

The Rt Hon Sir John Whittingdale OBE MP  
Minister of State for Media, Tourism and  
Creative Industries  
Department for Media, Culture and Sport  
HM Government

8 December 2023

## **Public Service Broadcasting in Wales**

Dear Minister,

Thank you for appearing at the Committee's meeting on Thursday, 19 October 2023, to give evidence for our scrutiny on Public Service Broadcasting in Wales. It was valuable to be able to welcome you to the Senedd, and for you to share your views with us in person.

Thank you as well for your [follow-up letter](#) of 14 November 2023, and please accept our apologies for our delay in replying. We welcome the fact that further discussions are planned with the Welsh Government relating to gaps in the provision of Welsh language programming by community radio stations and the longer-term options to support new stations in the parts of Wales that are not currently served by community radio.

With reference to your evidence session, we also welcome the UK Government's willingness to hear from the Committee about matters including the renewal of the channel 3 licence, and free to air sports rights. Given the importance of the Six Nations to Welsh cultural life and its ability to unite Welsh audiences in national 'shared moments', we are keen to explore the merits of adding the competition to the list of sporting events of national interest. We plan to undertake further work on this early in 2024.

We also discussed the fact that smaller public service broadcasters ("PSBs"), like S4C, may find it more difficult to broker prominence online as viewing behaviour shifts from linear TV towards online services. It is vital that prominence for regional PSBs is secured, recognising the social and economic contribution of the services they provide. We were reassured to hear that the regulatory framework will protect the prominence of PSB services to ensure that content remains easily discoverable for

audiences, and that you would be happy raise any future difficulties that PSBs may experience with Ofcom.

During the meeting, we also discussed Project Gigabit funding to improve access to broadband in harder-to-reach areas of Wales. You agreed to provide us with some further detail about the benefits of that initiative to Wales, and we would be grateful to receive that information.

Thank you again for sharing your views with us on these vitally important issues. As a Committee, we appreciate that you are keen to champion these issues, and to remain in contact with us.

Yours sincerely,



**Delyth Jewell MS**  
**Committee Chair**

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

Correspondence in Welsh or English.