

HK/MLW

17 September 2024

Committee Chair and Members
Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
CARDIFF
CF99 1SN

Dear Chair and Members of the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee,

Re your letter 12 August 2024 – Concerns around funding for magazines in Wales

Thank you for inviting further comments in relation to Emily Trehair's letter of 2 July 2024 and for the opportunity to respond. We believe that the evidence and information we presented to this committee thus far have addressed the key points raised in Emily Trehair's letter. We completely refute any allegations of making untrue, misleading or defamatory statements. There are two particular points however that warrant further clarification.

1. The purpose of the grant

The fact that some publishers have been receiving funding over many years may have created the impression that our funding is to support particular businesses or titles, but this is not the case. Our grants have the express purpose of ensuring the provision of particular outputs (books, magazines, online content) rather than the individual brands of publishers. It is the purpose of our grants, whether for books or for magazines, to ensure that readers have access to platforms and published content, not to guarantee the ongoing existence of any specific title, brand or company.

With regard to the new tender opportunity advertised in March 2024, a publisher who applied unsuccessfully for funding under the old tender would not have been able to recycle that application under the new tender, as it would not meet the criteria. However, unsuccessful applicants to the old tender were welcome to submit applications for new proposals that responded to and met the criteria for the new brief. It is of course up to editors and publishers to decide whether they are interested in providing those services and how to respond to new opportunities.

2. Funding status

The fact that publishers have been in receipt of funding in previous rounds, no matter for how long, does not create an entitlement to future funding once the contract has ended. So this is not a case of funding having been withdrawn, but rather that the application for new funding has been unsuccessful. And whilst it is understandable that unsuccessful applicants are deeply disappointed, it is entirely incorrect to portray as arbitrary and somehow unfair, the unanimous decisions taken by an independent subcommittee made up of experts in their field, with many years of service to Wales.

We completely refute Emily Trehair's allegation that she would be at a personal disadvantage in relation to future applications because of her involvement with the campaign to support magazines. We would never discriminate against any applicants on the basis of their involvement with particular causes and we fully agree that a decade of standstill funding followed by this year's budget cut has created an almost impossible environment for small independent publishers to exist, let alone thrive.

It is noteworthy perhaps that one of the programme publishers we support, Parthian Books, have taken on *New Welsh Review*, and it will continue to be published under Gwen Davies' editorship.

On a final note, we are able to update you that the tender process to award the remaining £80,000 a year for a brand-new literary magazine has been completed, which concludes the process for the 2024–28 round of the Cultural Periodicals Grant. We will be making the announcement regarding the new magazine on Thursday 19 September, and it will be launched in the new year.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide clarification on these additional points.

Yours sincerely,



HELGARD KRAUSE
Chief Executive