

**Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y Gymraeg,
Chwaraeon, a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol**

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

Vaughan Gething MS
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Pwnc | Subject: Ministerial scrutiny session: Minister for Economy and Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport and Chief Whip

Dear Vaughan and Dawn,

Thank you for attending the Committee meeting on Wednesday 15 September 2021. As noted in the meeting, I am writing on behalf of the Committee to seek further information on a number matters discussed during your evidence session. These are outlined under the relevant subheadings below.

Distribution of ministerial responsibilities

The Committee would be grateful if you could confirm which of you is responsible for which aspects of your respective ministerial portfolios. Information outlined on the Welsh Government website does not provide such a breakdown. The Committee would also be grateful if you could outline how your respective portfolio areas contribute the Welsh Government's target of 1m Welsh speakers by 2050. This information would assist the Committee and stakeholders in raising specific issues with the appropriate government minister.

Strategic approach to culture

The Committee welcomed your commitment to creating a new cultural strategy. It is accepted that there are number of factors that will influence the formation of these strategies, including the continued impact of the pandemic and forthcoming UK Government spending review. You stated during the meeting that the priorities for the cultural strategy are set out in the Programme for Government. This Programme includes a laudable aim of ensuring such sectors thrive during the forthcoming term. Despite listing some outputs, the Programme does not outline specific details that

would underpin such a strategy. The Committee notes that you intend to publish your strategy early next year. In the meantime, the Committee would welcome an outline of your current thinking around the goals you hope that your strategy will achieve. This would include the specific activity, funding allocations and timelines for achieving these goals.

Further to your overarching strategy for culture, the Committee would also welcome details of sector specific strategies you will have, or will be considering. Would you be able to provide a list of the sector specific strategies that fall within your ministerial remits? The Committee would also be grateful if you are able to also provide any action and funding plans associated with these strategies. Specifically, will you be updating the [Event Wales: A Major Events Strategy for Wales](#) document?

As per your commitment during the meeting, the Committee is keen to work with you on the development of your forthcoming cultural strategy as well as other strategies which fall under the Committee's remit. The provision of such information would greatly assist the Committee in doing so.

Programme for Government commitments

The Welsh Government's Programme for Government also states that "the arts, tourism and sport are of vital importance to both the Welsh economy and to our national life, and the Welsh language is a national treasure which belongs to every individual in Wales." The Programme also commits to widening access and harnessing creativity. The Committee agrees that these proposals are worthy, however there is a lack of detail pertaining to each of the specific outputs outlined in the Programme. The Committee would like to better understand Welsh Government's approach to the specific commitments outlined under the heading 'Push forward towards a million Welsh speakers, and enable our tourism, sports and arts industries to thrive'.

Please can you set out your goals, delivery plans and funding allocations for the following commitments:

- ensuring that Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic histories are properly reflected throughout our cultural and heritage sectors including in National Museums;
- creating a Creative Industry Research and Development Fund;
- establishing a National Music Service;
- investing in Theatr Clwyd;
- establishing a Football Museum;
- establishing a National Contemporary Art Gallery.

Further, the Committee would also welcome regular updates on Welsh Government's progress against each of these initiatives. Would you be willing to provide quarterly updates to the Committee on your progress?

UNESCO World Heritage status and a Museum for north Wales

I know you will agree with the Committee that the recent success north west Wales being awarded UNESCO World Heritage status is to be welcomed and celebrated. We would be grateful if you could outline your plans to build on this recent success. Likewise, we would be grateful to know if there are similar strategies in place to promote other sites in Wales such as Blaenavon, Pontcysyllte and the castles of Gwynedd?

The Committee also welcomes your proposal to develop a museum for north Wales. Though it is early days in your Programme for Government, the Committee would like to better understand how a museum for north Wales would be constituted. As you will be aware, the network of museums which form the National Museum of Wales all have a specific purpose and remit. For instance the National Slate Museum in Llanberis recreates the story of the Welsh slate industry; an industry which “once roofed the world”. Given your proposal to create a new museum for north Wales, could you outline in which material way will it be different to the current museum that exists in Llanberis? Is it your intention to expand the current museum on site or to create a brand new museum? The Committee would welcome any information you can provide to help it better understand how the proposed museum will conserve, document and showcase life in north Wales, and whether it is intended to replace the National Slate Museum. It would be helpful for this information to include targets, delivery plans and funding allocations.

Historic Wales

The Committee noted the outline you provided of the ongoing Historic Wales partnership between Cadw, the National Museum, the National Library and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales. In order for the Committee to better understand this partnership, could you provide details of the partnership including any written agreements for its operation (such as a memorandum of understanding), the partnership’s work programme and its outputs to date. The Committee would also be grateful if you could confirm that Welsh Government ministers will not seek to amalgamate these organisations during this Senedd term.

Television and film strategy

According to the Welsh Government’s Trade and Invest website, as a result of government support, the creative industries is one of the fastest growing sectors in Wales. It is noted that the sector has annual turnover of £1.9bn and employs over 58,000 people; which is a 52 per cent increase on ten years ago. The Committee believes this shows impressive growth in the sector and government support can ensure this grow continues. The predecessor Committee in the Fifth Senedd recommended that Welsh Government should publish a strategy which sets out its vision of Wales’ screen industry. The Committee would welcome details of your strategy for developing this sector with an outline of action plans, funding allocations and targets.

Creative Skills Body for Wales

The Committee noted the written statement issued on Thursday 16 September 2021 regarding a new Creative Skills Body for Wales. The Committee welcomes this important development in ensuring that skills and talent are developed to meet the demand created by an ever growing creative industries sector. The Committee has a number of questions following your statement:

- Is this new initiative being created as an additional arm of Creative Wales rather than as a separate body in of itself?
- In terms of governance, can you confirm the membership and structure of the steering group that will guide its work? Will it be down to the Creative Wales board to oversee this work and ultimately be responsible for its operation?
- How much funding is being provided on annual basis for the initiative?
- What is the five year roll out plan for expanding the work of the body to include other creative sectors?
- What targets have been set for the body in terms of number of placements and training opportunities created?
- How many all-age apprenticeships do you expect the initiative to create between now and 2026?
- How do you intend to monitor the progress of all this work?

Strategic approach to Welsh journalism

I am sure you will agree that the role of a strong native media in a democratic society is of utmost importance. This would include providing those who wish to vote in elections with fair, impartial information to allow them to make informed choices on who should run the country.

You will be aware that Welsh newspapers have seen continued decline in their print circulations, as have UK daily newspapers. While print circulation has dwindled, online traffic has soared. Despite this, news organisations have struggled to monetise this increasing traffic. Other than a few examples, they have been reluctant to charge for access to their content, instead relying on digital advertising, the bulk of which is hoovered up by Google and Facebook. The result has been newspaper closures, job losses and market-consolidation by the big players. The Committee is keen to understand the Welsh Government's approach to supporting the provision of impartial news journalism for Wales. Is the Government providing public funds to news media organisations? And if so, what assurance process and impartiality standards do they have to meet before being awarded such funding? The Committee would be grateful if you could provide a note on these matters.

Sports and leisure

The Committee would welcome an update on the Welsh Government's overall strategic approach to sport in Wales. This would include the overarching objectives you have and the approaches being considered for both elite and community level sport in Wales.

You also noted, as referred to at the start of this letter, that you are committed to widening access to several sectors. The Committee assumes this applies equally to sport and physical activity. Could you please set out your approach to widening access to sport in Wales over the next five years?

Remit letters for sponsored bodies

Finally, the Committee noted that you intend to outline your intentions and set targets for the cultural, heritage and sports sectors in forthcoming remit letters to the relevant Welsh Government Sponsored Bodies. This approach is welcomed. Could you provide an outline of the types of objectives you will set each Sponsored Body in these forthcoming remit letters including any targets on widening access and participation? The Committee would be grateful for a copy of these remit letters, once published, in order to assist with its scrutiny of your work.

I would be grateful if you could provide a written response to these questions by 21 October 2021, in order to inform our future work programme.

Yours sincerely,



Delyth Jewell MS

Chair

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

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.