

The Rt Hon Ian Murray MP
Minister of State (Minister for Creative Industries, Media and Arts)
Department for Culture, Media and Sport

17 November 2025

Senedd involvement in the appointment of the Chair of S4C

Dear Mr Murray,

Thank you for your letter dated 24 September, which was a response to my letter of 29 May 2025, and which concerned the appointment process for the Chair of S4C.

As a Committee, we recognise that broadcasting is currently a matter reserved to the UK Government, as is set out in your letter. This point notwithstanding, it is our belief that the future of S4C holds a particular relevance – and, indeed, resonance – for the people of Wales.

Indeed, we note your recognition of the fact that S4C is central to life in Wales. Whilst we welcome your statement that the UK Government is committed to ensuring the interests of all nations are reflected in the development of broadcasting policy, we also recognise that the UK Government has (rightly in our view) accepted that the Welsh Government should have a role in this non-devolved area.

This Committee's contention is that our parliament should be afforded the same opportunity. Since the UK Government has allowed for the involvement of the Welsh Government, it should surely follow that the relevant Senedd committee should be afforded the opportunity to hold a pre-appointment hearing with the preferred candidate. We consider that this would be a modest adjustment, given the importance of S4C to devolved matters (not least the Welsh language) and would reflect the maturity with which we approach such matters, as devolution develops into its third decade.

We are not only making a point here about principle: there are also precedents which we believe should be followed in this instance. Indeed, we would draw a comparison with Ofcom and the BBC within the same reserved policy area.

With regards to Ofcom, a Memorandum of Understanding exists between the UK Government, the Welsh Government, Senedd Cymru and the Office of Communications. This document commits

Ofcom to consulting the Welsh Government and Senedd on its draft Plan of Work, sets out the process for Welsh Ministers to appoint a member to the Ofcom Board, and outlines that Ofcom will attend meetings of Senedd committees where required.

There is a similar approach in place for the BBC, whereby there is a Memorandum of Understanding between the UK Government, Welsh Government and BBC. It outlines that the UK Government will consult the Welsh Government throughout the BBC Charter Review, and that the BBC will appear before Senedd committees "on the same basis as it does in the UK Parliament".

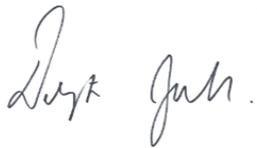
Whilst we do not consider these arrangements to be perfect, they do demonstrate that, even within the current constitutional backdrop where broadcasting remains a reserved matter, there are options available for improving the scrutiny of existing governance arrangements in public service broadcasting in Wales.

It remains the Committee's view that it is an anomaly that powers over the only public service broadcaster which operates solely in the Welsh language do not reside in the nation where that language is primarily spoken.

As such, we would greatly appreciate your reconsideration of this matter.

I am copying this letter to Geraint Evans, Chief Executive of S4C and to Jack Sargeant MS, the Welsh Government Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership.

Yours sincerely,



Delyth Jewell MS
Committee Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.