

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

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 5, Tŷ Hywel

Meeting date: 28 January 2026

Meeting time: 09.30

For further information contact:

Richard Thomas

Committee Clerk

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Hybrid

Private pre-meeting

1 Introductions, apologies and substitutions

09:30

2 Papers to note

09:30

2.1 Public service broadcasting in Wales

(Pages 1 – 7)

Attached Documents:

Letter from Cymdeithas yr Iaith: Expressing concerns about the impact of the proposed new streaming agreement between S4C and the BBC – 20 January 2026

Letter from the UK Government Minister for Creative Industries, Media and Arts: Providing written evidence for the Committee’s Public Services Broadcasting inquiry – 23 January 2026

2.2 Culture and the new relationship with the EU

(Page 8)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Danish Government Minister for Culture, Media, and Sports: Responding to the Committee’s letter – welcoming the Declaration on the necessity of culture and media as a safeguard for our European democracies – 23 January 2026



2.3 Appointment of the new Chair of S4C

(Page 9)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the UK Government Minister for Creative Industries, Media and Arts: Responding to the Committee's letter on the Senedd's involvement in the appointment of the Chair of S4C – 23 January 2026

2.4 Welsh Government Draft Budget 2026–27

(Pages 10 – 39)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language: Responding to the Committee's Draft Budget 2026–27 report – 23 January 2026

Letter from the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership: Responding to the Committee's Draft Budget 2026–27 report – 23 January 2026

3 Prohibition of Greyhound Racing (Wales) Bill – Stage 2 Proceedings

09:30–11:30

Huw Irranca-Davies MS, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs

Jackie Price, Head of the Greyhound Team, Welsh Government

Holly Miles, Lawyer, Welsh Government

Documents relevant to Stage 2 proceedings will be available on the [Bill page](#).

The Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee agreed on [15 January 2026](#), under Standing Order 26.21, that the order of consideration for Stage 2 proceedings would be:

Sections 1–3; Schedule 1; Section 4; Schedule 2; Sections 5–6; Long Title.



Yr 20fed o Ionawr, 2026 | The 20th of January, 2026

Pryderon am gytundeb arfaethedig rhwng S4C a'r BBC

Concerns about a proposed agreement between S4C and the BBC

Annwyl Delyth Jewell

Rwy'n ysgrifennu atoch chi fel y Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y Gymraeg, Chwaraeon, a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol ar ran Cymdeithas yr Iaith i fynegi pryderon ynghylch effaith y cytundeb ffrydio newydd arfaethedig rhwng S4C a'r BBC.

Yn dilyn cyhoeddiad gan S4C ar 14/01/26 am y cytundeb, un o'n pryderon yw'r perygl y gallai'r trefniant newydd hwn arwain at ddadflaenoriaethu Clic, sef yr unig wasanaeth ffrydio sydd wedi'i gynllunio'n llwyr o amgylch y Gymraeg a'i chynulleidfaoedd.

Rydym ar ddeall nad yw'r cytundeb rhwng y ddau ddarlledwr wedi'i gymeradwyo'n derfynol gan fyrddau'r ddau sefydliad eto; gofynnwn i chi felly wneud ymholiadau am ei effaith ar annibyniaeth a chynnaladwyedd S4C fel darlledwr annibynnol. Credwn ymhellach y dylai fod oedi rhag gweithredu'r cytundeb nes eich bod wedi derbyn y sicrwydd ac atebion ynghylch y peryglon posibl o ran lluosogrwydd y tirlun darlledu yng Nghymru ynghyd ag annibyniaeth a chynaliadwyedd S4C.

Mae'r cytundeb arfaethedig yn dod ar adeg pan welwn ni S4C yn dod yn fwyfwy dibynnol ar y BBC

I am writing to you as Chair of the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee on behalf of Cymdeithas yr Iaith to express concerns about the impact of the proposed new streaming agreement between S4C and the BBC.

Following an announcement by S4C on 14/01/26 about the agreement, we are concerned that this new arrangement could lead to the deprioritisation of Clic, which is the only streaming service that is completely designed around the Welsh language and its audiences.

We understand that the agreement between the two broadcasters has not been finally approved by the boards of the two organisations yet; we therefore ask you to make inquiries about its impact on the independence and sustainability of S4C as an independent broadcaster. We believe that there should be a delay in implementing the agreement until you have received the assurances and answers regarding the potential dangers in terms of the plurality of the broadcasting landscape in Wales together with the independence and sustainability of S4C.

a llawer mwy o'r un cynnwys ar y ddwy sianel - yr un cyflwynwyr a llai o gynnwys gwreiddiol, llawer o ddeunydd yn cael ei ail-arddangos ar lwyfannau BBC Wales.

Ar hyn o bryd mae Clic yn cynnig profiad cymharol isradd mewn rhai agweddau. Er enghraifft nid yw ap teledu Clic yn gallu rhedeg o gwbl ar rai modelau o setiau teledu ac mae angen datrys hyn trwy gefnogi mwy o ddyfeisiau.[1] Enghraifft arall yw bod Clic ar wefan y sianel yn dangos hysbysebion sydd yn anfantais o gymharu gydag iPlayer.

Gallai rhoi mwy o flaenoriaeth i BBC iPlayer olygu bod Clic yn aros ei unfan neu ddim yn cael ei ddiweddarau a'i wella, fyddai yn golygu bod gwylwyr yn fwy tebygol o droi ar iPlayer dros Clic.

Mae Clic yn llawer mwy na gwasanaeth ffrydio, dylai fod yn brif gartref digidol teledu Cymraeg. Os ydyn ni o ddifrif am ddyfodol y Gymraeg yn y byd digidol, rhaid sicrhau bod gan Clic ddyfodol clir, gyda'r adnoddau a'r flaenoriaeth briodol. Mae cynyddu gwelededd yn bwysig, ond ni ddylai amlygrwydd ar blatfformau eraill ddod ar draul annibyniaeth y sianel na seilwaith digidol y Gymraeg. Ni ddylai cofleidio'r byd aml-lwyfan olygu bod y sianel Gymraeg yn anwybyddu ei phlatfform cynhenid.

Rydym yn credu bod dibynnu ar iPlayer yn peri risg sylweddol i S4C, gan ei fod yn golygu colli rheolaeth dros ddata am ddefnydd a'r algorithmau sy'n dethol a darparu cynnwys, ynghyd â thanseilio ei lluosogrwydd a'i hannibyniaeth.

Rydym yn galw ar S4C i roi ymrwymiad clir a chyhoeddus y bydd Clic yn brif gartref digidol teledu Cymraeg, gyda lefel o fuddsoddiad, datblygiad a gwelededd sydd fan leiaf yn cyfateb ag unrhyw bartneriaeth allanol.

Heb weld manylion llawn y cytundeb arfaethedig, ni allwn fod yn sicr pa effeithiau eraill y gallai'r cytundeb arfaethedig rhwng S4C a'r BBC ei gael. Gofynnwn i chi wneud cais am oedi'r cytundeb nes

The proposed agreement comes at a time when we see S4C becoming increasingly dependent on the BBC and much more of the same content on both channels - the same presenters, less original content and a lot of material being repeated on BBC Wales platforms.

At present Clic offers a relatively inferior experience in some respects. For example the Clic TV app is not able to run at all on some models of TV sets and this needs to be resolved.[1] Another example, Clic on the channel's website shows advertisements which puts it at a disadvantage compared to iPlayer.

Prioritising BBC iPlayer could mean that Clic is not updated and improved, which would mean that viewers are more likely to switch to iPlayer over Clic.

Clic is much more than a streaming service, it should be the main digital home of Welsh TV. If we are serious about the future of the Welsh language in the digital world, we must ensure that Clic has a clear future, with the appropriate resources and priority. Increasing visibility is important, but prominence on other platforms should not come at the expense of the channel's independence or the digital infrastructure of the Welsh language. Embracing the multi-platform world should not mean that the Welsh language channel ignores its native platform.

We believe that relying on iPlayer poses a significant risk to S4C, as it means losing control over usage data and the algorithms that select and provide content, together with undermining its diversity and independence.

We are calling on S4C to give a clear and public commitment that Clic will be the main digital home of Welsh television, with a level of investment, development and visibility that is at least equivalent to any external partnership.

Without having seen the full details of the proposed agreement, we cannot be sure what other effects

eich bod wedi derbyn atebion llawn ynghylch yr holl gwestiynau sy'n cael eu codi trwy hynny.

Yn olaf, nodwn fod y cyhoeddiad am iPlayer yn tanlinellu'r angen brys i ddatganoli pwerau darlledu i Gymru. Heb rym deddfwriaethol clir yn y Senedd dros seilwaith cyfryngau yng Nghymru, bydd y Gymraeg yn parhau i fod yn agored i benderfyniadau a blaenoriaethau yn Llundain. Mae'n bryd symud y tu hwnt i drefniadau partneriaeth ansicr, a sicrhau bod amlygrwydd y Gymraeg yn hawl statudol ar bob sgrin ac ar draws platfformau digidol.

[1] Manylion am y modelau o setiau teledu sy'n gallu rhedeg ap Clic:

<https://www.s4c.cymru/cy/sut-i-wylio-s4c/teledu-clyfar/>

the proposed agreement between S4C and the BBC could have. We ask that you request the agreement is delayed until you have received full answers regarding all the questions raised.

Finally, the announcement about iPlayer underlines the urgent need to devolve broadcasting powers to Wales. Without clear legislative power in the Senedd over media infrastructure in Wales, the Welsh language will continue to be open to decisions and priorities of London. It is time to move beyond uncertain partnership arrangements, and ensure that the prominence of the Welsh language is a statutory right on all screens and across digital platforms.

[1] Details about the television set models that can run the Clic app:

<https://www.s4c.cymru/en/how-to-watch-s4c/smart-tvs>

Yr eiddoch yn gywir,

Mirain Owen

Grŵp Dyfodol Digidol
Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg



Department for Culture, Media & Sport

The Rt Hon Ian Murray MP
Minister for Creative Industries, Media and Arts
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23 January 2026

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

INT2026/00654/DC

Dear Delyth

Thank you for your invitation to attend a general scrutiny session on public service broadcasting in Wales in February 2026. Unfortunately, diary pressures mean I cannot give oral evidence at the current time. However, I would like to submit this letter as written evidence in the areas you are seeking views, and are highlighted in the State of Play report, including the Media Act, TV distribution, BBC Charter Review and licence fee, and S4C funding.

General Points

The UK Government recognises the vital role that public service broadcasting plays in Wales, as well as the rest of the UK. I know that S4C in particular is central to life in Wales, providing invaluable access to the Welsh language and encouraging social cohesion through shared TV moments, for example recently through its broadcasting of the first ever co-commissioned animated Christmas film, Nolig, with BBC NI and TG4.

All PSB activities in the nations make an enormously valuable contribution to the creative economy and we want the PSBs to continue creating high quality local jobs and driving growth across Wales. My Department is leading a number of important projects to support the PSBs to deliver across the whole of the UK, which I seek to update the Committee on.

Media Act

Firstly, the Media Act 2024 received Royal Assent on 24 May 2024. DCMS and Ofcom are now in the process of implementing the Act, including the new prominence regime.

I note the Committee's recommendation to amend "appropriate" prominence to "significant" prominence. You will be aware that Part 2 of the Act passed unamended. How prominence will be delivered will be determined by Ofcom in their Code of Practice, which they will consult on.

Once commenced, the new regime will be enforced by Ofcom and includes a backstop dispute resolution function in the event public service broadcasters and/or TV platforms wish to raise a dispute. The intention is for commercial negotiations to continue independently and Ofcom will be required to develop guidance to support effective negotiations between PSBs and TV platforms covering a range of negotiating factors.

Ofcom is required to consult on both the Code and guidance document which will provide an opportunity for stakeholders to shape and inform their approach to ensure it works for them.

TV Distribution and the Future of Broadcast Television

As you may also be aware, the UK Parliament has legislated to secure the continuity of Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) until at least 2034 and a decision on the future of TV distribution beyond this has not yet been made. The UK Government Department for Culture, Media and Sport is undertaking work to evaluate the future distribution of television as the sector continues to evolve over the next decade.

Millions of households continue to rely on DTT, but at the same time, many are choosing to watch TV over the internet. This shift is resulting in more choice and a better experience for audiences, but it is also creating financial pressures for our broadcasters. The project is gathering evidence to understand how people watch television now, and through the next decade, to ensure that we have the best picture possible of how the TV ecosystem may develop. This will ensure the continuity of a sustainable TV ecosystem that works for audiences and the TV industry. As part of this process, we are considering relevant geographical issues across the whole of the UK, including in the devolved nations, and have regularly engaged with S4C within our stakeholder forum for the project.

Renewal of the BBC Charter

On 16 December 2025, the UK Government launched the Charter Review Green Paper and Terms of Reference. The new Charter will formally set the terms of the BBC for the future, with a clear ambition to set it on a path to thrive until well into the latter half of this century. The public consultation, which will run for 12 weeks from 16 December until 10 March 2026, will help inform policy decisions for the next BBC Royal Charter, and we will set out our policy decisions in a White Paper later this year.

The Green Paper represents the first step on this path as we set out our vision for futureproofing our national broadcaster. Aligned with Recommendation 8 of the State of Play Report, a key objective of Charter Review will be to ensure the BBC tells a 'unifying national story' which reflects and represents all communities within the UK, including those in Wales. The Green Paper also reaffirms the UK Government's commitment to supporting minority language broadcasting, including Welsh, and considers ways in which the BBC can further support the production sector across the nations and regions. The Green Paper looks at where the BBC is commissioning productions to ensure that budgets and decision-making power for commissioners are spread across the UK and that its economic impact continues to be felt across the UK, for example, whether the 'Out of London' quotas should be amended.

Welsh Language Radio

There is a need to consider whether there is sufficient plurality of Welsh language radio, noting the BBC's increase in its Welsh language programming with the expansion of its Radio Cymru 2 service in March 2024. The decision by Global to end its Welsh language programmes in January 2005 was disappointing, especially given its Capital North West Wales service station had performed well with a 13% reach/3.1% share in the North Wales market. That being said, we do not believe that introducing or increasing requirements on existing commercial radio stations to increase the availability of Welsh language programming is the right approach and could affect the viability of commercial stations in Wales and reduce the choice of services available to Welsh listeners on FM or DAB.

We agree with proposals in evidence to the State of Play inquiry that community radio could play a greater role in providing choice for listeners in Wales. My officials have held initial discussions with Creative Wales, the Welsh Community Radio Network, and Ofcom Wales to explore possible options as to how to support more community services in Wales, including services that cater for Welsh language speakers. I am very keen to support these discussions and to seek to address this as part of measures to support and strengthen community radio nationally.

BBC Licence Fee

In relation to funding, the UK Government's aim is to support a sustainable and fair funding model for the BBC. This will allow the BBC to deliver for all, drive growth in creative industries, nurture talent, create jobs, and invest across the whole of the UK. I also recognise that sustainable funding is crucial to ensuring that the BBC can continue its support of minority language speakers. The State of Play report notes that the BBC's investment in Wales continues to outweigh the income they generate from Welsh licence fee payers.

We are considering a number of ways to ensure this for the long term through the Charter Review, including how the BBC can operate more efficiently, generate more commercial revenue, and how the licence fee could be reformed. We have ruled out funding the BBC through general taxation and replacing the licence fee with another form of public funding, such as a household tax or a levy on the revenues of streaming services.

In order to future proof the BBC, we must also ensure that it is on stable financial footing for the remainder of this Charter Period.

In line with Recommendation 6 of the State of Play Report, I want to reassure the Committee that we will be taking evidence from S4C as part of our consideration of the future of the licence fee at Charter Review. My Department is in regular contact with S4C on all matters related to the Charter Review and will continue to consider their views throughout.

S4C Funding

S4C's activities make an enormously valuable contribution to the creative economy in Wales and we want S4C to continue creating high-quality local jobs and driving growth.

As above, we will ensure that wider considerations about the BBC's overall funding model take into account funding for minority language broadcasting, including S4C, to ensure that it can continue to play this role and that the rich linguistic heritage of our communities can continue to thrive and grow. As set out in our Charter Review Green Paper, we are considering the most appropriate arrangements for providing sustainable funding for S4C as part of the Charter Review process and will be engaging with S4C to understand its funding needs.

The Communications Act 2003 also already requires the Secretary of State to ensure sufficient funding for S4C and the government will continue its commitment to this as a clear recognition of the importance of Welsh broadcasting.

Thank you once again for inviting me to appear before the Committee. I am sorry my schedule prevented me from attending on this occasion. I will follow the Committee's work in this important area with interest.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Murray', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

The Rt Hon Ian Murray MP
Minister for Creative Industries, Media and Arts

Agenda Item 2.2

Minister for Culture
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Ms. Delyth Jewell

23rd January 2026

Dear Ms. Delyth Jewell

Thank you very much for your letter on behalf of the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee and the kind words regarding the Danish EU Presidency and the Declaration on the necessity of culture and media as a safeguard for our European democracies.

Also, thank you for bringing the committee's culture shock report to my attention. I have asked my department to review it.

I look forward to continued dialogue and cooperation in the future. Please accept my best wishes.

Yours sincerely,



Jakob Engel-Schmidt

Agenda Item 2.3



Department
for Culture,
Media & Sport

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23 January 2026

Delyth Jewell MS
Chair, Culture, Communications, Welsh Language,
Sport, and International Relations Committee
Welsh Parliament
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INT2026/00659/DC

Dear Delyth,

Thank you for your letter of 17 November that outlines your views on Senedd involvement in the appointment of the Chair of S4C. I agree on the importance of S4C in Welsh life and in Welsh language broadcasting, and that it is vital for S4C to continue to deliver for the people of Wales.

The provisions of the Broadcasting Act 1990 and the DCMS Concordat with the Welsh Government determine matters related to the appointment of the S4C Chair. Schedule 6A to the Broadcasting Act 1990 provides that the Secretary of State will appoint the non-executive members of the S4C Board, including the Chair, and the Concordat specifies that the DCMS will consult the Welsh Government on any appointments relating to Wales, something the Government will continue to do.

I recognise the potential benefits of Senedd involvement in the process and want to continue to hear the Committee's views in relation to key matters for Welsh broadcasting. In that vein, I would not object to the Senedd Committee inviting future proposed S4C Chair candidates for their own hearing prior to the candidate's confirmation. This would ensure that the Senedd has a formal opportunity to question the preferred candidate and share its findings with the Welsh and UK governments, for us to consider, before a final appointment is made. This would not alter the appointments rules as set out in legislation, and broadcasting would remain reserved.

The Government is committed to the continued support of broader minority language broadcasting provisions and as part of the BBC Charter Review, we will continue to collaborate with the Welsh Government, the Senedd, and stakeholders in Wales to continue to bolster Welsh broadcasting and ensure the continued success of S4C.

Yours sincerely,


The Rt Hon Ian Murray MP
Minister for Creative Industries, Media and Arts



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Our ref: MA/MDFWL/3314/25

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

23 January 2026

Dear Delyth,

Thank you for the Committee's report on the 2026-27 Welsh Government Draft Budget, published on the 15 December 2025, outlining 21 recommendations for the Welsh Government.

We acknowledge the work undertaken by the Committee on their scrutiny of the Draft Budget and welcome this report. Please find enclosed the Welsh Government response to recommendations 12-17, relating to the Welsh Language, in advance of the vote on the Final Budget on 27 January.

Responses to the other recommendations will be provided by the relevant Ministers separately.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Drakeford AS/MS

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyllid a'r Gymraeg
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language

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

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



Welsh Government response to the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations (CCWLSIR) Committee's report: Scrutiny of the Welsh Government Draft Budget 2026-27

Chapter 3: Welsh Language

Summary

This report sets out the Welsh Government response to the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations (CCWLSIR) Committee's Report on the Scrutiny of the Welsh Government Draft Budget 2026-27.

It provides responses to recommendations 12-17 which fall under Chapter 3 – Welsh Language section of the report.

A further two separate reports will be provided in relation to Chapter 2 – Culture, Communications and Sport (recommendations 1-11) and Chapter 4 – International Relations (recommendations 18-21).

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1. Introduction

The Welsh Government Draft Budget for 2026-27 was published in two stages. The outline draft budget 2026-27 was published on 14 October 2025 with the detailed draft budget 2026-27 published on 3 November 2025. It set out revenue and capital spending plans for the period April 2026 to March 2027.

As part of the budgetary process written evidence was provided by the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language to inform scrutiny of the Draft Budget 2026-27. This paper provided information to the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations (CCWLSIR) Committee on budget allocations relevant to the Welsh language.

Oral evidence sessions were held on the 19 and 27 November 2025 where the CCWLSIR Committee took evidence from the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership and the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language.

The Committee published its report on [Scrutiny of the Welsh Government Draft Budget 2026-27](#) on 15 December. We thank the Committee for the report.

The Welsh Government has considered the Committee's report and responds to recommendations 12-17 in relation to the Welsh Language below.

2. Recommendation 12

The Welsh Government should:

- provide a full breakdown of the distribution of funding to partner organisations under this funding stream, including how much will be allocated to the Athrofa;
- provide clarity on whether the funding allocated to support the preparatory work of the Athrofa includes funding to support the National Centre for Learning Welsh with its own inflationary costs and additional responsibilities;
- provide details of any discussions the Cabinet Secretary has had with partner organisations regarding the impact of a below inflation uplift on their operation and activities.

Response: Accept

A list of the grant allocations for each grant recipient in 2026-27 is provided at [Annex 1](#).

In 2026-27, approximately £0.489m revenue will be required to support the transitional costs associated with the establishment of the Athrofa. As part of Final Budget 2026-27, capital funding of £50,000 has been allocated to the Welsh Language BEL for establishing the new statutory body. This funding is separate from the funding allocated to support the National Centre for Learning Welsh. The National Centre for Learning Welsh will therefore receive a 1% inflationary increase in line with other grant recipients.

Officials have held discussions with grant recipients regarding the funding position. In line with the Third Sector Partnership Agreement all grant recipients were notified by the end of December 2025 that they will receive the same grant allocation for the next financial year and any inflationary increases will be communicated to them as at the earliest opportunity. As the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language explained to the Committee in December, the funding to implement the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act must be prioritised within the resources available within the Welsh Language BEL. Given the need to prioritise this funding, grant recipients will be provided with a 1% inflationary increase for 2026-27, which follows a minimum 5% inflationary increase for 2025-26.

3. Recommendation 13

- The Welsh Government should provide all partner organisations with the minimum 2 percent uplift, and fully resource those areas associated with the implementation of the Act with additional revenue

Response: Reject

The Welsh Language BEL has been allocated a further inflationary increase of £0.085m in in Final Budget 2026-27, increasing the revenue budget to £39.419m in 2026-27. As detailed in the response to Recommendation 12, this has resulted in all grant recipients being allocated a 1% inflationary increase for 2026-27, which along with the minimum 5% allocated in 2025-26, represents an inflationary increase of 6% over two years.

Whilst we are unable to award the full recommended inflationary increase to core grants for 2026-27, the Cymraeg 2050 BEL has been allocated an additional £3.057m capital in Final Budget 2026-27. This will help support capital commitments faced by some grant-funded organisations. By providing additional capital support to organisations such as the Urdd and the National Eisteddfod, we will not only enhance Welsh-medium provision for the people of Wales but also strengthen financial sustainability and deliver savings in future years. It also includes £0.050m to contribute towards the establishment of the Athrofa.

4. Recommendation 14 and 15

- The Welsh Government must provide a real terms increase in funding accompanied by the increase commensurate with the additional activities the Commissioner is being asked to undertake.
- The Welsh Government, as part of any budget agreement, should seek to provide the Commissioner with the additional £83,000 requested as part of her estimate to undertake work developing Welsh use in the workplace.

Response: Reject

The draft budget provided a total revenue budget for the Commissioner of £3.475m in 2026-27, which was a 2% (£0.073m) increase on the previous financial year. Since then, a further £0.036m inflationary increase for revenue has been allocated to the Commissioner's budget which brings the total revenue in the Final Budget 2026-27 to £3.511m.

We are satisfied that the Commissioner has been allocated a sufficient budget to fulfil her duties. As an independent body, it is a matter for the Commissioner to prioritise activities within her available budget.

5. Recommendation 16

- The Welsh Government should:
- provide the Mudiad Meithrin with an inflationary increase at the same level as other partners that work to support and promote the language;
- set out how much funding the Mudiad Meithrin will receive as part of this Draft Budget, and where that funding is allocated.

Response: Accept

The funding to Mudiad Meithrin is met from both the Welsh in Education BEL (Education MEG) and the Welsh Language BEL (Central Services and Administration MEG) as set out in Annex 1. Mudiad Meithrin will receive an inflationary increase of 1% in 2026-27 in line with other grant allocations. The 1% increase will be supported from the uplift to the Welsh Language BEL and will total £44,510, increasing Mudiad Meithrin's overall allocation to £4.496m in 2026-27.

Mudiad Meithrin was provided with a one-off increase of £0.5m in 2025-26, and with the additional £44,510 allocated next year, Mudiad Meithrin will receive a 13.8% increase over two years.

6. Recommendation 17

- The Welsh Government should set out in detail how ARFOR has been mainstreamed into the general budget.

Response: Accept in Principle

For the 2025-26 financial year, ARFOR is receiving £0.5m in funding (Economy, Energy and Planning MEG) primarily to undertake a 'pause and reflect' exercise on the key findings of the programme to date, aimed at assessing what has worked well and delivered real impact, identifying what has been less successful, and exploring opportunities for mainstreaming by Welsh Government and, more locally, by individual authorities. The review is currently taking place and due to be completed by the end of March 2026.

This recommendation is therefore accepted 'in principle' so as not to pre-empt the outcomes of the review and allow time to consider the outcomes. No commitment has been made to fund the ARFOR programme beyond the current term. The findings of this exercise will be important in shaping future direction.

7. Annex 1 – Welsh Language grant allocations 2026-27

Sefydliad / Organisation	Dyraniad Grant allocation 2025-26	Cynnydd 1% increase	Dyraniad Grant allocation 2026-27*
Welsh Language BEL (6020)			
Prifysgol Caerdydd (Technology)	8,400	84	8,500
CFFI Cymru YFC	200,000	2,000	202,000
Coleg Cymraeg Cenedaethol	10,382,000	103,820	10,485,900
Cwmpas - Perthyn Grant Scheme**	400,000	0	400,000
Cwmpas - Prosiect Perthyn Advice and Support	157,500	1,575	159,100
Cymdeithas Cerdd Dant Cymru	10,500	105	10,700
Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru	68,250	683	69,000
Cymdeithas Eisteddfodau Cymru	58,850	589	59,500
Cynllun Paragonia Project**	80,000	0	80,000
Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Cymru	1,250,000	12,500	1,262,500
Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru	425,000	4,250	429,300
Llenyddiaeth Cymru - Bardd Plant Cymru	6,000	60	6,100
Mapio Cymru (Technology)	10,500	105	10,700
Merched y Wawr	150,000	1,500	151,500
Mentrau Iaith & Papurau Bro	2,999,850	29,999	3,029,900
Mudiad Meithrin - Cymraeg i Blant	1,230,000	12,300	1,242,300
Canolfan Ddysgu Cymraeg Cenedlaethol	15,629,000	156,290	15,785,300
Prifysgol Bangor - ARFer	70,350	704	71,100
Prifysgol Bangor - Iriaith (Technology)	367,500	3,675	371,200
Prifysgol Bangor - Y Termiadur Addysg	158,550	1,586	160,200
Promoting the Welsh Language in London	90,000	900	90,900
Prosiect BRO	100,000	1,000	101,000
Prosiect WICI Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru	15,750	158	16,000
Urdd Gobaith Cymru	2,713,500	27,135	2,740,700
Sub-total	36,581,500	361,015	36,943,400

* dyraniadau wedi eu croni fyny i'r £100 agosaf / grant allocations have been rounded up to the nearest £100

** dim angen cynnydd chwyddiant ar gyfer y grant / inflationary increase not required for grant

Welsh in Education BEL (5164)			
Pencampwr Iaith	65,000	650	65,700
E-sgol	600,000	6,000	606,000
Cwlwm	190,000	1,900	191,900
Mudiad Meithrin	3,031,000	30,310	3,061,400
RhAG	105,000	1,050	106,100
Sub-total	3,991,000	39,910	4,031,100
Total	40,572,500	400,925	40,974,500

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
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23 January 2026

Dear Delyth

Thank you for the Committee's report on the 2026-27 Welsh Government Draft Budget, published on the 15 December 2025, outlining 21 recommendations for the Welsh Government.

We acknowledge the work undertaken by the Committee on their scrutiny of the Draft Budget and welcome this report. Please find enclosed the Welsh Government response to recommendations 1-21, relating to the Culture, Communication and Sport, in advance of the vote on the Final Budget on 27 February.

Responses to the other recommendations will be provided by the relevant Minister separately.

Yours sincerely,

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

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



Written response by the Welsh Government to the report of the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations (CCWLSIR) Committee on the 2026-27 Draft Budget

Summary

This report sets out the Welsh Government response to the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations (CCWLSIR) Committee's Report on the Scrutiny of the Welsh Government Draft Budget 2026-27.

It provides responses to recommendations 1-11 which fall under Chapter 2 – Culture, Communication and Sport section of the report.

A further two separate reports will be provided in relation to Chapter 3 – Welsh Language (recommendations 12-17) and Chapter 4 – International Relations (recommendations 18-21).

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1. Introduction

The Welsh Government Draft Budget for 2026-27 was published on 3 November 2025. It set out revenue and capital spending plans for the period April 2026 to March 2027.

As part of the budgetary process written evidence was provided by the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership to inform scrutiny of the Draft Budget 2026-27. This paper provided information to the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations (CCWLSIR) Committee on budgets within the Culture, Heritage and Sport portfolio.

An oral evidence session was held on the 19 November 2025 where the CCWLSIR Committee took evidence from the Prif Weinidog, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language and Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership

The Committee published its report on [Scrutiny of the Welsh Government Draft Budget 2026-27](#) on 15 December 2025. We thank the Committee for the report.

The Welsh Government has considered the Committee's report and responds to recommendations 1-11 in relation to culture, communication and sport below. For each recommendation we have provided a written response and either decided to 'accept', 'accept in principle' or 'reject' each recommendation.

2. Recommendation 1

The Welsh Government should increase funding for culture and sport in the Final Budget.

Response: Accept

The Draft Budget that was published was a rollover budget, primarily reflecting existing rather than new priorities; but our ambition was clear to fully allocate all the funding available to us, if we could secure support for shared priorities with opposition parties.

On 9 December 2025 we announced that we had reached a budget agreement with Plaid Cymru to enable passage of the Final Budget, with a focus on investment in the NHS and local government.

In addition to allocations for the NHS and local government, the Final Budget takes into account the updated November OBR forecasts for inflation and wages growth, providing a modest amount of additional funding to each MEG.

The Final Budget reflects further increases to the budgets allocated to Arts, Culture, Heritage, Creative Industries and Sport within the Economy, Energy and Planning MEG. This includes £0.629m revenue and £4m capital funding.

The increases to revenue provide further funding to Arm's Length Bodies (ALBs), Cadw and Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments for Wales to reflect revised wage growth forecasts provided by the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) of 3.2%. The table below summarises these allocations.

Revenue Budget (excluding non cash)	£000		
BEL Description	2026-27 Draft Budget	Changes	2026-27 Final Budget
Creative Wales	8,409	0	8,409
Arts Council of Wales	33,522	82	33,604
Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museums of Wales	28,504	276	28,780
National Library of Wales	12,364	95	12,459
Support for Local Culture and Sport	9,936	0	9,936
Cadw	17,482	18	17,500
National Botanic Garden of Wales	587	0	587
Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments for Wales	1,858	29	1,887
Sport Wales	23,239	129	23,368
Total	135,901	629	136,530

The £4m capital is for arts, culture and sport to invest in the National Library, local museums and libraries as well as programmes through the Arts Council of Wales and Sport Wales to widen access and participation.

3. Recommendation 2

The Welsh Government should provide the Committee with figures for total revenue and capital spending on culture and sport from non-culture and sport departments. This should include, for each year since 2024-25, a breakdown of funding by Budget Expenditure Line and an explanation of how this funding was used for culture or sport.

Response: Accept in principle

In addition to the funding in the Local Government Settlement, the priorities for which are for the respective Local Authorities to determine, and funding from UK Government for culture and sport activities which are not devolved, we can identify investment in culture of almost £230m from across Welsh Government. This figure is for 2025-2026 and was calculated in July 2025. We do not have a calculation for 2024-2025.

The 2025-2026 figures consist of £152.1m revenue and £75.4m capital. It includes investment from my own portfolio, but also from areas as varied as Welsh language, education, local government, health, and the Welsh Government Energy Service.

Specific examples outside of my portfolio include:

- Support for Amgueddfa Cymru from the Welsh Government Energy Service's Public Sector Low Carbon Heat Grant;
- Support from the Welsh Government's Transforming Towns for cultural buildings and through other grants from the Local Government portfolio;
- Support from the Cymraeg 2050 division's wider budget allocation for a myriad of organisations delivering cultural activity in Wales;

- Support from Education, which includes funding for the National Music Service, the Creative Learning Cymru programme, and grants to the Books Council of Wales to support reading for pleasure.

It is difficult to disaggregate some data which is additional to the above - for example, local authority funding for cultural services, and funding to support heritage activities in National Parks. There have also been other announcements of funding since the data was collated which were not included in our calculations, for example the £1m St David's Day Fund, representing investment in culture from the Tourism and Marketing budget line.

Additionally, within sport there is further capital investment in facilities from outside my portfolio through the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme and the Community Facilities Programme. Local authorities also invest in sport and leisure facilities and activities through local government budgets. Additionally, there is funding provided for programmes such as Healthy Weight, Healthy Wales, Period Proud, Child poverty and Anti Racist Wales from other portfolios.

Finally, through our events strategy there is significant investment and economic return from hosting major sporting fixtures and events such as Euro 28, Ironman Wales, Tour de France 2027 and the AIG Women's Open. Some of these events also carry legacy commitments for further investment into grassroots sport.

4. Recommendation 3

The Welsh Government should align budgets towards preventative spending, as recommended by the Future Generations Commissioner, Audit Wales and this Committee. A starting point would be to increase funding for culture and sport.

Response: Accept

The 2025–26 Budget placed a strong emphasis on investment in prevention, recognising that early intervention and long-term planning are essential to improving outcomes and reducing future demand on public services. The 2026–27 Draft Budget restates that priority. It ensures we can continue to support preventative measures across government.

We have maintained real-terms funding for all departments and applied inflationary uplifts to ensure continuity in core services. This stability allows departments to sustain and build on preventative programmes already in place—whether that's in health, education, social care, or climate resilience.

We are mindful of the need to balance preventative investment with the pressures of current demand. That is why we have prioritised frontline services and safeguarded funding for local government, the NHS, and education, while still enabling departments to take forward longer-term, preventative work.

The Well-being of Future Generations Act remains central to our budget planning, and the Strategic Integrated Impact Assessment (SIIA) process has helped us consider how spending decisions contribute to long-term outcomes.

I have made spending decisions across my portfolio which prioritise well-being and prevention. Some of these are set out in the evidence paper I sent to the Committee Chair on 3 November.

As outlined above, an additional £4m capital has been allocated as part of the Final Budget with £0.5m of this allocated to Sport Wales to widen access and participation. Investing in sports facilities is an important preventative activity that supports the health and wellbeing of the nation.

5. Recommendation 4

The Welsh Government should empower culture and sport organisations by enabling them to spend additional funding provided by the Welsh Government according to their own governance processes, and not requiring undue additional authorisation from the Welsh Government. In doing so, it should consider how it can reduce the administrative burden, and instead provide more funding as additional contributions to their grant-in-aid.

Response: Reject

In the draft Budget 2026-27 we have set out increased Grant-in-Aid (GiA) allocations for the culture and sport ALBs. The GiA has the specific purpose of supporting the ALBs ongoing operational costs or it is funding they pass on as grants to other organisations.

Where an ALB requires additional one-off funding for specific projects, for example to support improvements in their estate or infrastructure, this is provided as a separate one-off project grant following the development of a business case. For such projects, it is not appropriate for the one-off additional funding to be allocated through GiA mechanism designed to support the operational costs of the organisation.

Where specific projects are being proposed, the business case approach prescribed through the Better Business Case Model agreed between the Welsh Government and UK Treasury still applies. It is an internationally recognised standard for developing business cases, used across the public sector.

This guidance is important to ensure that capital investments are successfully delivered through good project management supported by clear governance. We work closely with the ALBs to ensure the process is clearly understood and is

applied flexibly and proportionately within the guidance based on assessed levels of risk and investment. We have also offered expert input from the author of the guidance.

The business case development process is used to assess risks, value for money, strategic fit and deliverability. It ensures that clear accountability, governance and control, relevant to the scale of the project, are put in place to support successful delivery.

6. Recommendation 5

The Welsh Government should:

- set out a sustainable long term funding stream for its Celf project.
- provide the rationale for the Minister's position that Celf "should be self-sustaining as a project," given that this appears to contradict two independent assessments of the project

Response: Accept in principle

We have worked closely with the Celf partners to strengthen the proposals for future delivery. This has included an increased focus on moving towards attracting external funding from multiple sources and becoming sustainable in the future.

The three partners all have the delivery of Celf as a priority project within their remit letters. The recurring uplift in the GiA revenue funding baseline to the three national partners in 2025-26 included an element for the ongoing delivery of Celf.

We have provided £179,428 for transition costs and an additional contribution of up to £395,000 towards the operating costs of Celf during 2025-26. An in-principle agreement of up to £395,000 towards the operating costs of Celf during 2026-27 has also been agreed. This funding was provided to allow more time for the partners to explore and secure funding from wider external sources. These amounts match those requested by the three lead partners and are in addition to funding already provided through their GiA.

We understand the concerns about the ability to secure external funding and we will continue to work closely with the three partners. It is reasonable expectation for the initiative to become self-sustaining over time and we have asked that further work is undertaken to consider wider potential funding sources, including the private sector.

7. Recommendation 6

The Welsh Government should increase revenue funding for Sport Wales, so that it receives at least the average increase to revenue budgets used across the overall Welsh Government budget.

Response: Accept

The Final Budget includes an increase to Sport Wales's revenue budget of £0.129m to reflect revised wage growth forecasts provided by the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) of 3.2% along with a £0.5m increase to the capital budget to widen access and participation. The increased capital investment, taking the allocation to £11m in 2026-27, will continue to support key programmes such as investment in facilities and the development of grassroots sport. It will make a real and positive difference to people's lives and will be targeted at areas of deprivation and communities where increased support is needed.

8. Recommendation 7

The Welsh Government should set out a clear timescale to make a final decision about the relationship between Cadw and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales

Response: Accept

I will shortly be publishing the cross-organisational Working Group's report which reviewed the relationship between Cadw and the Royal Commission and a Written Statement outlining the next steps.

The review forms a key part of the Welsh Government's commitment to delivering a sustainable, high-quality historic environment service for Wales. The group considered three options for the future relationship: maintaining current arrangements, closer strategic collaboration, and a full merger of Cadw and the RCAHMW to create a new unified Welsh Government historic environment service. It concluded that of these, merger has the most potential to deliver sustainable long-term benefits for the sector and people of Wales, but that further work detailed work is required – in particular to articulate the strategic benefits and costs of delivering them, and to establish the measures necessary to safeguard the National Monuments Record of Wales. This work is currently in progress.

9. Recommendation 8

The Welsh Government should provide further details of the “£1.97m to Medr to support performance-based music and drama conservatoire provision”. These details should include which part of the Welsh Government budget this funding comes from, what outcomes the funding will provide, and whether the Welsh Government anticipates maintaining this funding on an ongoing basis.

Response: Accept

The funding will be provided from the Support for Local Culture and Sport BEL. The funding will safeguard the provision of conservatoire higher education in Wales, and Medr will monitor the use of funding to ensure it is also deployed in continued investment in outreach, widening access and civic mission activity. This funding has been baselined to recur in future financial years.

10. Recommendation 9

The Welsh Government should provide details of its allocations for journalism and to the Books Council for Wales in 2026-27. In doing so, it should explain how it has factored in appropriate pay and working conditions for those working in these sectors.

Response: Accept

The allocations for journalism and to the Books Council for Wales in 2026-27 will be agreed as part of the formal budget process. This process includes consideration of how decisions align with Welsh Government policy priorities, including fair work.

11. Recommendation 10

The Welsh Government should respond to the recommendations of the 2023 report *Of and for Wales: towards a sustainable future for public interest journalism*, explaining how any work implementing this report will be funded.

Response: Accept

The Welsh Government responded to the 2023 report 'Of and for Wales: Towards a Sustainable Future for Public Interest Journalism' in its Written Statement of 12 May 2025, where it was confirmed that £350,000 from Creative Wales' budget would be allocated to support journalism in 2025-26. Since then, more than £350,000 has been awarded to eight projects directly delivering against the recommendations set out in the report through the Wales Public Interest Journalism Fund, and to support the continuation of the arm's length PING! News CIC Journalism Fund and Senedd reporter post at the Caerphilly Observer.

12. Recommendation 11

The Welsh Government should clarify whether the December 2025 announcement of an additional £2.5 million for the creative industries will have any impact on allocations in the 2026-27 Draft Budget.

Response: Accept

Additional capital in 2025-26 will maximise the benefits to the creative sector by bringing forward completed projects in 2025-26 which will release financial commitments in 2026-27. This will allow Creative Wales to support additional productions in 2026-27, providing increased opportunities for Wales-based crew and supply chain companies. It will also allow more funding to be allocated to other priority areas such as Games.