

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

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

The Rt Hon David Lammy MP
Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth
and Development Affairs

29 January 2025

Dear Secretary of State,

On behalf of the Senedd's Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee, I am writing to you regarding the key role the British Council plays for Wales and for the UK.

The work of the British Council has never been more important as we face global challenges and political changes in an ever more uncertain world. The British Council works on behalf of the UK and the four nations and is deeply appreciated by the Committee and those working on Wales's connections overseas.

The organisation champions our world-leading cultural and educational institutions, boosting the UK's international reputation. In these efforts, devolution is a huge asset to the UK and it is invaluable to have an organisation that can represent the diversity of interests and priorities of the four nations effectively.

The British Council's work is essential to the international ambitions of Wales and our sectors here. There has been strong support for Wales's International Strategy, where the British Council has worked in partnership with Welsh Government to raise the profile of Wales on the world stage. This has seen them support the delivery of projects and priorities for Wales in countries such as India, France and Japan. They have supported the internationalisation of key festivals such as Hay, Greenman, Focus Wales and Artes Mundi, contributing their expertise, funding and partnership opportunities.

Members of the Committee also worked with the British Council to welcome international arts delegations to Wales from Ukraine, Hong Kong and Iraq in the last year, enabling politicians, policy makers and practitioners in Wales to learn from global best practice.

In education, Welsh higher and further education organisations use the British Council's global network and expertise in 100 countries, offering a huge advantage and window on the world for

Senedd Cymru

Bae Caerdydd, Caerdydd, CF99 1SN
SeneddDiwylliant@senedd.cymru
senedd.cymru/SeneddDiwylliant
0300 200 6565

Welsh Parliament

Cardiff Bay, Cardiff, CF99 1SN
SeneddCulture@senedd.wales
senedd.wales/SeneddCulture
0300 200 6565

Wales. That brokering and connecting role that the British Council is able to play, and the insight they provide is invaluable for the Welsh tertiary sector.

The British Council's education programmes and policy events supports international research collaborations, transnational education partnerships, market development for Welsh universities and policy exchange around common interests from climate change, leadership and governance to semiconductor research.

The Study UK campaign, run by the British Council on behalf of the UK Government, works closely with Study in Wales to promote international student recruitment to Wales. A recent campaign achieved 11.4 million impressions, demonstrating what can be achieved in partnership. The British Council's work with schools, young people and languages too supports Wales's new curriculum and the international resources, partnership opportunities and policy work help create informed citizens of Wales and the world.

The Committee was therefore concerned to see reports about the financial challenges the organisation faces during the recent appearance of the British Council's Chief Executive in front of the Foreign Affairs Select Committee in Westminster, and in the press. Any decision which results in the British Council having to restrict or reduce its operations overseas and the ability it has to serve the priorities of the devolved Governments would not only negatively affect Wales's place in the world, but the soft power of the UK.

I would be grateful for your assurances, therefore, that the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office is doing everything in its power to ensure that strategy dictates the future of the British Council and to make sure the organisation is supported towards a financially sustainable future.

Yours sincerely,



Delyth Jewell MS
Committee Chair

cc: The Rt Hon Baroness Chapman of Darlington

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.