

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

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 3 – Senedd

Meeting date: 13 November 2024

Meeting time: 09.30

For further information contact:

Lleu Williams

Committee Clerk

0300 200 6565

SeneddCulture@senedd.wales

Hybrid

Pre-meeting registration

(09.15 – 09.30)

Public

1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

(09.30)

2 Impact of funding reductions for culture and sport: Evidence session with the Minister for Culture, Skills & Social Partnership (10)

(09.30 – 10.45)

(Pages 1 – 26)

Jack Sargeant MS, Minister for Culture, Skills & Social Partnership

Ruth Meadows, Director for Culture, Heritage and Sport, Welsh Government

Steffan Roberts, Deputy Director Arts and Sport, Welsh Government

Paul Kindred, Deputy Director Culture, Welsh Government

Attached Documents:

Research brief

Welsh Government written evidence



3 Paper(s) to note

(10.45)

3.1 Impact of funding reductions for culture and sport

(Pages 27 – 70)

Attached Documents:

Correspondence from Y Lolfa: Expressing concerns about the financial support for the publishing sector in Wales – 11 October 2024 (English Translation by Senedd Commission)

Correspondence from Llinos Dafydd, Creative Editor, Writer and Adapter: Expressing concerns about the financial support for the publishing sector in Wales – 14 October 2024 (English Translation by Senedd Commission)

Correspondence from Ioan Kidd, Author: Expressing concerns about the financial support for the publishing sector in Wales – 17 October 2024 (English Translation by Senedd Commission)

Letter from Amgueddfa Cymru–Museum Wales: Providing written evidence in relation to the Committee's inquiry into the impact of funding reductions for culture and sport – 18 October 2024

Letter from the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales: Providing additional information following the Committee's meeting on 9 October 2024 in relation to the Committee's inquiry into the impact of funding reductions for culture and sport – 21 October 2024

Correspondence from Creu Cymru: Providing additional information following the Committee's meeting on 17 October 2024 in relation to the Committee's

inquiry into the impact of funding reductions for culture and sport – 24
October 2024

Correspondence from Angharad Tomos: Expressing concerns about the
financial support for the publishing sector in Wales – 25 October 2024
(English Translation by Senedd Commission)

Letter copied for information from Sioned Wyn Roberts, Author, to the Welsh
Government: Expressing concerns about the financial support for the
publishing sector in Wales – 31 October 2024 (English Translation by Senedd
Commission)

Letter from the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership: Providing
information requested by the Committee in relation to the real-terms
difference between budget allocations for Culture and Sport in 2014–15 and
2024–25 – 4 November 2024

Attachment

Correspondence from Byw'n Iach: Providing additional information following
the Committee's meeting on 24 October 2024 in relation to the Committee's
inquiry into the impact of funding reductions for culture and sport – 5
November 2024 (English Translation by Senedd Commission)

Correspondence from Swim Wales: Providing additional information following
the Committee's meeting on 24 October 2024 in relation to the Committee's
inquiry into the impact of funding reductions for culture and sport – 5
November 2024

Annex

Correspondence from Chapter Arts Centre: Providing additional information

following the Committee's meeting on 17 October 2024 in relation to the Committee's inquiry into the impact of funding reductions for culture and sport – 6 November 2024

Correspondence from Sport Wales: Providing additional information following the Committee's meeting on 9 October 2024 in relation to the Committee's inquiry into the impact of funding reductions for culture and sport – 6 November 2024

Annex 1

3.2 Books Council of Wales magazine funding model

(Pages 71 – 74)

Attached Documents:

Letter from Emily Trahair, former Editor of Planet magazine: Writing to raise further points following the Committee's evidence session with Books Council Wales on 17 October 2024 – 22 October 2024

3.3 Welsh Government international relations

(Pages 75 – 77)

Attached Documents:

Ministerial International Engagement – September 2024

Ministerial International Engagement – October 2024

Letter from the Chair of the Committee for the Scrutiny of the First Minister: Inviting the Committee to attend the next meeting of the Committee for the Scrutiny of the First Minister on 13 December 2024 as the topic is Wales and the World – 29 October 2024

3.4 Wales–Ireland relations

(Page 78)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Joint Committee on Tourism, Culture, Arts, Sport and Media,

Houses of the Oireachtas: Following the Cross-committee exchange visit to the Houses of the Oireachtas, Dublin in September 2024 – 6 November 2024

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

(10.45)

5 Impact of funding reductions for culture and sport: Consideration of evidence and key issues

(10.45 – 11.45)

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

(11.45 – 12.30)

(Pages 79 – 105)

Attached Documents:

Key issues

Letter from Cymdeithas yr Iaith: Highlighting barriers to accessing services and extracurricular activities for children and young people through the medium of Welsh – 4 October 2024 (English Translation by Senedd Commission)

Document is Restricted



CCWLSIR Committee Inquiry into the impact of funding cuts on Culture and Sport – 13 November 2024

Welsh Government's evidence paper

13 November 2024

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1. Overview

1. The 2024-25 Budget presented the most stark and painful choices for Wales in the devolution era. Our settlement for 2024-25 is up to £700m lower in real terms than expected at the time of the 2021 Spending Review, and our Budget in 2024-25 £3bn lower than if it had grown in line with GDP since 2010. In this context, and in taking these very difficult decisions, we worked hard to mitigate impacts on cultural, heritage and sports organisations.
2. We recognised this was, and continues to be, a difficult financial time for our culture, arts and sport arm's length bodies (ALBs). At the beginning of the year, they received a 10.5% reduction to their indicative revenue grant in aid for 2024-25. Despite significant challenges, our ALBs adapted at pace. We worked closely with our culture and sport ALBs as they developed new plans to operate within their revised budgets, while minimising job losses and preserving specialist skills. We are also aware that organisations within the local culture and sport sectors continue to feel pressure on their funding from governing bodies.
3. The Welsh Government listened to concerns regarding intense financial pressures on all cultural institutions at a national and local level and acted to try and mitigate these difficulties. In response to the immediate budget reductions, we re-purposed £2m revenue funding, which was allocated to delivering the Culture Strategy in 2024-25, to mitigate the impact of job losses at Amgueddfa Cymru, the National Library of Wales, the Arts Council of Wales and the wider arts sector.
4. In July, we provided additional capital funding of £3.2m in this financial year for repairs to both National Museum Cardiff and the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth. Amgueddfa Cymru and the National Library have assured us that the national collections in their care are safe in the immediate short term. However, the longer-term challenges to the safety of the national collections are significant and the Welsh Government will continue to work closely with both organisations. Additional funding of £500,000 was also allocated to help improve storage facilities and protect important collections at local and independent museums and archives which tell the stories of communities across Wales.
5. Given this announcement of additional capital in July focused on the immediate priority of protecting and preserving cultural institutions and their collections, we announced that as a result investing in an anchor gallery for the National Contemporary Art Gallery for Wales and a new Museum of North Wales will not be possible at this time.
6. Cadw received a similar reduction in budget to the ALBs. Cadw has two distinct roles, both of which carry significant statutory obligations – management and protection of the historic environment and the conservation, management and provision of safe public access to the 131 historic properties in the care of the Welsh Ministers. Cadw's business plan is commercially focused and it has evaluated all its expenditure and income raising capabilities to ensure a balanced budget prioritising its statutory duties, introducing a stretching income target and reducing non statutory budgets to maintain financial stability. Although income levels have significantly recovered since the pandemic, uncertainty remains about the future commercial income Cadw will generate during 2024-2025 due to the ongoing cost of living crisis. The target for income generation was increased by 4% primarily with price increases.

7. The Cadw plan protected grants to the wider historic environment sector as far as possible. However, sharing the impact of the reductions was unavoidable and revenue grant reductions of up to 10.5% were applied, the most significant being a 10% cut to Heneb – the trust for Welsh archaeology. Cadw also had to take the difficult decision to close five of its monument visitor centres. However, it continued to provide public access to these sites, albeit in a more limited way. There will be further challenges for the historic environment with reduced funding for local authority services also impacting on Cadw's heritage priorities. For example, local authorities are starting to approach Cadw to take on historic buildings they can no longer maintain, something that Cadw is not currently able to do.
8. In September, we provided additional non-recurrent revenue funding of £5m to culture and sport ALBs and Cadw to help ensure their financial sustainability and invest in key services. The additional £5m was drawn from our reserves and, although it will not reverse the full impact of the difficult decisions we have had to make to protect frontline services, it will help support the financial stability and strengthen the resilience of these bodies.
9. Similar to culture and sport ALBs, the Books Council of Wales' grant from Creative Wales also received a 10.5% cut. We have worked closely with the Books Council throughout the year to understand the impact of the cut and to explore options to provide additional support and earlier this year, we awarded a further £150,000 to the Books Council to support a presence for Welsh publishers at the Frankfurt and London Book Fairs.

2. Priorities as Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership

10. Since being appointed the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership in September I am excited about the positive developments we have in progress and I am extremely passionate for the portfolio. This despite the extremely challenging context of the past 12 months.
11. I certainly recognise the ongoing financial challenges facing our sectors and this has been clear in the meetings I have been having with representatives. We see many examples, such as the challenges faced by organisations such as the Welsh National Opera and the threat to local authority-run cultural venues such as Llancaiach Fawr and Blackwood Miners' Institute.
12. I am aware that several local museums, libraries and archives have announced significant financial pressures or budget reductions, and cuts to local authority budgets have had an effect on these important sectors. Their contribution in terms of health and wellbeing, economic impacts as visitor attractions, resources for schools and lifelong learning is vital.
13. Looking ahead, much of the future vision for the portfolio will be around the Priorities for Culture which is being developed following the recent consultation over the summer. There has been a credible number of responses to the consultation, with good representation from across all sectors which are in scope of the new Priorities,

and from other stakeholders. We will be publishing a summary of responses report in late November which will outline the responses in more detail.

14. I am very clear that my portfolio can contribute positively to the First Minister's four priorities:

- **Iechyd Da** - Alongside our continued investment in sports facilities and improving access to sport, research shows that culture, the arts and our historic environment has a positive impact on people's health and well-being. The Culture and Sport ALBs, local sector museums, archives and libraries and Cadw deliver a range of activities to support positive mental health and wellbeing including Cadw's award-winning volunteering programme, as a partner in the Hapus project, social prescribing, Arts, Health and Wellbeing in Wales and House of Memories Cymru to support dementia. Books Council of Wales supports the delivery of the Reading Well scheme and makes an important contribution to our health and wellbeing objectives.
- **Green jobs and Growth** - Our ALBs play a vital leadership role in tackling all aspects of the climate and nature emergencies by helping the public engage through exhibitions and supporting our cultural organisations and sports clubs to become more energy efficient and enhance biodiversity. Cadw leads research into the impact of climate change on historic assets and is helping to develop National Occupational Standards, retrofit qualifications and training materials for those working in the renewable energy sector. Through our own work programmes and capital grants, Cadw provides work for skilled conservation practitioners.
- **Opportunity for every family** - Education is at the heart of the work our ALBs, local museums, libraries and archives undertake, both in terms of formal and informal lifelong learning. For example, Amgueddfa Cymru is the biggest delivery body of education outside the school system in Wales and alongside our investment in the local library network, we also fund literacy schemes including the Summer Reading Challenge. On housing, the skills developed on our Cadw capital projects are transferrable and can be applied to the thousands of traditional buildings which make up a high percentage of our national housing stock. In publishing, the Books Council's work on the promotion of reading and the provision of books and educational resources plays an important part in improving literary standards and educational attainment.
- **Connecting Communities** - Some responses to the Priorities for Culture consultation stress the importance of transport in relation to access to culture – this will inform our implementation. Cadw brings communities together by making its historic sites available free of charge for community events, many sites are located at the heart of communities and are therefore ideal locations for local events. Local libraries are now regarded as community hubs in many areas and are therefore crucial in bringing communities together.

15. We must be pragmatic and consider how things might be done differently, including how we can collaborate between various organisations. For example, the work on Celf is being led by a collaboration between the Arts Council of Wales, Amgueddfa Cymru and the National Library of Wales. Cadw collaborates with several national bodies, such as Amgueddfa Cymru at Blaenafon and Caerleon, and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monument of Wales. Further opportunities for collaborative

work are being considered to enhance service delivery, as recommended by the governance review of Cadw.

3. Capital Investment Programmes

16. We continue to invest in exciting and varied capital programmes. For example, our investment in the redevelopment of Theatr Clwyd delivers on a Programme for Government commitment and represents a significant investment in the arts in Wales and recognition of the considerable social, cultural, and economic benefits Theatr Clwyd brings to Wales, particularly to communities in North- East Wales. The development of Wrexham Museum to incorporate a new Football Museum for Wales will be a major development in the city. We have awarded a further £1.4m in 2024-25 towards the cost of the redevelopment of the National Slate Museum in Llanberis. This takes our total investment for 2023-24 and 2024-25 to £2.5m.
17. The development of Celf, the National Contemporary Art Gallery for Wales, remains a key priority within our Programme for Government. Celf will provide increased access to the national collection and bring contemporary art closer to communities through a network of nine galleries, which are already established, across Wales. Access to more of Wales' collections will also be provided through the Celf ar y Cyd website.
18. Recognising the preventative power of sport and physical activity in relation to health and wellbeing, we will reinforce our Programme for Government commitments by using our capital funding to invest in elite and grassroots sports facilities, particularly focused in more disadvantaged areas. This investment of £8m continues in 2024-25.
19. Cadw is currently undertaking a major capital investment project at Caerphilly Castle which includes essential conservation work as well as work to transform the castle into a leading visitor attraction, which sits at the heart of a wider Placemaking Plan for Caerphilly – Caerphilly 2035.

4. Conclusion

20. Following the UK Government's Budget statement on 30 October, the Welsh Government will be making spending decisions as we develop our Draft Budget for 2025-26 in the weeks ahead. While the additional funding to Wales from the UK Government is welcome, the wider financial context remains challenging and it is likely Ministers will continue to be faced with difficult decisions. Nevertheless, we remain committed to working closely with organisations within the culture portfolio through this period to mitigate any impact on the sector in the context of ongoing budgetary challenges.
21. Organisations within the culture portfolio are key in delivering a number of our Programme for Government commitments and play a fundamental role in promoting good mental wellbeing and physical health and bringing communities together. I am clear that every person in Wales has the right to access, create, participate in, and see themselves reflected in the cultural and sporting activity of our nation.

An urgent letter to the following Members of the Welsh Parliament:

Lynne Neagle

Dawn Bowden

Mark Drakeford

Rebecca Evans

Elin Jones

Mabon ap Gwynfor

Cefin Campbell

Jane Dodds

Eluned Morgan

Rebecca Evans

Jack Sargeant

Dear Colleagues

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the critical state of Welsh language publishing. On top of swingeing cuts to the budget of the Books Council of Wales over the last ten years, we have seen a significant reduction in sales of Welsh books.

Lolfa employs 23 full-time members of staff in rural Wales. In addition, it pays over £400k annually to writers, artists and designers from Wales who generally work on a freelance basis. We produce our books here in Talybont, and most of our expenditure is in Wales.

Unfortunately, we have reached a situation where professional publishing in the Welsh language is almost unsustainable. The business decision made by Wales's foremost publisher, Gwasg Gomer, to sell its publishing division as it was a loss-making operation was an indication of the severity of the situation five years ago. Now, the situation is even more dire.

Freezing or cutting Welsh Government grants for the publication of Welsh books would force us to consider whether it is commercially possible for us, as a publisher, to continue publishing in Welsh.

Supporting the books industry in Wales benefits the Welsh economy and the Welsh-language economy. It is also a means of promoting literacy and well-being, as well as a core part of meeting the target of a million Welsh speakers. We feel that it is unfair, inconsistent and unwise to cut support for Welsh-language publishing while other sectors relating to the Welsh language are retaining their budgets.

Sincerely

Garmon Gruffudd

Garmon Gruffudd

Managing Director

Y Lolfa Ltd., Talybont, Ceredigion, Wales SY24 5HE

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tel: 01970 831902



www.yloffa.com

Publishers and printers / *Publishers and printers*



Dear Elin Jones MS,

I am contacting you as a writer, adapter and creative editor who has worked in the Welsh publishing industry for nigh on 15 years now. During this time, I have adapted a number of children's books and have worked closely with publishers who rely on the vital grant funding that is administered by the Welsh Book Council. This funding has enabled me and a number of other freelancers to contribute to a thriving and diverse Welsh-language literary scene.

The 10.5% cut to the Book Council's funding last year has already created challenges, and the further cuts currently being considered would have a devastating effect on our ability to continue producing high quality in Welsh. I have seen with my own eyes how this funding enables the creation of important, diverse works that enrich our nation. Without it, many of these projects will not happen.

As a freelancer, my livelihood depends on the continuation of this grant funding, which allows publishers to commission work from writers, illustrators, editors, and translators across Wales. The funding not only supports the creative output but also ensures the availability of Welsh language books for future generations.

I urge you to advocate for the protection and continuation of this essential funding to protect the future of our industry and the cultural heritage of Wales.

Thank you for your time and support.

Kind regards,

Llinos Dafydd

Creative Editor, Writer and Adapter

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17 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

Plaid Cymru Member of the Senedd for South Wales Central:

Heledd.Fychan@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 as an author, to express my concern regarding the financial
support provided to 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 cut to its budget in 2025-26 worries me 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 a million Welsh speakers by 2050. In terms of the use and viability of the language, the role that the sector plays is as central as the roles of Mudiad Meithrin, the National Centre for Learning Welsh and the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, three national bodies that have been 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, I 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. In addition, not only do we need to ensure that there are no further cuts, but there is also a genuine need for investment and a real increase in the Welsh Book Council's budget next year. That body has already suffered far too much.

Yours faithfully

Ioan Kidd

Author

[1] *Welsh 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.

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Amgueddfa Cymru – Museum Wales
Cathays Park
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18 October 2024

By email

Annwyl Gadeirydd,

Inquiry on the impact of funding reductions for culture and sport

Thank you for your letter dated 14th October and the request for evidence from Amgueddfa Cymru to be considered as part of the Committee's current inquiry into funding reductions for culture and sport.

To respond to the questions asked:

Can you outline the impact of the cuts in the 2024-25 Budget on Amgueddfa Cymru and how they were implemented?

We understand the context within which the culture sector funding decisions were made, nonetheless, they represented the biggest cuts to Amgueddfa Cymru's budget ever. The fact they led to in-year funding cuts of 10.5% (£3million) to the revenue Grant-in-Aid (GIA,) which we were asked to deliver by the 2024-25 financial year meant Amgueddfa Cymru had to operate at unprecedented pace to deliver the savings within a very tight three-month timescale. As we had also been running at an annual deficit, we aimed to deliver £4.5million savings and a balanced budget by the 2024-25 financial year to satisfy the GIA cut and address our longer- term financial sustainability.

Over 80% of Amgueddfa Cymru's GIA is staff related. The Museum therefore had to deliver a full restructure by April 1st, 2024, to produce a balanced budget and to avoid having to make deeper cuts by going into the new financial year without having identified the full savings. Following the announcement of the budget reduction in December 2023, the Museum sought approval from Welsh Government to deliver a voluntary severance scheme. Full approval for both a compulsory and voluntary scheme was given in mid-February 2024, and the Welsh Government made funding available to

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We welcome correspondence in Welsh and we will answer you in Welsh. This will not lead to any delay.

cover the costs of any voluntary severances made by the end of the financial year – meaning a period of some six weeks to implement.

We looked to Amgueddfa Cymru's Royal Charter, the Amgueddfa Cymru 2030 strategy, Programme for Government and the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act duties to inform the budget cutting exercise. The Museum established a change programme entitled, 'Shaping our Future' to oversee a staff reshaping, a reduction in operating costs, and a focus on increasing the profitability of income-generating activities.

In establishing the Shaping our Future change programme, the Senior Executive Team identified the following principles to guide and inform decision making. These principles were supported by the Board of Trustees who were kept informed throughout the process:

- focus on core purpose;
- reduce in size to deliver with excellence;
- provide learning and visitor experiences through relevant collections;
- deliver long-term financial sustainability;
- create an environment that is agile in practice, policy and thinking;
- be a truly 'national' museum;
- do it big to do it once; and,
- limit the requirement for redundancies.

During the process, consideration was given to whether roles needed to be modernised, amended to enable Amgueddfa Cymru to be better equipped to face the museum's future needs, or were no longer needed. The Museum also identified those roles critical to its operations and duties that needed to be safeguarded and maintained. This was against the priority areas mentioned above and based upon assessment by Directors and Heads of Departments collectively. Roles were defined by the following criteria:

- Deleted.
- Amended (opportunity to do differently).
- Retained.

All roles were considered within the context of the agreed priority areas to understand whether there was potential to change (do differently and / or to modernise the job description to meet future needs) or to be deleted. Where a role was seen as critical to future needs, it was retained. Assessment was on roles rather than individuals. Any new roles created acted as suitable alternative roles to avoid redundancies.

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AMGUEDDFA CYMRU

The voluntary severance scheme launched first for senior staff on the higher grades G and H. By doing this, certainty was given to those making decisions on future structures and potential changes to the senior leadership positions. This empowered leaders to lead on reshaping the teams with Directors and was designed to protect those on the lower grades. (A restructure of the Directors had been undertaken just prior to this process.) A wider voluntary severance scheme to all staff was opened in February, running alongside a compulsory scheme. This period of intensive consultation involved team and one-to-one discussions. Despite the very tight timescale, many hundreds of hours of consultation were undertaken during the restructure process.

All the redundancies to date have been voluntary. Most of the staff reductions were made by April 1st, 2024. The process is still underway with the visitor experience teams at National Museum Cardiff, National Waterfront Museum Swansea and St Fagans.

The Museum has also used the Shaping our Future process to ensure that the museum has a fit-for-purpose structure with a clear set of agreed priorities that all departments will deliver against. These priorities will strengthen the visitor experience and place the emphasis on the public learning through the national collection. Both are at the heart of what we do, and the latter is the Amgueddfa Cymru purpose as defined in the Royal Charter. Changes have been made to Amgueddfa Cymru's divisional structure to deliver this, with the new structure as follows: Collections and Research; Experience, Learning and Engagement; Finance and Resources; Priority Programmes, and Relationships and Funding.

The Amgueddfa Cymru Leadership Forum has engaged with teams across the Museum to identify non-critical activities implementing a 'stop, start, do different' model. This will both achieve efficiencies and enable our reduced teams to focus on the most critical areas of work for the future of Amgueddfa Cymru.

We are now in phase two of the Shaping our Future programme. This has three workstreams:

1. **Ways of Working** - which is looking to enable the Museum to create a more involving, participative culture with confident decision making and creative collaboration at its heart.
2. **Collections** - which is exploring ways in which the Museum can capitalise on the breadth and richness of the national collection to generate more income.

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3. **Review and Learn** - given the very constrained timetable within which we had to deliver the changes, a group of colleagues from within the Museum is peer-reviewing the process to identify whether any corrective action may be required and where lessons could be learnt for the future.

All three workstreams actively involve staff from across the museum and from all grades. Trade Union representatives have and continue to be engaged throughout the process.

How is the additional in-year grant-in-aid funding allocated by the Welsh Government to Amgueddfa Cymru being spent, and how is it mitigating the impact of funding reductions?

Amgueddfa Cymru has received two non-recurrent in-year awards in the 2024-25 financial year.

The first of these, a grant, for £787k, was announced in May 2024 through the Co-operation Agreement. It was to mitigate against job losses at Amgueddfa Cymru following the reduction in revenue Grant in Aid. Having had assurance of this funding, the Museum has invested it in supporting staff and in retaining and developing specialist skills needed for the Museum to operate within its new, post Shaping our Future, structure. Conversations are ongoing with Welsh Government to enable the Museum to actually draw down the funding.

Amgueddfa Cymru [was also awarded an additional £940k in September 2024](#). This was from Welsh Government reserves and is to 'strengthen the financial stability of culture and sport arm's length bodies' and to support our investment 'in some of the key services [we] provide the people of Wales.' Our intention is to use this funding to strengthen and support the following priority areas:

- Commercial Development;
- Purpose and Brand;
- Developing Visitor Experience;
- Improving Governance; and
- Culture and Wellbeing

This funding is being allocated on a phased basis through GIA.

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AMGUEDDFA CYMRU

How have you used the additional in-year capital funding to mitigate the risks to the national collections? How is the Welsh Government working with Amgueddfa Cymru to protect the Cardiff site over the longer term?

The security and care of the national collection are paramount. National Museum Cardiff (NMC) is over a 100-years old and was specifically built to house and showcase Wales' very special national collection. However, as the Committee is aware, the age of the building and a lack of investment has led to critical maintenance issues.

Amgueddfa Cymru was grateful therefore for an [additional £1.3m of capital expenditure announced by the Welsh Government on 10th July 2024](#) as part of a wider 'capital funding package to protect and preserve Wales' national treasures.' This will enable us to start on some of the critical work needed to safeguard NMC and to begin to undertake the work in a phased, planned way. We have a five-year plan for the most critical work at NMC.

The Museum has developed a Business Justification Case to access the £1.3 million. We are awaiting confirmation that we will be able to access the funding and will then seek to undertake the necessary works before the end of the financial year.

To deliver the five-year plans to undertake the most urgent work at NMC, the work must be phased and planned. Other than the work which has already taken place within 24-25, we need to undertake detailed surveys of NMC this financial year to advise and steer the rest of the works deemed most critical in the most efficient way. We are in discussions with Welsh Government about this.

What is Amgueddfa Cymru's contribution to the Welsh Government's National Contemporary Art Gallery project? What funding has the Welsh Government committed to providing Amgueddfa Cymru to support their contribution to the project post-March 2025?

AC is a partner in the Welsh Government's National Contemporary Art Gallery Wales (NCAGW.) This initiative is providing access - both digitally and physically - to the nation's collections across Wales and was a commitment of the Programme for Government.

In collaboration with Arts Council of Wales and the National Library of Wales, Amgueddfa Cymru and the nine venues that are members of the network of galleries are developing and implementing a dispersed loans model to enable

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the people of Wales to explore the collection within their own localities. We are also ensuring people can have improved digital access to the national collection – wherever they are.

Supported by a total revenue and capital investment from Welsh Government of just over £6.3 million in the period 2023-25 (in addition to initial investment of £1.4million to begin the work of digitising artwork in 2019), the current active project delivery phase is due for completion by the end of March 2025. This end point will deliver a substantial programme of investment in the existing infrastructure of the nine galleries comprising the dispersed network. In addition, 30,000 artworks in the national collection held by Amgueddfa and the National Library have been digitised and are available on the dedicated social media platform [Celf ar y Cyd](#) which is hosted by the museum.

Key achievements include:

- Exhibitions using the national collection at Aberystwyth Arts Centre, Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, Plas Glyn y Weddw, Storiel (Bangor), Newport Museum and Gallery and Oriel Mostyn, Llandudno. Others are planned at Ruthin Craft Centre, Oriel Davies, Newtown and Storiel.
- Delivery of learning programme activity related to all above exhibitions. Most of the partner galleries do not have specialist learning staff and Amgueddfa Cymru has supported the development of materials and the co-ordination of schools activity.
- Developing a series of commissions working with artists from across Wales. We have commissioned a total of 22 artists working across the 11 sites to create new work in response to the national collection. The programme also delivered a special commission involving five artists to make work for the Eisteddfod.
- The establishment of a genuine partnership with the nine galleries across Wales and a new approach to co-working and collaboration.

The establishment of the Celf ar y Cyd website which showcases contemporary art from the national Collection. This is proving to be a popular and well-used resource with both the public, and schools.

Amgueddfa Cymru remains a committed partner in NCAGW and we believe it is a valuable programme to enable people across Wales to have access to the national art collection in their own communities. Amgueddfa Cymru is supporting exploratory conversations with potential funders for project related elements of NCAGW's work after the current revenue funding ends

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this financial year. We have submitted a Business Case to Welsh Government which requests funding of £560k for 2025-27, to facilitate the ongoing delivery of the programme and to cover essential core costs relating to conservation, learning programmes, loans advice and support and technical support. These costs also include NCAGW staff at both Amgueddfa Cymru and the National Library. This is not something which has been factored within the Museum's current Grant-in-Aid funding.

The Welsh Government has committed to investing in Amgueddfa Cymru's Llanberis site. Can you outline the funding commitments the Welsh Government has made, and how these fit with your plans for the site?

The Llanberis redevelopment plans will transform Amgueddfa Lechi Cymru – National Slate Museum into a world-class visitor attraction and the main interpretation hub for the internationally significant Slate Landscape of northwest Wales UNESCO World Heritage Site. This project will allow us to create spaces to support traditional skills, learning and well-being and better connect with everyone, from local communities to those from further afield, enabling them to find their story through our national collection. Amgueddfa Lechi Cymru will also be the anchor site for Amgueddfa Cymru in north Wales, providing us with an opportunity to bring geographically relevant items from the national collection to Llanberis. The site closes to the public for some twenty months from 4th November, and we are working with partner organisations across the UNESCO World Heritage Site to offer pop-up initiatives of Amgueddfa Lechi Cymru during the site closure.

To date, funding for the Amgueddfa Llechi Cymru Redevelopment project has been secured from a range of valued sources, including; £6.2m from Cyngor Gwynedd as part of the 'Llewyrch o'r Llechi' project (funded via UK Government, formerly Levelling Up); £412,000 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (with a further £9.5m subject to a successful Delivery Phase bid in February 2025) and £2.5m from the Welsh Government, announced in 2023. On the 10th of July 2024, the Welsh Government also committed to investing 'funding... in the redevelopment of Amgueddfa Cymru's Llanberis site, which will create opportunities for greater and improved access in North Wales to the national collection'.

The current estimate is a funding gap of approximately £3.2m. We are in constructive discussions with Welsh Government for additional funding as well as fundraising to endeavour to reduce the remaining gap via a variety of philanthropic sources.

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We would be delighted to welcome the Committee to Llanberis again to see the redevelopment.

Can you outline aspects of Amgueddfa Cymru's activity that you see as examples of preventative spending?

Our 2030 Strategy directly supports the ambitions of the Welsh Government's Programme for Government and embeds the Goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015). Our planning and our programming are driven by the six commitments outlined in the 2030 Strategy. We are committed to delivering against the Welsh Government's Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan, LGBTQ+ Action Plan and other equalities plans as outlined in our Widening Engagement Action Plan 2022/25. We will continue to align our operational planning and our programming with the Welsh Government's Priorities for Culture 2024-2030 and the First Minister's four key priorities.

Amgueddfa Cymru is the largest provider of learning outside the classroom in Wales. Our extensive learning programme supports family learning; schools and groups; adult and community learning; people with additional needs; and health and well-being. Our in-person and virtual visits can be adapted to support learners. We are currently developing a Child Anti-Poverty Action Plan in collaboration with partners, children and young people in response to Welsh Government's Child Poverty Strategy for Wales.

Recent examples of preventative spending within learning include:

- Our Family and Early Years Learning Programme; we partner with organisations such as Flying Start to provide families from underserved communities with opportunities for young children to explore our collection through themed play, craft, and sensory activities. The free to attend drop-in sessions take place in safe, supervised spaces and use interactive resources that encourage curiosity, inquisitiveness, and learning.
- In 2023/24, 288,000 children and young people engaged with our school-based learning programme. We have active programmes in all 22 counties of Wales. When determining which schools to engage in our programming, we review the data on schools with the highest allocations of free school meals and target those schools.
- Pinc College are based at National Museum Cardiff, and we collaborate to create and deliver learning programmes to support neurodiverse

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young people who have excluded from the traditional educational system pathways.

- We also engage directly with people living with dementia, their carers, and care homes through Museums Inspiring Memories (MIMS). MIMS is a partnership project with Alzheimer's Society Cymru which aims to use our museums, collections and resources, to develop a sustainable programme of activities to engage with and support the wellbeing of people affected by dementia.
- We are a partner in Public Health Wales' Hapus scheme and are also developing an initiative to support Social Prescribing at Amgueddfa Cymru museums.

To instigate the changes needed in our organisation, within the sector, and in Wales, we believe that individuals and communities should be able to contribute to the debate about what counts as culture, where it happens, who makes it and who experiences it.

We engage with a collective known as the Amgueddfa Cymru Producers, a network of young people aged 16-25 from different sectors and a variety of backgrounds who are contracted to challenge and disrupt the way we think. These are paid opportunities to work alongside Museum staff to develop a variety of youth-led projects, challenge institutional structures, platform their voice within the Museum and engage with communities. They work on collections, events and displays on themes encompassing anti-racism, LGBTQ+, and the environment. Our plans also involve communities to help ensure the programmes we run and the spaces we develop better represent people across Wales.

A recent example of preventative spending in terms of our representation work is:

- Our Reframing Picton project whereby Amgueddfa Cymru Producers commissioned two artists to amplify the voices of those originally neglected in the telling of Lieutenant-General Sir Thomas Picton's story, or those whose lives are most affected by his legacy today. The group were also instrumental in shaping a learning offer related to the exhibition.

We have also developed our approach to involving people and communities in our work and provided opportunities for community artists to have their

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works alongside eminent artists. By doing so we ensure that voices the most underrepresented are given a platform.

Other examples of preventative spending include:

- Over the past few years, people and communities in Merthyr Tydfil and the Cynon Valley have been working with us to create new stories about the visual art collection through The Valleys Re-told project. This culminated in The Valleys exhibition, the first major exhibition to explore the visual culture of the south Wales valleys and the communities that have shaped it.
- With support from Welsh Government and in collaboration with Arts Council Wales and visual arts organisations, creative practitioners are developing authentic and decolonised interventions as part of *Safbwynt(iau) / Perspective(s)* at each Amgueddfa Cymru museum.
- Our museums continue to be safe spaces to welcome the communities of Wales with events such as Diwali Mela, Black History Wales and the Welsh Somali Heritage Day.

Our decarbonisation work across Amgueddfa Cymru and the resulting improvements to the environment and health is also an example of preventative spending.

We are in the process of developing an impact framework for the Museum, which will enable us to demonstrate not only what we are doing and with whom, but the impact that work is having on individuals and communities.

I thank the Committee for its continued interest in, and support of, Amgueddfa Cymru.



Jane Richards

Prif Weithredwr
Chief Executive

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Delyth Jewell AS/MS
(by email to: Delyth.Jewell@senedd.wales)

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

Comiswn Brenhinol Henebion Cymru
**Royal Commission on the Ancient and
Historical Monuments of Wales**

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21 October 2024

Annwyl Gadeirydd,

I am writing in follow up to the Senedd hearing by the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee on 9 October. Once again, I apologise for not having been able to join you on the day but was grateful to my Vice Chair, Hayley Roberts, for joining the Secretary to represent the Royal Commission.

Having read the transcript of the discussion, I would like to offer some further thoughts around two of the topics raised, if I may. If possible, I would be grateful if this letter could be included as an addendum to the transcript, or reflected in the Culture Committee's final report.

Charitable status

The Royal Commission is not a UK Registered Charity. Legal advice was sought in 2016 as to whether it would be possible for the Commission to seek charitable status but we were advised that it would prove difficult to register the Royal Commission itself as a charity, owing to our constitutional status under our Royal Warrant. In 2017 we explored the option of establishing a separate Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) to act as a fundraising vehicle for the Royal Commission, but the degree of control which was likely to be retained by the Commission, even with an independent Chair and majority of Trustees, did not meet the Charity Commission's requirements for the charity to be fully autonomous. The restricted and exclusive beneficiaries of the CIO's work was also felt to support the Charity Commission's view that the charity would be directly controlled. At this time it was agreed with Welsh Government to hold off from pursuing the establishment of a CIO.

Our success in securing European and other public funding for our work, notably the CHERISH project which ran between January 2017 and June 2023, meant that our need to attract philanthropic funding diminished. Early in 2023 however the Royal Commission began again to explore opportunities to engage with charitable trusts and foundations but in early approaches to funders including The Garfield Weston Foundation and The Wolfson Foundation, our status was still a barrier to success. Given that the view of the law firm we engaged in 2017 was that the Commission's purpose was charitable, we proposed to Welsh Government that in light of this the Royal Commission could be considered as an 'exempt' organisation. Under the Charity Commission's Guidance on Exempt Charities (CC23) we would be exempt from registration with, and oversight by, the Charity Commission for England and Wales under the heading of "Museums, galleries and other institutions of national importance". Currently however, there are no such institutions registered as exempt charities in Wales, only in England. In order to achieve this status in Wales, we would need Welsh Government to act as 'principal regulator', but in 2023 we were advised that Welsh Government only act in this capacity for further education corporations and foundation schools. Technically we believe Welsh Ministers could act as a principal regulator for the Royal Commission, but there is no precedent for them to do so for cultural institutions. The key benefit of achieving exempt charity status would be to enable the Royal Commission to apply for philanthropic funding from a larger pool of charitable trusts and foundations, who require their beneficiaries to be either a UK Registered Charity or an exempt charity. The Royal Commission undertook to explore the potential funding sources that would be open to us as an exempt charity and the quantum of funding this might unlock, but a lack of capacity since late 2023 has prevented us from taking this work forward.

Cadw governance review

The purpose of the review underway to examine the working relationship between Cadw and the Royal Commission is to establish arrangements which sustain those areas of work where both organisations have a clear collective interest. It aims to deliver a solution which has the Welsh historic environment at its heart. The review has not been established to identify cost-savings through redundancies nor the closure of the Royal Commission's Aberystwyth office and nationally important archive facility. Instead it is exploring ways in which both Cadw and the Royal Commission can best deliver their responsibilities to Wales's historic environment collectively, and in a sustainable manner, identifying and building on the centres of excellence and expertise that exist within both organisations, and ensuring they are provided with the clarity of purpose to operate effectively into the future.

I am grateful to you for your consideration of these additional points, which I would have raised and reinforced if I had been able to join the hearing.

Yn gywir,



Caroline Crewe-Read
Cadeirydd Dros Dro | Acting Chair



Creu Cymru additional responses for the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee.

October 2024.

What else could the Arts Council do, beyond additional funding, to mitigate the impact of reduced funding on the arts?

ACW could promote and facilitate partnerships between arts organisations to share resources. This would allow organisations to pool limited resources, reduce operational costs, and create synergies in programme delivery.

ACW could play a larger role in advocating for the value of the arts to the public and the government. A coordinated advocacy campaign, in partnership with the sector, could raise awareness of the cultural, economic, and social contributions of the arts, potentially unlocking alternative funding sources or influencing policy decisions.

They could be doing more around providing arts organisations with strategic guidance for sustainability, such as helping them plan for long-term challenges, navigate economic changes, and adapt to shifts in audience behaviours. This would involve not only financial planning but also encouraging flexible programming and diversified income streams.

Have you applied for the Arts Council's additional funding for resilience in the sector? Do you have any comments about the pace and design of this funding?

We haven't applied as I believe there are other organisations with more urgent need for this funding. General feedback has been that whilst organisations understand the quick turnover for applications in order to get money out the door, it puts organisations under pressure and is not helpful with applicants with additional access needs.

Do you have any observations on the timings or scope of the Arts Council's reviews into English language theatre and traditional music? (They are being conducted 11 months after the Investment Review, when National Theatre Wales lost its funding)

The reviews (which also includes dance) have been a long time coming but some of that is due to the appeals process, so I do understand. The lack of immediate action following the initial announcement in September 2023 has caused some frustration, and not ideal for some of the main organisations effected (Trac, NTW, Rubicon etc).

Had the reviews been conducted earlier, they might have provided clearer guidance for future funding and support strategies.

It's not ideal that all the reviews are happening at the same time as it means lots of surveys / meetings / consultation events in parallel as each other.

A respondent to the committee's consultation said "There is a sense within the arts sector that the Arts Council are under pressure, and should not be disturbed unless absolutely necessary". Is this a fair description?

Whilst I believe that ACW are under pressure with limited staff, financial and time, I don't feel like they can't be approached or disturbed.

I am writing to you, by virtue of your work, to express my concern at the situation for publishing in Wales, and the fact that the industry faces a 40% reduction in 10 years, as reported on the news today.

Having been a writer for 40 years, earning my livelihood by authoring books, it is sad to think that the children of today will not have the opportunity enjoyed by children of the past. Keeping any language alive requires investment in the arts, the publication of new books, and access to libraries. I worry that the library in my own village has been closing for an extra day during the week since the beginning of September, but I consider us lucky to have a library at all.

Closing libraries and cutting grants will lead to job losses and a widescale effect on the economy. In education, we already see the effects of Covid on children's reading, so we ought to see greater investment in books.

If the Welsh Government seriously considers the publishing sector to be important, then invest in it, so that strategy formulation is possible.

Funding is available, but it is in the wrong hands, and wealth is being misdistributed with the poor getting poorer and the rich increasing their wealth.

Please, demonstrate that there is another way of doing things in Wales.

Yours sincerely,

Angharad Tomos

Sioned Wyn Roberts
76 Plasturton Avenue
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31 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 the Welsh Language: Correspondence.Mark.Drakeford@gov.wales
Cabinet Secretary for the 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

Also copied to the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee: SeneddCulture@senedd.wales

I am writing to you as an author writer that makes a living writing in Welsh to express my concern about the 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 me.

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

Literacy - 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 Welsh language - The publishing sector supports the Welsh language and has a key role to play in meeting the Welsh Government's target of one 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 economy - 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.

Diversity - Welsh literature has historically been a lifeline for the voices of diverse communities, and in recent years, it has developed a more inclusive space for readers and writers across the spectrum of sexual identities, nationality, race, religious backgrounds, and various worldviews.

Health and well-being - 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: <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

Sioned Wyn Roberts

Author

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.

Jack Sargeant AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Diwylliant, Sgiliau a Phartneriaeth Gymdeithasol
Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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

4 November 2024

Dear Delyth,

Further to my letter of 7 October, I am writing with the information you requested in relation to the real-terms difference between budget allocations for Culture and Sport in 2014-15 and 2024-25.

The information you requested is included in the attached spreadsheet. This includes tabs comparing the relevant resource and capital budgets in 2014-15 and 2024-25 as they were published, plus a tab showing real-terms comparisons for the resource and capital totals.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "JACK SARGEANT". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Jack Sargeant AS/MS
Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership
Y Gweinidog Diwylliant, Sgiliau a Phartneriaeth Gymdeithasol

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

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

	2014-15	2024-25	Growth
Resource	105,673	115,037	
Capital	13,074	50,366	
GDP deflator (23-24=100)	77.1	100.8	
<u>Real-terms in 23-24 prices*</u>			
Resource	137,031	114,120	-16.7%
Capital	16,954	49,964	194.7%

Deflators:

[GDP deflators at market prices, and money GDP June 2024 \(Quarterly National Accounts\) - GOV.U](#)

*Note:

The GDP deflator is a broad-based inflation metric that measures the changes in prices of all the goods and services produced in the economy. It is the measure of inflation generally used to adjust public expenditure levels across different years, to take account of price changes. For example, it is used to calculate the real-terms year-on-year growth rates in the tables supporting spending plans in Welsh Government and UK Government Budgets. For the years up to 2023-24, the GDP deflator is based on Office for National Statistics data. For 2024-25, the March 2024 OBR forecast for the deflator is used (it is currently indexed to 2023-24 so the real terms figures are shown in 2023-24 prices, but the growth rate between the two years would be the same

RESOURCE

Action	BEL No.	BEL Description	2024-25 Final Budget Restated April 2024	2014-15 Final Budget	2014-15 Final Budget Budget was published at Action Level not Bel level.	
			BEL		Action	
Support for Culture and the Arts Pack Page 52	5800	Arts Council of Wales	30,429	33,408	5800 Arts Council for Wales	Support and sustain a strong arts sector via the Arts Council and others
	5800	Arts Council of Wales - Non cash	119		Non cash not identified seperately	
	5812	Support for the Arts	0		5812 Support for the Arts	
	5540	Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museums of Wales	25,504	23,356	5540 - Amgueddfa Cymru - NMGW	Foster Usage and Lifelong Learning through Museum Services
	5540	Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museums of Wales - Non cash	2,400		Non cash not identified seperately	
	5660	National Library of Wales	11,093	11,171	5660 - National Library of Wales	Foster Usage and Lifelong Learning through Library Services
	5660	National Library of Wales - Non cash	1,250		Non cash not identified seperately	
	6170	Support for Local Culture and Sport	6,668	2,518	6170 - Cymal	Strategic Leadership for museum, archive & library services
Total Support for Culture and the Arts			77,463	70,453		
Support the Historic Environment	2700	Cadw	8,547	11,481	2700 - CADW 2710 - National Botanic Garden 6200 - ROYAL COMMISSION	Conserve, protect, sustain and promote access to the historic environment
	2700	Cadw - Non cash	5,480			
	6200	Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments for Wales	1,656			
	6200	Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments for Wales - Non cash	134			
	2710	National Botanic Garden of Wales	525			
Total Support the Historic Environment			15,817	11,481		

Sports and Physical Activity	5900 Sport Wales	20,978	23,739	5900 - Sports Council for Wales 6010 - Sport & Active Wales Fund 6012 - Support for Sport & Active Wales	Delivery of effective sports & physical activity programmes
	5900 Sport Wales - Non cash	779			
Sports and Physical Activity		21,757	23,739		

115,037 105,673

CAPITAL

Action	BEL No.	BEL Description	2024-25 Final Budget Restated April 2024	2014-15 Final Budget	2014-15 Final Budget Budget was published at Action Level not Bel level.	
					BEL	Action
Support for Culture and the Arts	5800	Arts Council of Wales	400	355	5800 Arts Council for Wales 5812 Support for the Arts	Support and sustain a strong arts sector via the Arts Council and others
	5540	Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museums of Wales	5,000	1,763	5540 - Amgueddfa Cymru - NMGW	Foster Usage and Lifelong Learning through Museum Services
	5660	National Library of Wales	2,000	4,530	5660 - National Library of Wales	Foster Usage and Lifelong Learning through Library Services
	6170	Support for Local Culture and Sport	24,700	1,050	6170 - Cymal	Strategic Leadership for museum, archive & library services
Total Support for Culture and the Arts			32,100	7,698		
Support the Historic Environment	2700	Cadw	10,000	5,031	2700 - CADW 6200 - Royal Commission 2710 - National Botanical Gardens	Conserve, protect, sustain and promote access to the historic environment
	6200	Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments for Wales	50			
	2710	National Botanic Garden of Wales	200			
Total Support the Historic Environment			10,250	5,031		
Sports and Physical Activity	5900	Sport Wales	8,016	345	5900 - Sports Council for Wales 6010 - Sport & Active Wales Fund 6012 - Support for Sport & Active Wales	Delivery of effective sports & physical activity programmes
Sports and Physical Activity			8,016	345		

50,366 13,074

Good afternoon,

Responses to certain additional questions noted below:

- What else could the Welsh Government do, beyond additional funding, to mitigate the impact of reduced funding on culture and sport?

1. Collaborate to establish an additional Practice Referral Programme for non-chronic conditions. Several local authorities have piloted work that suggests that such an intervention can be financially self-sustaining if it receives input from the health sector in terms of referrals. This can be an extremely valuable preventive intervention and reduce demand on the health sector while making leisure facilities more self-sustaining.
2. Revisit the Curriculum for Wales to place a clearer emphasis on ensuring that all children learn to swim as a necessary life skill. Also, the national transport framework should be looked at in order to consider school travel costs (especially in rural areas)
3. Commit to medium-term funding arrangements for all grants in the area e.g. a minimum of 3 years in order to offer job security to the workforce, and to reduce turnover/loss of experience and waste of resources. And a reasonable process within the terms and conditions of the NERS scheme to review user fees - as a contribution towards provision costs.
4. Review the Free Swimming Grant to set clearer expectations that better match the level of investment available and follow clear priorities. E.g. the ability to use it to target children and young people who cannot swim

- Swim Wales has called for statutory protection for swimming pools. What is your opinion on this?

Agree, if additional resources follow in order to support the statutory status. There is a need to consider what the basis of the statutory provision would be, especially with regard to rural areas and travel distance to a pool etc.

- What else could the Arts Council and Sport Wales do, beyond additional funding, to mitigate the impact of reduced funding on culture and sport?
- Medium-term funding arrangements - even if only indicative budgets.
 - Review the Free Swimming Grant to set clearer expectations that better match the level of investment available and follow clear priorities. E.g. the ability to use it to target children and young people who cannot swim

Regards,

Amanda

Follow up questions for CCWLSIR Committee - 24 October 2024

1) Can Swim Wales expand on their proposal of statutory protection for swimming pools? Should this be broadened to other sport facilities?

A) Over the past 10 years all of us have seen first-hand the increased pressures on pool owners and operators - a 'perfect storm' of COVID (temporary closure and loss of income), the subsequent energy crisis and then the reductions in Central Government and Local Authority investment into facilities combined. The recent Swim Wales National Facilities Audit 2024 informs us that 80% of swimming pools in Wales are over 20 years old, with 50% being built prior to 1979 and only 2 built in the last 10 years. In the last 10 years, only 11 sites across all 22 local authorities in Wales have received major refurbishment or renovation.

The funding model for the majority of public use (260+ non-statutory public owned pools in Wales) facilities mean that they are not eligible for many grants, and a lack of capital funds in relation to need has meant a significant shortfall between investment versus the rising maintenance and running costs. Many pools in Wales have already had to either close their doors, significantly reduce operating hours or increase costs to unprecedented levels which is impacting accessibility and affordability.

There is no protection currently, local authorities have the power to remove this public service and cut participation. With the pressures increasing weekly and monthly multiple closures are becoming a reality. Public campaigns, local protests and petitions are commonplace across many councils indicating the strength of public sensitivity support. Never before in Wales have we seen leisure centres (and by association pools) so vulnerable, statutory protection is the only way that we can guarantee that 500,000 children & adults (current levels) REMAIN aquatically active in Wales, a huge contribution to health and wellbeing for our Welsh public.

2) What else could the Welsh Government do, beyond additional funding, to mitigate the impact of reduced funding on sports?

A) There are several interventions that we see available to the current administration. Some suggestions from Swim Wales would be;

- Ensuring (not just encouraging) collaboration amongst departments such as sport, health, education and transport
- Signposting projects and initiatives across government that can help with the sports mission, there are many projects and opportunities that can be supported by pooled resources and co-production
- Advocating for sport in relation to the health benefits, international relations and employment at every opportunity using positions of influence to broadcast the 'power of sport and leisure'

- Creating a shared 'prevention' fund where NGB and other associated sports providers can access EXTRA funding through collaborative projects with other departments.

3) How has the Welsh Government's approach to using sport as a public health measure changed in the last decade?

A) The narrative in this area has changed slightly over the last 10 years but this has been, and continues to be, a very slow process. We see good progress at local authority level, with many adopting joint programmes with us like GOOD BOOST <https://www.goodboost.ai/about-us>

Many other nations (UK & European) are highly active in collaborative partnership between sport and health, or education and transport to ensure that the long term benefits of active and healthy lifestyle. There is currently some great collaboration in Scotland through the newly formed health, social care and sport committee of the Scottish parliament. This group bring cross party and cross department discussions to the table regarding health services in Scotland to include primary care, GPs, and pharmacy services, public health including mental health and wellbeing, and tackling drug and alcohol misuse social care THROUGH sport and physical activity. Unfortunately, trying to get Wales to engage in similar short to medium term activities in order to see medium to long term benefits has escaped the various administrations that we have had over the last 10 years.

Swim Wales hopes that the appointment of a former health minister as First minister of Wales will help 'shift the dial'.

One good example of collaboration was initiated 6 years ago in the form of the Healthy and Active Fund (HAF). This was a four-year grant funding programme (funded by Health & Sport) which allocated £5.85 million to 17 projects across Wales which sought to improve participants' mental and physical health by enabling active lifestyles. The report below presents the findings of a programme level evaluation of the HAF, unfortunately we have not seen anything since.

[https://www.gov.wales/evaluation-healthy-and-active-fund-final-report#:~:text=The%20Healthy%20and%20Active%20Fund%20\(HAF\)%20was%20a%20four%2D,level%20evaluation%20of%20the%20HAF](https://www.gov.wales/evaluation-healthy-and-active-fund-final-report#:~:text=The%20Healthy%20and%20Active%20Fund%20(HAF)%20was%20a%20four%2D,level%20evaluation%20of%20the%20HAF)

4) To what extent has the Welsh Government used the importance placed on physical activity during the pandemic to drive an increase in sports participation?

A) This has been an area of strength since COVID, with Welsh Government have made funding available to community sport and grass roots participation (via Sport Wales) through projects like the WINTER OF WELLBEING, SUMMER OF FUN and BE ACTIVE, all of these programmes have helped upskill volunteers in areas where community clubs lack expertise or experience. They have supported

clubs in the development of innovative projects that promote physical activity in new or different ways clubs utilising technology to engage more people in physical activity outreach aimed at people who are currently under-represented in sport and physical activity. Aquatic clubs have benefited to the figure of just under £180,000 from these funds alone.

The SPORT CAPITAL FUND has also benefited many of our communities by helping them improve facilities or purchase equipment that allows more people to participate in our sport such as timing systems, new changing facilities or starting blocks. To date this has supported aquatics by more than £200,000.

5) The Senedd's Health and Social Care Committee, and a number of charities, have called for a 'preventative' category of spend in future Welsh Government budgets, moving towards a longer-term budgeting view to help build and protect population health. What are your views on this?

A) A preventative category would be very welcomed by Swim Wales and the aquatic community at large, we have several examples of our own here – Good Boost, GP Referral Scheme and NHS Muscular Skeletal project (MSK) to support people with neck and back pain injuries, lower limb injuries including groin, hip, knee, ankle and foot, upper limb injuries including shoulder, elbow, wrist and hand, joint problems. We have also seen huge impact when using aquatics exercise/swimming in areas post-operative rehabilitation and occupational work disorders.

Swim Wales would love to be involved in any preventative/long term strategy, pilot or initiative to support this idea.

6) Have you applied for Sport Wales's additional funding announced this September? Do you have any comments about the pace and design of this funding?

A) Swim Wales applied for and were awarded £57,000 in the additional funding round this autumn. This funding was very much appreciated and unbudgeted. Unfortunately it only served to offset a range of operational costs increased across facility hire or filling the gap of last year's cuts. The speed and access to this funding through Sport Wales was excellent, while we remain very grateful for extra funding the visibility remains very short term and hard to plan with operationally, especially 'in year' availability with a cut off on March 31st.

We hope this helps, please do not hesitate to get in touch with myself or the wider team for any other support. We are once again extremely grateful for the committees time and interest on these important subjects.

KR,

Fergus

FERGUS FEENEY
Chief Executive Officer
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Document is Restricted

Hello

Please find our responses to the questions

What else could the Arts Council do, beyond additional funding, to mitigate the impact of reduced funding on the arts?

- Lobby more effectively at a Welsh and UK level including sharing the impact of the arts more widely – eg economic, health and well-being, social justice, climate justice.
- Explore opportunities to stimulate commercial market in visual arts in Wales to support income for artists and wider reputation of culture in Wales.
- Use their overview and connections across networks more effectively to encourage organisations to share resources and intelligence around key priorities such as environment, organisational transformation, social justice, cultural democracy.
- Stimulate journalistic opportunities in Wales. We have a world-class school of journalism with virtually no writers reaching UK and international press. A robust network will support reputational growth and interest in our nation's great offer. This will have a knock-on effect to attracting more funding, growing audiences, improving reach of cultural tourism, etc.
- Lead a debate, consultation and lobby for a universal basic income for artists such as that in Republic of Ireland.
- Consultation and information gathering on Unions for artists (visual) such as those successful models in England and Scotland.

Have you applied for the Arts Council's additional funding for resilience in the sector? Do you have any comments about the pace and design of this funding?

Yes, we applied for this. The opportunity to apply for additional support was very welcomed.

It was a difficult application to respond to for many reasons:

- We were asked to send a project outline before we could receive an application form. This was challenging and stressful. The timeline for that was an immediate turnaround to give enough time to then flesh out the full application. The short turn around and with no opportunity to speak with an ACW officer in advance meant that we were fearful to get the ask wrong and exclude ourselves from the funding opportunity.

- It was a small pot of £1.5m to make the ‘sector resilient for the future’ – this is over ambitious given the scale of funding cuts and impact of other cost-of-living and inflationary pressures.
- The turnaround time was 12 days (there were 2 weekends in that time, so 8 working days to prepare a critical application.
- Difficult to respond to the statement that ‘organisations who don’t evidence how financial support will improve longer term sustainability will be a lower priority for funding’.
- No time to interrogate budgets to ensure they were clear and responding to the ‘project’.
- We could not apply for money to ‘bridge the gap’ but that’s exactly where the greatest challenge for the future of sustainability for cultural organisations lies.
- The majority of the funding must be claimed by 31st March 2025 which doesn’t reflect support for resilience. Also, it’s a project grant therefore by definition a restricted fund that cannot be used for general core costs. We have asked for funds to help strengthen our staff team in the short term in the hope that they can generate the funds to make their roles self-supporting in the longer term – it’s a tall order in a short amount of time. The short availability of this funding makes it difficult to determine how long we can protect jobs. Additionally, the application went in before the recent budget announcement around increases in NI contributions for employers; this has an enormous impact on charities of our scale and size.
- Overall, the objectives of the fund did not match the criteria for the application.

Do you have any observations on the timings or scope of the Arts Council’s reviews into English language theatre and traditional music? (They are being conducted 11 months after the Investment Review, when National Theatre Wales lost its funding)

This should have been conducted before the investment review to allow a broad consultation to inform decision making.

A respondent to the committee’s consultation said “There is a sense within the arts sector that the Arts Council are under pressure, and should not be disturbed unless absolutely necessary”. Is this a fair description?

We are aware that there are fewer specialists within ACW due to cuts so understandably they are stretched. We know that arts officers are less likely to attend Board meetings or be available at short notice to support. There is less attendance at events by ACW officers than there was pre the Investment review and the cuts which brings into question their understanding of the sector at this time.

There seems to be a gap in the reporting we do as funded clients which is all about jobs and what ACW used to be interested in, which is the activity, impact and reach, which maybe indicates they have less capacity to support the arts.

As individuals our officers are supportive, but they have little capacity to change or influence anything. We don't feel like we should not approach them, but we are aware of their lack of capacity.

Kind Regards

Sharon Stone and Hannah Firth

Sharon Stone

Co-Director Cyd-gyfarwyddwr

Director, Finance & Resources

Chapter

November 2024

Annwyl Cadeirydd,

We write, following our appearance at the Committee on Wednesday 9 October. Please see the answers to your questions below.

- **Welsh Government funding of Sport Wales has reduced by 9% in real terms since 2014-15. How have the requirements placed on Sport Wales by the Welsh Government changed over this time?**

The quoted real terms cut for Sport Wales at 9%, includes both Capital and Revenue income. This total expenditure figure masks the true impact on sport's ability to make a difference. In fact, revenue funding has been cut by 40% since 2010 and such a significant decrease in revenue investment of course means that the sector is less likely to be able to achieve the requirements made of it.

Whilst we welcome the very recent capital investment from Welsh Government, there is a need for consistent and ideally increasing amounts of matching revenue investment into sport as well, ensuring that not only are our facilities throughout Wales fit for purpose but also impactful and sustainable. Our latest remit letter has been a term of Government letter which is welcome because it identifies what is set out for us for the five years of this current Senedd; however the remit has not been amended to meet the decrease in funding we faced in this last financial year, and given that cut was significant, that has presented difficult decisions and increasing challenge.

We are grateful to the sector for its ability to work in an agile way and collegiately as we tried to ensure that only the smallest cut of funding was passed on to our partners.

- **How has the Welsh Government's approach to using sport as a public health measure changed in the last decade?**

There have been several good examples over the past decade where sport has been used either as a rehabilitative measure, or as a method of social prescribing. However, sport's potential ability to be a significant preventative health measure is not always realised. For example, within the Healthy Weight, Healthy Wales programme, though many of the priorities reference sport and physical activity, there is little done to ensure that the delivery of the priorities is joined up with the delivery in the sector. In the healthy environments section of the plan, the outcomes expected include 'an increase in people achieving the Chief Medical Officer's physical activity guidelines and significantly reduced sedentary behaviours across all ages'.

While we would highly commend this joined up approach from Government, looking across different portfolio areas to deliver better overall population health, it is unclear how the inputs of the plan such as 'increased investment into high quality play facilities which

are targeted at areas of high deprivation' are being aligned to the outcomes – when we know that since the pandemic inequalities gaps have continued to widen and though the picture improved slightly for adults' activity in the latest National Survey for Wales (2022-23), there is still only around 36% of adults in Wales who are active three or more times a week. In turn, this is one of the Future Generations' indicators, and it would be reassuring to see a joined up approach to policy which took account of the ambition and the actors which have the ability to make a difference in this space.

Before and during the pandemic the Wales Physical Activity Partnership (WPAP) between ourselves, Natural Resources Wales and Public Health Wales was referenced in a number of Government plans, and the partnership allowed us to work closely with those other bodies which could make a difference across policy areas. Sadly, due to the pandemic, a lot of the work which took place could not continue and though we look to work closely with these bodies, there is perhaps not the same agreed emphasis placed on the importance of our partnership.

We have good links with the health department in Welsh Government and work closely with them on delivering the 60+ Active Leisure Scheme, which has seen great progress on increasing activity in this age group within local authority leisure provision.

In terms of social prescribing, physical activity is often talked about as an important opportunity to get people more active and to support their mental health. The National Exercise Referral scheme is also pointed to as a success as a case in point.

During reshuffles this year, we were interested to note that twice, sport and culture were the responsibility of a full portfolio holder, which seems to denote a suitable level of importance given the presence at Cabinet. More recently, physical activity now sits with a Minister under the brief of health and separate to the Minister for Culture (which includes sport), neither with a seat at Cabinet.

In terms of the link between health and sport, under the Fifth Senedd, Sport sat within the health, social care and sport committee membership; though the Government's portfolios did not align, this gave an interesting perspective on portfolio alignment. We know that during this Senedd, the Welsh Government believes in sport as a preventative health tool, as this was referenced in their budget evidence for the last three years.

- **The Arts Council has called for culture and the arts to be made a statutory responsibility. What might be the impact of sport being made a statutory responsibility, for either the Welsh Government or local authorities?**

There are many requirements on local authorities already and we know that many of them face challenges in delivering against their existing obligations due to funding pressures and rising costs. Consequently, sport and physical activity is an area of policy where decisions to make cuts are often easier to take because of the lack of statutory status.

We know that sport and physical activity makes a huge difference to people's lives and reductions in opportunities for them to exercise or participate in suitable activities can have a huge detrimental effect on their mental and physical wellbeing. Therefore, any action which requires the Welsh Government and/or local government to think differently about sport and physical activity instead of it being a 'nice to have' would be beneficial to people across Wales.

- **To what extent has the Welsh Government used the importance placed on physical activity during the pandemic to drive an increase in sports participation?**

Unfortunately, the clear message that physical activity was the most important thing to do once a day during the early part of the pandemic, whilst very welcome, was also confused by the changes and variations in rules in participation across the UK. It would be helpful to see a similar strength of message about the importance of physical activity and the benefits on people's physical and mental health being a focus for Government policy post pandemic, as well as a focus on providing the resource for developing such opportunities for people to be more physically active.

- **A breakdown of the annual funding provided to national governing bodies.**

Please see 2024/25 funding at Annex 1.

Finally, Carolyn Thomas MS asked us to share our Social Return on Investment (SROI) statistics.

The work that was undertaken by the Sport Industry Research Centre (SIRC) at Sheffield Hallam University highlighted the wide reaching and significant impact that sport has annually on the health and well-being of the nation. In total [the SROI report](#) identified a conservative value of £5.98bn in social impacts generated through sport. This included an estimated £621m net saving to the health service in Wales through the prevention of an estimated 113,000 cases of ill-health. For every £1 invested in sport there was a £4.44 return, demonstrating the value of sport and the real concern any reduction in funding can have in reducing those impacts. This was the false economy of cutting sport that was referenced to the Committee.

Further to the publication of this SROI report, we also felt it was important to reshare the recently published [Economy Value report](#). This new insight has built on the evidence of the social return of sport with the quantifiable economic impact. The report, again produced by SIRC and is a collaboration between all the Home Sport Councils in the UK, UK Sport and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport at the UK Government. You will note that again the impact sport has nationally is substantive.

The study has showcased the massive contribution that sport makes to the UK economy, both directly via sport and in supporting wider industries such as construction, tourism

and hospitality services. The data shows that sport in Wales delivers £1.9bn in direct GVA alone whilst underpinning 38,345 direct jobs. When considering the impact on other sectors and indirect impacts, those figures rise to a staggering £2.9bn and 58,997 FTE roles.

Brian Davies OBE and Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson
Sport Wales



Grant funding to NGBs for 24/25

	Exchequer	Lottery	Total
Athletics	394,741	590,664	985,405
Badminton	146,701	184,341	331,042
Basketball	204,609	158,283	362,892
Bowls	62,734	124,503	187,237
Boxing	166,969	395,706	562,675
Canoeing	138,015	240,319	378,334
Cricket	317,530	193,027	510,558
Cycling	337,798	615,758	953,556
Football	600,315	332,972	933,288
Golf	207,505	221,982	429,486
Gymnastics	377,369	582,943	960,312
Hockey	295,332	214,260	509,592
Netball	221,982	192,062	414,044
Rowing	63,699	257,692	321,391
Rugby Union	521,174	174,690	695,864
Sailing	105,200	206,539	311,739
Squash	120,642	157,317	277,960
Swimming	457,475	580,048	1,037,523
Table Tennis	161,178	239,354	400,532
Tennis	217,156	174,690	391,846
Triathlon	59,839	201,714	261,552
Volleyball	-	-	-
Judo	55,013	196,888	251,901
Rugby League	38,145	7,239	45,384
Shooting	41,229	193,027	234,256
Weightlifting	18,338	265,413	283,750
Angling	21,233	12,547	33,780
Archery	-	7,721	7,721
Curling	-	1,448	1,448
Fencing	-	18,338	18,338
Karate	-	-	-
Lacrosse	-	965	965
Orienteering	-	1,448	1,448
Snooker	-	23,163	23,163
Snowsport	-	43,431	43,431
Surf Life	-	1,930	1,930
Wrestling	-	17,372	17,372
CGCW	44,927	187,977	232,904

Agenda Item 3.2

Planet: the Welsh Internationalist

[REDACTED]

28.10.24

[For publication]

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

Thank you very much for your continued engagement with the issue of funding for magazines and websites. I have now read the transcript of the evidence session with the Books Council of Wales from 17.10.24 and have a few points to follow up from earlier correspondence. For anyone reading who is new to the issues in question, you can read more about our perspective here, which also includes important context for the additional points I make below, for example the ‘rationale’ given for removing our grant:

<https://www.planetmagazine.org.uk/planet-online/253/editorial/emily-trahair>

The urgency for sustainable publisher funding and system reform

Firstly, I’d like to lend support to the urgent call from Wales’s publishers and from BCW itself for immediate financial relief for publishers of books, magazines and websites from Welsh Government. The existence of a viable contemporary Welsh literature and media in both languages is clearly under threat, at incalculable loss to Welsh citizens, writers and publishing staff.

As soon as sustainable funding can be delivered to publishers, there’s a strong argument that a process of in-depth scrutiny and reform of current publishing strategy, funding management and ethos needs to begin – led by the publishing grassroots, and perhaps also at governmental and Senedd level. If such a process of reform could be also undertaken within the structures of BCW itself that would be very welcome. There would be limited point in injecting more money into BCW if there was still a risk that when their funding came up for renewal in a few years time publishers would then be vulnerable to debilitating cuts, or even having their grant removed completely, as *Planet*’s was, for wholly unfair and illogical reasons, with very little transparency, and (in the absence of any coherent explanation for the loss of grant) leading to publishers fearing punishment for raising concerns about effects on working conditions from grant cuts and BCW funding targets. Additional funding would be most efficiently spent for the benefit of Wales’s readers if publishers did not need to expend a huge amount of time and energy challenging all the variously impracticable, irrational, unethical and erroneous facets of the approach to funding strategy and targets that have emerged in the last few years.

Such areas requiring reform are beyond the scope of this correspondence, and of the two editorials I have written on this subject. With regard to reform of magazine and website

funding (this being the area we're most familiar with) *Planet* will be happy to initiate a discussion. Our dormant status gives us a freedom to publicly challenge the current approach and strategy, and pool ideas for reform and alternatives, a freedom which is not shared by publishers and other organisations in receipt of BCW funds (but who have so often expressed their support for our stance in private). This would be a positive and constructive outcome from our current experience of being defunded. Plans for how this discussion will be initiated are already underway, and we'd be very happy to feed back the outcomes of the discussion to the Committee and all other relevant bodies, including BCW.

The factors behind poor working conditions for publishers

The second point I'd like to raise is with regard to Helgard Krause's reflection on 'self-exploitation' in the Welsh publishing industry. I'm glad that she appears to acknowledge that declining grant levels have an impact on working conditions. However, I would challenge her point that 'there's only so much you can do'. In *Planet*'s case – and I know other publishers have experienced very similar – the decline in working conditions was due partly to successive reductions in our core grant (so it became less than half it was in 2008). However, it was also due to multiple increasing demands on our operations and increasingly (and often counter-productively and unduly) interventionist measures in the form of BCW targets and conditions in this same period (2009 to 2020) with partial respite with regard to targets only in response to the pandemic. We were never in a position, as could perhaps be interpreted from Krause's response, where we were allowed to 'do less' as a consequence of receiving less of a grant – quite the opposite. From 2018 until the pandemic in particular we were very much in the position where we were threatened with losing our grant if we did not meet ever more stringent (and often very problematic) targets.

Transparency and objectivity

The third point is in relation to the welcome question raised by Laura Anne Jones as to how BCW ensure transparency and objectivity in the funding process for magazines. My correspondence with the Committee from 17.04.24, 02.07.24 and 23.09.24 includes multiple points demonstrating that BCW's funding process is lacking in transparency, independence and/or objectivity. I would like to add additional points for public record with regard to BCW's appeals process and the confidential 'internal report' from July 2022 which fed in to the sub-committee's decisions.

BCW's appeals process is not independent or objective at all, but internal. The two individuals who investigated our Stage 2 complaint were the Chair of BCW's Magazine Panel – i.e. the Panel which interviewed us and makes decisions re. the grant franchises (this is Alan Watkin, who is the Vice-Chair of the BCW English-language publishing development subcommittee) and BCW's Head of the Publishing Development Department (Arwel Jones). In this way they were essentially investigating themselves. (Our stage 1 complaint was less formal correspondence with our BCW Publishing Development Officer – so again was internal to BCW.)

As mentioned previously, the July 2022 internal report was drawn up without any formal consultation with publishers, writers or readers (in contrast with the earlier 2013 report into English-language magazines chaired by Tony Bianchi). Publishers were not allowed to know who were the external experts on the review panel for the report, nor to see the internal report itself (which was only revealed this year in correspondence with the Committee). Indeed, not even the Committee were allowed to see the crucial 'external experts' report' which fed in to the internal report, let alone the publishers. BCW refused the Committee access to this on the grounds that it 'contains commercially sensitive information'. This secrecy raises alarm bells

in relation to the ludicrously unfair, illogical ‘rationale’ that was later given for removing *Planet*’s funding.

What is also noteworthy is that the topic that formed the crux of this rationale is one of the key criteria in the July 2022 Report, and it's noted there that their external experts explored this with ‘research’ (no more details were given). However, this topic was not mentioned at all in the tender documents. Nor was it mentioned at all in the very informal and partial feedback I had from our grants officer about the outcome of the internal review back in 2023 when I asked her for information. In this way, publishers who applied to the 2023 franchise did not have the opportunity to know all the criteria that were being factored in to the decisions, nor in their application to respond to positively, give greater context about, or potentially redress any misconceptions the panel may hold about this topic.

Nor is it the case, as could potentially be interpreted from Krause’s response on 17.10.24, that the independent sub-committee are the only individuals to influence funding decisions. The panel meetings for the July 2022 internal report were led by a BCW staff member – Arwel Jones, who from email correspondence with our (soon to depart) grants officer Lucy Thomas, clearly had been tasked with an influential role in shaping the content and parameters of the report, and that our grants officers would have a role to play in this process too. Staff members from BCW (including Helgard Krause, Arwel Jones and our grants officer Ashley Owen) were present throughout the publisher franchise interviews and subsequent discussion. Staff members an opportunity (through their involvement in sub-committee meetings) to shape sub-committee outcomes - for better or worse. Moreover, there should surely be a set of mechanisms by which BCW staff can intervene and set certain parameters if there is a danger that the independent sub-committee is making any decisions lacking in impartiality and fairness, or if the subcommittee or their colleagues stray beyond their proper remit without justification: BCW as an organisation is ultimately responsible for maintaining these standards, after all. In a small nation, and an environment where publishers sometimes need to give robust constructive critique of funding decisions, it’s vital that those decision-makers – both the subcommittee and staff – maintain scrupulous standards of impartiality, objectivity and fairness.

Scrutiny

I thank the Committee for their ongoing scrutiny. After the evidence session with BCW the two main questions for BCW with regard to *Planet* remain the following:

How can they justify their untruth 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 at all?

Secondly, how can they justify the sole ‘rationale’ given to us for the *Planet* grant decision, which, I would argue, effectively 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, our grant application – and now indeed the evidence session discussion between BCW and the Committee?

I would like to conclude by paying tribute to Welsh publishing and media staff of both languages – they are among the hardest working (and most poorly remunerated) people in Wales, who go to exhaustive lengths to give a voice to Welsh citizens, ensure the survival of a distinctive and pluralistic Welsh culture, and be a vital vessel for issues of conscience

during a prolonged period of economic and political turbulence. They make considerable personal sacrifices to this end, often at significant risk to their wellbeing. They deserve to be protected and fostered in the most capable way possible, rather than undermined and defunded.

Alongside all the excellent arguments given by publishers, and indeed by Helgard Krause herself in the evidence session for why Welsh publishing needs greater financial support, there is also the point that the written word (whether as creative writing or journalism) is essential for Welsh democracy, and its unique, world-class literature plays a huge part in upholding Wales's claim to be a distinct nation to begin with – and has done from at least the 6th century to the present day.

Kind regards,

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

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

Agenda Item 3.3

MINISTERIAL INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

SEPTEMBER 2024

INWARD VISITS	
25 Sept	<p>Visit to Wales by German Ambassador to the UK The German Ambassador visited Wales to celebrate German Unity Day. Whilst in Wales the Ambassador met with the First Minister and the Cabinet Secretary for Economy. During their meetings they discussed climate issues, low carbon energy and marine renewables, expertise in Wales across life sciences, creative industries and cyber, the take up of German languages at GCSE and A-Level in Wales, the economic relationship and increasing tourism into Wales from Germany.</p>
25 Sept	<p>Visit to Wales by Delegation from Birmingham, AL (Sister Cities) Wales hosted a delegation from Birmingham, Alabama between 25-28 September as part of the Friendship Pact and Birmingham Sister Cities programme. The visit programme included a welcome reception with the First Minister, a Wales Window connections event, attendance at the Monumental Welsh Women lecture on Betty Campbell and separate economic and cultural strands.</p>
30 Sept	<p>Visit to Wales by Chief Minister of Nagaland The Chief Minister of Nagaland, and his accompanying delegation, visited Wales to meet with the Deputy First Minister and cultural bodies in Wales to discuss closer relations and Wales' participation as a partner country for this year's Hornbill Festival in Nagaland. Hornbill will represent the closure of Wales in India 2024.</p>
OUTWARD VISITS	
22 Sept	<p>Deputy First Minister attendance at New York Climate Week The DFM attended New York Climate Week for a range of meetings including a trilateral with Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero and Energy, Gillian Martin and Irish Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Andrew Muir. Meetings were also held with the Future Generations Commissioner and the CEO of Earthshot. The DFM spoke at numerous engagements showcasing Wales's success stories in combatting climate change and a number of receptions, including one organised by Welsh Government. For his final morning, the Cabinet Secretary joined a round table discussion on Mobilizing Funding for Waste Methane Reduction at Scale.</p>
22 Sept	<p>Meeting with EU Ambassador in Liverpool The First Minister met with the EU Ambassador at the Labour Party Conference. During their meeting they discussed Taith/Freedom of Movement, Erasmus and the opportunity for FM to address the EU HOMs in London. This was welcomed and the FM invited the Ambassador to visit Wales with fellow Member State Head of Missions in the Spring 2025.</p>

MINISTERIAL INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

OCTOBER 2024

INWARD VISITS	
Nil	
OUTWARD VISITS	
01 Oct	Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership visit to France The Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership travelled to Toulouse for a two-day visit, joining a number of Welsh companies at ADS Toulouse.
17 Oct	First Minister visit to Dublin The First Minister travelled to Dublin for meetings with President Higgins and Minister Ryan TD. The day also included a roundtable meeting with the British Irish Chamber of Commerce and Irish investors.
18 Oct	First Minister visit to Cork for the Wales/Ireland Ministerial Forum The First Minister travelled to Cork for the 4 th Wales/Ireland Ministerial Forum. The visit included a bilateral with the Tánaiste, a visit to Cyber Ireland Campus at Munster Technological University, discussions on Ireland/Wales academic research projects and the day concluded with the Forum meeting to discuss the shared statement. First Minister attends Ireland-Wales Forum for first overseas visit GOV.WALES
25 Oct	Deputy First Minister visit to Den Bosch, Netherlands The Deputy First Minister travelled to the Netherlands to take part in the commemorations marking the 80 th anniversary of the liberation of den Bosch and the role of the 53rd Welsh Regiment in liberating the city during World War II.
31 Oct	Other Voices The First Minister travelled to Cardigan for the Other Voices international festival to promote Wales. The First Minister opened the festival, took part in a Clebran session with Philip King, held a bilateral with the Irish Ambassador to the UK and hosted a reception.

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

October 2024

Dear Delyth,

Committee for the Scrutiny of the First Minister meeting

I understand that your Committee members are interested in attending the next meeting of the Committee for the Scrutiny of the First Minister meeting on 13 December, as the topic Wales and the World is relevant to the International Relations part of your remit.

I am happy to extend an invitation to all Committee members to attend as non-participant guests, and would be grateful if you could confirm via officials who will attend. The Committee meeting will take place in Committee Room 5 and on Zoom, and begin at 10am.

You are also welcome to attend the Committee pre-meeting at 3pm on 22 November via Teams, to will allow you to feed in to possible areas of discussion.

Yours sincerely



David Rees MS

Chair, Committee for the Scrutiny of the First Minister

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

Agenda Item 3.4

An Comhchoiste um
Thurasóireacht, Cultúr, Ealaíona,
Spórt agus Meáin



Joint Committee on Tourism, Culture,
Arts, Sport and Media

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

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6th November 2024

Ref: JCM-I-2185

Annwyl Gadeirydd,

I write to you on behalf of the Joint Committee on Tourism, Culture, Arts, Sport and Media in relation to your correspondence received on 23rd October 2024, regarding the visit by the Senedd delegation to the Oireachtas.

At its meeting of 6th November 2024, the Joint Committee on Tourism, Culture, Arts, Sport and Media considered your kind letter, which it has agreed to note with thanks.

The Joint Committee Members further wishes to outline that it was delighted of the opportunity to meet with the delegation from the Welsh Senedd to explore the many common areas of interest in the work of both Committees and indeed of both Nations, from musician visas post-Brexit to the funding of the arts and cultural institutions, investment in sports and supports for film and TV production. The Committee believes such engagements prove extremely productive and may explore further such opportunities in the future, be they in person or online.

The Committee would also be of the hope that such engagements could be continued into the next Dáil.

The Committee also wishes to thank you most sincerely for the advance copy of your report "Culture shock: Culture and the new relationship with the European Union" which it has agreed to note with thanks. The Committee commends the work undertaken in this report.

If you require any further information regarding this matter, please contact Laura Pathe, Clerk to the Committee, by telephone at 01-618 4125, or by email at jcmedia@oireachtas.ie

Yours sincerely,

Niamh Smyth T.D. - Cathaoirleach

Document is Restricted



October 2024

Dear Delyth,

We are writing to you to highlight the barriers that remain in terms of accessing services and extracurricular activities for children and young people through the medium of Welsh, and to seek your support and guidance on this issue.

We do so in your capacity as Chair of the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language and International Relations Committee. We consider that this is relevant, and relates, to many aspects of your Committee's functions, including:

- oversight of the work of the Welsh Language Commissioner;
- language and education policy, and specifically the link to the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill in respect of activities outside the classroom, which support the objectives of the Bill; and
- leisure and sports policy, including your oversight of Sport Wales.

Our understanding is that the Welsh language standards include a standard for education courses. Nevertheless, more than eight years since Cymdeithas yr Iaith conducted research as the first Welsh language standards came into force in 2016, ([Cymdeithas yr Iaith research on swimming lessons](#)), there are barriers that continue to prevent children and young people from having swimming lessons and engaging in other activities through the medium of Welsh.

There are examples where children who receive Welsh medium education in Welsh schools are having swimming lessons and instrumental lessons, and are engaging in other sporting activities, through the medium of English. Not only does this confirm the notion that Welsh serves only as the language of the classroom; it also undermines Welsh education.

We would therefore be grateful if you could advise us on the way forward, and if you could consider undertaking an inquiry in this area, with a view to establishing, among other things:

- The extent to which the Commissioner's work in the area of sports and music activities has been adequate in protecting and enforcing the rights of Welsh

speakers. We note that the Commissioner told you in a pre-appointment hearing that it is important to ensure that children and young people have opportunities to use the Welsh language outside the classroom.

- The extent to which bodies such as Sport Wales, which is responsible for the Welsh Government's Free Swimming programme, are taking proactive steps to ensure that proactive provision is available in Welsh throughout Wales.
- The extent to which music and sporting provision is monitored to ensure that it is provided through the medium of Welsh.
- The extent to which school governing bodies use their influence, especially in Welsh-medium schools, to organise extracurricular activities and demand that they be provided in Welsh; or whether pupils are obliged to receive English provision or go without.

We would be willing to have further discussions on this matter and our request.

Sincerely,

Cymdeithas yr Iaith Welsh Language Rights Group