales has been at the heart of our proposed strategy for the future of the Airport. It is an economic subsidy that sees the Airport as a catalyst for generating new jobs and increasing economic activity in its hinterland, as part of the aerospace cluster. Whilst we envisage a growth in direct employment and GVA contribution from the Airport itself, we also expect significant benefits for the wider related economy, for example at the nearby Bro Tathan business park. The Welsh Government International Strategy references the South East Wales Aerospace and Defence Sector cluster as one of its Magnet Projects.

International connectivity is an integral element to enable future economic growth and as such, the core aims of the Welsh Government's International Strategy formed an important part of our thinking. In developing the proposed approach to supporting the Airport in the long term, my officials have worked closely with their colleagues from across the Welsh Government, including those in International Relations and Trade. The intentions around air route development are to improve connectivity to regions of economic importance to Wales, reflecting the regions of the world referenced in the International Strategy. This includes the Middle East & Asia, Europe, and North America/Canada. I am not in a position at this time to identify a specific routes or individual destinations as it will be for the Airport executive team, who are responsible for the commercial operation of the Airport and who lead on those commercial negotiations, to seek to secure the best possible arrangements with airlines that serve these regions. I have agreed that the Airport should consider a small number of targeted routes focused on attracting inbound tourism and foreign investment. If the Welsh Government's international priorities change, I am confident that Cardiff Airport will be required to flex its approach accordingly, so long as its activities remain within the parameters of the final subsidy package that emerges from the CMA referral process.

As outlined in the recent Written Statement, we have acknowledged the policy tensions between owning an airport, the significant economic benefits the Airport can deliver for Wales and our need to address the climate emergency. The proposed strategy for the Airport aims to

encourage the development and local adoption of more sustainable aircraft propulsion technologies and to reduce carbon emissions from the Airport's infrastructure.

I would like to take this opportunity to address a misunderstanding regarding a claim that the Airport has missed a net zero target. Under the terms of the Rescue and Restructure grant, the Airport was required to provide a commitment by 31 March 2023 to becoming carbon neutral, which it has done. The target was not to achieve carbon neutrality by 2023.

Cardiff Airport is committed to reducing its carbon footprint and I am pleased to advise the Committee that the Airport has reduced carbon emissions from its ground operations by over 60% in the last four years, from 1,700 tonnes to under 600 tonnes of CO₂ annually, with an aim to reduce this by a further 50% over the next five years. The Airport has also recently announced that it has added six new electric powered vehicles to its operational fleet which will be used across Cardiff Airport and St Athan Aerodrome by the car parks, security, airfield operations and bird control teams.

As specific examples of achievements in this area, the Airport has:

- Switched to entirely renewable and clean electricity sources;
- Had a heavy focus on recycling and is zero waste-to-landfill;
- Reduced its natural gas consumption by 30%;
- Replaced assets with modern and more energy efficient technology;
- Restricted ground running of engines during anti-social hours;
- Employed continuous descent operations for aircraft on approach, promoting noise abatement;
- Encouraged twin engine aircraft to taxi with one engine;
- Introduced a replacement programme of LED lighting; and
- Continued to reduce plastic consumption with its partners.

The proposed long-term strategy will enable the Airport to continue on its path to net zero. The Airport is working on updating its Environmental Flight Path which it will publish once the future route to funding has been confirmed following completion of the CMA process.

On the subject of Qatar Airways, the Airport executive team is leading on the commercial negotiations with the airline regarding the resumption of the Doha service. It would not be appropriate for me to comment further while those negotiations are still underway, other than to say that I would very much welcome the resumption of the route when the time is right for both the Airport and the operator.

Cardiff Airport is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Welsh Government, operated at an arms-length as a private limited company. It operates in an independent and commercial manner and is liable for its own actions and any issues arising from the running of its business. Ministers do not intervene in the Airport's day-to-day commercial operating matters. It will therefore be for the Airport executive team, with appropriate scrutiny from WGC Holdco Ltd, to decide how, on a commercial basis, they deliver on the Welsh Government's strategy. It is my intention that Holdco will play a more prominent role in the governance, challenge and scrutiny of the Airport going forward. Once the future strategy has been confirmed I will ensure that appropriate success metrics and governance arrangements are put in place to monitor the Airport's performance against its economic objectives.

With regard to budgets, decisions on annual allocations of funding to the Airport will be considered in context of the specific investment opportunities that have been secured by the Airport executive team and will be considered alongside other priorities for spending across the Welsh Government. Any expenditure on the Airport will of course be subject to the outcome of the CMA process.

I hope that the Committee finds the information within this letter of help.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca Evans." The signature is written in a cursive style.

Rebecca Evans AS/MS

Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Ynni a Chynllunio

CC: First Minister of Wales;
Chair of the Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee;
Chair of the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee; and
Chair of the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee.

Gwasg y Bwthyn
36, Y Maes
Caernarfon
Gwynedd
LL55 2NN

gerwyn@gwasgybwthyn.co.uk

2 October 2024

To:

Cabinet Secretary for Education: Correspondence.Lynne.Neagle@gov.wales
Minister for Children and Social Care: Correspondence.Dawn.Bowden@gov.wales
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language: Correspondence.Mark.Drakeford@gov.wales
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning:
Correspondence.Rebecca.Evans@gov.wales
Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership: Correspondence.Jack.Sargeant@gov.wales
Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing: Correspondence.Sarah.Murphy@gov.wales

and to the Members representing Gwynedd and North Wales – Gwasg y Bwthyn areas:

Sian.Gwenllian@senedd.wales
Llyr.Gruffydd@senedd.wales
Mark.Isherwood@senedd.wales
Sam.Rowlands@senedd.wales
Carolyn.Thomas@senedd.wales

as well as a copy to the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee: SeneddCulture@senedd.wales

I am writing to you on behalf of Gwasg y Bwthyn to express our concern regarding the financial support for the publishing sector in Wales.

That sector is led by the Books Council of Wales, which saw its annual budget from the Welsh Government cut by 10.5 per cent in 2024-25. That came in the wake of years of zero budget uplifts; before the cut, the grant had remained flat for more than ten years – without taking into account the impact of inflation. The possibility of a further budget cut in 2025-26 worries us greatly.

Government support for the publishing sector in Wales is needed now more than ever:

The publishing sector supports literacy at the exact time when reading standards among 15-year-old school pupils in Wales have fallen to an all-time low – a situation that was exacerbated by the repercussions of the COVID pandemic. According to the PISA test results released in December 2023, Wales is the only country within the United Kingdom in which pupils' reading scores are lower than the international average.

The publishing sector supports the Welsh language and has a key role to play in reaching the Welsh Government's target of one million Welsh speakers by 2050. In terms of the use of the language and its viability, the role that it plays is as central as that of Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin, the National Centre for Learning Welsh and the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol – three national bodies that were protected from cuts in 2024-25. In the case of the National Centre for Learning Welsh and the Coleg Cymraeg, a decision was made on 'maintaining budgets at 2023-24 levels to cause the least disruption to the Welsh language sector'.¹

The publishing sector supports the Welsh economy, and many publishers employ a number of freelancers – such as editors, designers and writers – who live and work in rural Wales.

The publishing sector supports the health of the nation: among its many other advantages, reading has proven benefits in respect of mental health and well-being. Here is a recent report from the National Literacy Trust, one of several pieces of research that confirm this important point: <https://literacytrust.org.uk/research-services/research-reports/reading-for-mental-wellbeing-in-2023/>

The Chancellor of the Exchequer in the new Labour Government pledged that there would be no more economic austerity. With the publishing sector in Wales still trying to cope with the devastating impact of the 10.5 per cent cut in 2024-25, we ask that you honour this pledge and ensure that no further cuts are made in 2025-26. That would constitute one step towards trying to ensure that an already challenging situation does not become a truly critical one.

Yours faithfully

H. Dylan Roberts

Chair
Gwasg y Bwthyn Board

¹Welsh Government Draft Budget 2024-25 – Ministers' written evidence to Senedd scrutiny committees regarding the allocations within each Main Expenditure Group – December 2023, gov.wales, p. 339.

School of Welsh and Celtic Studies
Bangor University
Bangor
LL57 2DG

3 October 2024

Dear Committee,

I am writing to you as a writer and an academic to express concern about financial support for the publishing sector in Wales.

The sector is led by the Books Council of Wales, which saw a 10.5% cut in its annual budget from the Welsh Government in 2024-25. This followed years without any increase in its budget - before the cut, the size of the grant had remained unchanged for over 10 years - and did not take into account the effects of inflation. The prospect of a further cut to its budget in 2025-26 is a matter of great concern to us.

The need for government support for the publishing sector in Wales has never been greater:

The publishing sector supports literacy at the very time when reading standards among 15-year-old school pupils in Wales are at their lowest ever – a situation exacerbated by the effects of the Covid pandemic. According to the Pisa test results released in December 2023, Wales is the only country in the UK where pupils' reading scores are below the international average.

The publishing sector supports the Welsh language and has a key role to play in meeting the Welsh Government's target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050. In terms of the use of the Welsh language and its viability, its role is as central as that of Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin, the National Centre for Learning Welsh and the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, three national bodies saved from cuts in 2024-25. In the case of the National Centre for Learning Welsh and the Coleg Cymraeg, it was decided to maintain 'budgets at 2023-24 levels to cause the least disruption to the Welsh language sector'.¹

The publishing sector supports the Welsh economy and many publishers employ a number of freelancers, e.g. editors, designers and authors, who live and work in rural Wales.

The publishing sector supports the health of the nation: among its many other benefits, reading has been proven to be beneficial to mental health and well-being. Here is a recent report by the National Literacy Trust, one of several pieces of research that confirm this important point:

¹ *Welsh Government Draft Budget 2024-25 Ministers' written evidence to Senedd scrutiny committees on allocations within each MEG December 2023*, gov.wales, p. 339.

<https://literacytrust.org.uk/research-services/research-reports/reading-for-mental-wellbeing-in-2023/>

The new Labour Government's Chancellor of the Exchequer pledged there would be no more economic austerity: with the publishing sector in Wales still trying to deal with the devastating impact of the 10.5% cut in 2024-25, we ask that you honour this pledge and ensure that no further cuts are introduced in 2025-26. This would go some way towards trying to ensure that an already extremely challenging situation does not turn into a very real crisis.

Yours sincerely

Angharad Price

Professor of Welsh and Creative Writing, Bangor University