

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

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

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Delyth Evans, Chair

Geraint Evans, Chief Executive

S4C

By email only

13 February 2026

Public Service Broadcasting in Wales

Dear Delyth and Geraint,

Thank you for your appearance before the Committee on 22 January 2026. As we mentioned during the meeting, we have some additional questions, which are set out below.

Performance

We discussed the trends in viewing figures that S4C (and indeed all public service broadcasters) are experiencing.

The Committee understands that this reflects wider changes to viewing habits, driven by developing technology and increased competition from global streaming platforms.

Nevertheless, we remain concerned that, whilst other PSBs do also lose viewers to these global players, in those instances, viewers are essentially moving from one English language service to another. When viewers leave S4C, on the other hand, they are also leaving behind Welsh language programming. This is therefore a unique risk to S4C's purpose.

We noted your response to these challenges in developing content on platforms beyond traditional television, commissioning digital content and working to make such content available on multiple platforms.

Furthermore, we discussed the need for legislation to keep pace with the changing broadcasting landscape and would be grateful if you could set out in more detail any legislative changes that would help S4C compete in the marketplace in the coming years.

Prominence

We discussed the implementation of the Media Act 2024 and the effects that it has on prominence of different channels.

As you explained to the committee, “visibility is viability”. You expressed your view that the implementation of the Media Act must ensure that S4C is adequately visible and accessible to audiences in Wales and across the UK as platforms develop rapidly.

In this context, you set out for the Committee the continuing importance of Clic, the opportunity that the Media Act could present for Clic to have increased visibility on smart television, and your concerns about Ofcom’s draft code of practice on Prominence and Accessibility on connected Television platforms .

We also discussed the recent agreement between you and the BBC about the prominence of S4C on iPlayer. We were reassured to hear that the agreement will give S4C more prominence on iPlayer itself, and that you will be curating your content on iPlayer.

We were struck from your evidence about the fact that you were not certain about Ofcom’s support when it comes to negotiations with television platforms. We were also surprised that Ofcom did not seem to be aware of your concerns with its draft prominence code of practice. These omissions suggested to us that the relationship between S4C and Ofcom was not as strong as we would expect. We will be raising all these concerns directly with Ofcom and suggesting that they hold meetings with you as a priority to see how these concerns can be addressed. Specifically, we will be recommending that:

- Ofcom should revise the draft code of practice on Prominence and Accessibility on connected television platforms so that UK PSBs receive equivalent prominence as they do at present under the Electronic Programme Guide Code.
- Ofcom should revise the draft code of practice on Prominence and Accessibility on connected television platforms so that S4C receives greater prominence within Wales than it does across the UK as a whole. S4C should of course also receive prominence across the UK, in recognition of its audiences outside of Wales.
- Ofcom should make it clear that it supports PSBs in their negotiations with television platforms. To this end, Ofcom should provide clearer guidance, so that there is less scope for disagreement between PSBs and platforms.

Culture

Although this was not the main focus of our session on this occasion, we discussed the progress that has been made under your leadership since the events that took place in 2023. We were pleased to

note that you feel that good progress has been made in developing, embedding and monitoring a new culture at S4C.

We were reassured to hear that you consider this to be an important ongoing task, and we urge you to continue to give it your highest priority. No doubt a future Senedd committee may wish to return to this in future scrutiny sessions.

We are keen to see evidence to support the anecdotal evidence you gave us that good progress has been made, so that we can have reassurance that past problems are unlikely to be repeated:

Recommendation 1: S4C should provide empirical evidence (such as headline results of staff surveys) that monitors the state of its workplace culture.

Charter review

The Committee has previously expressed its view that the UK Government should significantly increase S4C's funding and should consider funding S4C according to a formula, to give S4C greater certainty over future funding.

The UK Government's review of the licence fee funding model will "explicitly consider the funding arrangements of Welsh language broadcasting". The Committee will make sure that its views are expressed to the UK Government as part of this review.

In the context of the Charter review and the issues surrounding budgets, we considered your relationship with the BBC and the potential for joint working to drive efficiency. We would encourage both broadcasters to continue to explore where S4C and the BBC can reduce duplication and unnecessary costs. We would be grateful if you could send us further information relating to the financial relationship between the two broadcasters.

It is crucial that S4C has a strong voice in the Charter Renewal process. To this end, we would be grateful if you could explain how the UK Government has engaged with you in developing the Green Paper.

Recommendation 2: S4C should explain what engagement it has had with the UK Government, including meetings with the Secretary of State, whilst the Green Paper proposals were being developed.

We touched briefly on your relationship with Creative Wales and the potential that exists in terms of developing content. You explained that Creative Wales has funded a number of productions that wouldn't have happened without that funding. We would be grateful if you could provide us with some written information relating to that.

Thank you once again for your evidence.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Delyth Jewell'.

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.

