

Tim Davie CBE,
Director General, BBC
Rhuanedd Richards,
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By email only

13 February 2026

Public Service Broadcasting in Wales

Dear Tim, Rhuanedd and Garmon,

Thank you for your evidence on 22 January 2026.

The Committee would like to thank Tim Davie for his clear commitment to Wales during his tenure as Director General. As Professor Justin Lewis told us recently, "over the last ten years, and especially the more recent period, we've seen quite meaningful devolution to Central Square in Cardiff and BBC Wales." Although we feel that there is yet more work to be done, the BBC as it relates to Wales is in a markedly better place than it was a decade ago: the results are there to be found in spending figures, jobs, and on our screens. We have appreciated the positive engagement with the Senedd over this period and Mr Davie's personal appearances to give evidence to this Committee. We would expect that the next Director General continues in this positive manner.

There are a few further areas of questioning which we wanted to raise with you, which are set out below.

Content for audiences in Wales

In its 2024 report, [State of Play](#), the Committee recommended:

The BBC's spend on English-language television content in Wales should grow year-on-year until it approaches parity with the BBC's spend on English language

content in Scotland. The BBC should outline to this Committee how it will achieve this.

In 2024-25, the BBC's spend on English language TV content for audiences in Wales was £31 million (which was a slight decrease on spend in 2023-24 when it was £32 million).

In Scotland – which has a separate TV channel, BBC Scotland – spend on English language TV for Scottish audiences was £76 million in 2024-25, over double the equivalent spend in Wales.

In 2023, Rhuanedd Richards told the Committee:

"We have managed to increase our spend on English-language television last year, and this year I believe we'll see further growth. And that's really my aim: if I've got a target, it's year-on-year growth."

We discussed the comparative levels of spending on local content in Wales and Scotland. Mr Davie told us:

"There are differences in the broadcasting shape. There are differences in the population numbers. There are all kinds of differences."

We do not think that the fact that Scotland has a population 74 per cent larger than Wales justifies the BBC spending over 100 per cent more on content for local content in Scotland than Wales. Wales has the same breadth of devolved political institutions as Scotland, which require the same journalistic coverage, regardless of population size. Ms Richards told us (in 2023) that she hoped to see year-on-year growth on this spend in Wales: This hasn't happened. We reiterate the recommendation from our 2024 report:

Recommendation 1: The BBC's spend on English-language television content in Wales should grow year-on-year until it approaches parity with the BBC's spend on English language content in Scotland. The BBC should outline to this Committee how it will achieve this.

Network news

In our 2024 report, we recommended:

Network news providers, including the BBC and ITN, should keep driving improvements in their reporting of devolved policy issues.

We discussed the extent to which network news accurately reflects the devolved nature of the UK with Professor Stephen Cushion of Cardiff University's School of Journalism, Media and Culture. He told us:

"Over recent years, standards have slipped a little bit, and it's perhaps a time to reset and to rethink again, particularly as we approach an election campaign in

Wales and Scotland coming up, to reset and to actually think through again how network news are presenting politics across the UK."

He mentioned ongoing research into how broadcasters' social media posts reflect devolution, noting that "there is an awful lot—far more than we've ever found before—of headlines that simply make devolution invisible."

You described the work the BBC does to educate network news journalists about devolution, and said "I recognise the issue, and there's more to do."

Accurately reporting about the devolved UK is wired into the current BBC Charter. It says that the BBC should "help people understand and engage with the world around them" and "reflect, represent and serve the diverse communities of all of the United Kingdom's nations and regions."

Yet too often the BBC still broadcasts as though to audiences in England: that is, by explaining that a certain UK Government policy applies only in England, but not having the curiosity to explore what's happening in other UK nations. Reflecting the devolved nature of the UK isn't simply a case of adding "in England" to a news bulletin, but re-thinking how political news is presented to reflect the reality of how the UK is governed. This is an issue of accuracy, not just for audiences in Wales, but across the UK.

We reiterate our previous recommendation:

Recommendation 2: Network news providers, including the BBC and ITN, should keep driving improvements in their reporting of devolved policy issues.

As noted above, Professor Cushion's research has also highlighted how, on social media, headlines provided without context often "make devolution invisible."

Recommendation 3: The BBC should take note of Professor Cushion's research into how news social media content reflects devolution across the UK and drive improvements in this area.

Thank you for your comments on Ofcom's current consultation on prominence rules, and the BBC Charter Review Green Paper. We will consider these comments in our responses to the Ofcom and UK Government on these matters.

Yours sincerely,



Delyth Jewell MS

Chair

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

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.