



*Yn Gosod y Llwyfan I'r Celfyddydau Perfformio yng Nghymru
Setting the Stage for the Performing Arts in Wales*

Dear Ms Jewell

I hope you are well.

We are deeply concerned that Caerphilly County Council have announced proposals to withdraw subsidy, mothballing Blackwood Miners' Institute from the end of December 2024. There is a growing and significantly worrying trend for local authorities to withdraw from cultural provision and spending.

Communities and audiences will be left with no access to the arts or culture on their doorstep. We know that Blackwood Miners' Institute presents over 160 performances and welcomes 32,275 audiences every year. They are a home to many community and amateur productions and importantly also have active youth theatre at a time when young people's access is also challenging.

The venue directly supports 25 people (a mixture of internal staff and freelance professionals) and of course additionally provides work for a sector workforce through receiving touring performances.

We know how heavily the creative sector relies on local venues for their living and how local audiences love their venues. Local theatres make a vital contribution to the economy, health and wellbeing, and international reputation of our nation. Venues like Blackwood Miners' are the lifeblood of local communities, providing inspiration, entertainment and a creative outlet for so many. Theatre supports individual wellbeing and provides jobs for skilled local people. It provides value to the community at large through revived highstreets, a thriving nighttime economy and by encouraging social cohesion. ACW have further announced a detailed Economic Impact Assessment for the sector, unfortunately it looks like this might be too late for Blackwood Miners', but we hope not.

Our funding environment with local authorities reducing cultural spending, the recent ACW cuts and Welsh Governments budgetary challenge is alarming. We hope to work with you and the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee to encourage Caerphilly County Council to reverse their decision.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Cofion gorau,
Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Louise Miles-Payne'.

Louise Miles-Payne,
Cyfarwyddwr, Creu Cymru / Director, Creu Cymru