



1 December 2023

Annwyl Gyfaill,

We are writing to you in response to a letter that has been sent to the Secretary of State for DCMS, The Rt Hon Lucy Frazer KC MP by the former chief executive of Welsh language broadcaster S4C. It was also shared on her X, formerly twitter, account. The letter contains a number of allegations and statements which are very troubling.

Cwmni Da is a production company that employs 51 full time staff, located in the north west of Wales, which is classed as a socially deprived area. We are unique in Wales in being an Employee Owned Trust – our company is owned by a trust for the benefit of our staff. We have immense pride in our highly skilled and dedicated team and the fantastic content that they create for S4C and other broadcasters. We pride ourselves on being able to offer a number of pathways into the industry and a high level of training and development.

This publicly shared letter yesterday is a direct threat to the media production industry in Wales. We believe that the current situation at S4C has to be resolved as soon as possible, for the sake of the service that S4C provides to viewers in Wales and across the UK, to S4C itself and the wide range of production companies – large and small across Wales. We fully support the Chairman and the Board in the present situation, and any discussion about their future at this point in time is not helpful. We condemn in the strongest possible manner the alleged actions of the previous chief executive.

There are proper and recognised channels for raising concerns and pursuing complaints. It is not social media. Promoting this narrative, is not helpful, especially in the week when £500million of cuts is being announced by the BBC.

The accompanying narrative that everything in the last 18 months has been a success and the previous years were a failure is at best misleading.

Content produced in Wales has been sold for years on the international market, very successfully, with drama series such as Hinterland and Byw Celwydd only two such successes. This has resulted in money being channelled back into the industry in Wales. We are only one of a number of companies that have been working internationally for years, with success. It provides value for money for content for the viewers, provides challenges and valuable learning opportunities for the staff, and helps raise the profile of Wales on the international market.

Ms Doyle also makes public her plan, executed successfully according to her, of reducing work to companies with a high turnover. Under Ms Doyle's plan, successful production companies appear to be punished, for no reason other than their relative success. We have been assured by S4C that this personal plan has never been approved by the S4C Unitary Board nor discussed with the channel's commissioners.

If the channel's Board or content commissioners were not aware of this policy, how was it possible that such a secret policy led to 'increased creativity and transparency'? It is a very, very troubling admission and serious questions remain about the business policies implemented by S4C over the previous 18 months.

We felt it was important to raise these issues with you as the allegations by the individual concerned are shared and inevitably discussed. It is with a great deal of sadness and disappointment that we must reflect that the damage inflicted upon S4C over the last two years risks discrediting the reputation of an important national public service broadcaster.

Yours faithfully,

Llion Iwan (Managing Director)  
Bethan Griffiths (Operations Director)  
Sioned Wiliam (Non-Exec Director)  
Phil Williams (Non-Exec Director)

*Cwmni Da Doc Fictoria Caernarfon Gwynedd LL55 1SR*

