

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

Y Pwyllgor Cyllid | Finance Committee

Cyllideb Ddrafft Llywodraeth Cymru 2026-27 | Welsh Government Draft Budget 2026-27

Ymateb gan Teledwyr Annibynnol Cymru, | Evidence from Teledwyr Annibynnol Cymru,

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## **1. What, in your opinion, has been the impact of the Welsh Government's 2025-2026 Budget?**

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

The Committee will recall from our submission last year that Wales has around 50 TV production companies, creative SMEs making high-quality TV for the UK PSBs, streaming platforms and for S4C. Cardiff is the third largest TV production sector in the UK. The Welsh TV and film industry delivered a turnover of £460m to Wales during 2023. (<https://www.gov.wales/latest-figures-show-creative-boom-wales-boosting-economy>)

The current climate in TV production remains challenging, with an advertising downturn and inflation together creating pressures on commissioning both from the UK PSBs and global streamers. The effect is worse outside the M25 and particularly in Wales. Research shows that the share of spend on productions outside of London contracted slightly to 48% from 52% in 2023, however spend decreased in Wales from 13% to 5% (O&O/Pact Census 2025).

TV production companies work with a variety of other creative industry professionals and other services. Supporting the TV production sector is therefore very important for Wales' economic, cultural and social future. In this context the work of Creative Wales is very important. Creative Wales provides funding to develop productions and also supports a range of different skills programmes to develop screen industry skills, from screen technicians to writers, as well as increasing diversity.

We would like to see an increase in funding for Creative Wales/Ffilm Cymru Wales to add to the potential of our sector, for developing new ideas and productions which will help indigenous Welsh production companies to grow their businesses, as well as attracting inward investment from the UK and internationally.

We welcomed that, in the 25-26 Final Budget, an additional £4.381m was being provided through the Economy, Energy and Planning Main Expenditure Group, 'for the arts, culture, heritage, publishing, creative and sports sectors to reflect the challenging position the

sector has faced recently' (<https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2025-02/final-budget-2025-2026-note.pdf>). Conditions are still difficult and therefore it is important this funding is maintained and increased.

We note the statement made in May, by the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership, that Welsh Government has put aside plans for a new Broadcasting and Communications Advisory Body (<https://www.gov.wales/written-statement-update-broadcasting-and-media>).

Instead, Creative Wales now has a responsibility to conduct further sectoral research and grow its engagement with related stakeholders. Creative Wales will need additional resource to deliver its already-important functions in its commitment to protect and strengthen the creative sector.

Lastly we would like to see funding provided for a dedicated Minister for creative industries, media and communications, who would be able to lead on such matters as growing Wales' reputation as a filmmaking centre and location. The Welsh Government needs to ensure everything possible is being done to promote and showcase Wales' creative sectors. The Minister could also have a potentially greater role in holding UK broadcasters and regulators to greater account on their performance and public purposes in Wales.

## **2. How financially prepared is your organisation for the 2026-27 financial year, how confident are you that you can deliver planned objectives, and how robust is your ability to plan for future years?**

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

## **3. What action should the Welsh Government take to:**

- **help households cope with cost of living issues;**
- **address the needs of people living in urban, post-industrial and rural communities, including building affordable housing and in supporting economies within those communities?**

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

## **4. Have Welsh Government business support policies been effective, given the economic outlook for 2026-27?**

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

Those running TV and film studio facilities are stating that business rates need to be reformed.

The rates are set at a high rate, and in addition, given the stop-and-start nature of film-making, it is hard to keep these facilities operating constantly and therefore they need to be treated differently from businesses which are operating constantly.

**5. Are Welsh Government plans to build a greener economy clear and sufficiently ambitious? Do you think there is enough investment being targeted at tackling the climate change and nature emergency? Are there any potential skill gaps that need to be addressed to achieve these plans?**

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

The environment is a devolved matter and Wales leads the way in some areas, for example being named second in the world for recycling, ahead of the rest of the UK. TAC already works with S4C and Bafta albert to make sure TV productions work towards greater sustainability and some production companies are introducing innovative ways of making productions low-carbon or carbon-neutral.

We would like to see greater support and leadership for the creative industries in this regard from Welsh Government . The Budget must maintain the current prioritisation of 'green skills', which relate to applying environmentally aware practices in a wide range of occupations and ensure the creative industries are prominent.

This can be implemented by greater emphasis on sustainability in Creative Wales' development and skills funding, by including within the budget funding for Creative Wales to have a new Sustainability Facilitator role to work with the industry in Wales.

**6. Is the Welsh Government using the financial mechanisms available to it around borrowing and taxation effectively?**

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

The Committee would like to focus on a number of other specific areas in the scrutiny of the Budget. Do you have any specific comments on any of the areas identified below?

**7. Is enough being done to tackle the rising costs of living and support those people living in relative income poverty?**

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

TV/film freelancers' work is becoming increasingly precarious, with no guarantee of regular income and also significant outgoings associated with keeping skills up to date, plus other

costs of being self-employed. Maintaining the freelancer skills base is essential if we are to navigate through current difficult times to advantage of future increased demand and opportunities.

The UK Government's Creative Industries Sector Plan includes a commitment to have a Freelancer Champion to make sure the needs of creative freelancers are recognised in policy and we would like consideration given to whether that is also a function which could be funded to operate within Welsh Government.

We also support a basic income for freelancers. The Republic of Ireland Basic Income for the Arts scheme has aided creative workers to stay in those occupations and support themselves, thus remaining available to the industries they work in. We want to see a commitment to introduce a similar scheme in Wales, to ensure our freelance base is maintained and available to meet growth in production as stability returns.

## **8. How could the budget further address gender inequality in areas such as healthcare, skills and employment?**

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

## **9. Is the Welsh Government's approach to preventative spending represented in resource allocations (Preventative spending = spending which focuses on preventing problems and eases future demand on services by intervening early).**

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

## **10. How should the Welsh Government explain its funding decisions, including how its spending contributes to addressing policy issues?**

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

## **11. How can the documentation provided by the Welsh Government alongside its Draft Budget be improved?**

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

The Welsh Government should always include an economic impact assessment to show the overall effects on the economy of the reduced/increased spend.

This is important to provide a clear picture on the effects of increasing/decreasing funding on the economic sectors concerned.

**12. How should the Welsh Government prioritise its resources to tackle NHS waiting lists for planned and non-urgent NHS treatments. Do you think the Welsh Government has a robust plan to address this issue?**

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

**13. Is the Welsh Government providing adequate support to the public sector to enable it to be innovative and forward looking through things like workforce planning?**

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

**14. Has there been adequate investment from the Welsh Government in basic public sector infrastructure?**

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

**15. How should the Budget support young people?**

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

TV provision for children and young people is important, so they can have their own nation and culture reflected and presented to them.

This again feeds into how much support there is for children's TV production in Wales.

Creative Wales has sought to provide development funding to young people's content in the past and this needs to continue. Also the outcome of the TV Licence Fee review will be important in terms of investment in Wales' creative industries, which both create content for young people and provide them with potential careers.

**16. How is evidence and data driving Welsh Government priority-setting and budget allocations, and is this approach clear?**

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

**17. Is the support provided by the Welsh Government for third sector organisations, which face increased demand for services as a consequence of the cost of living crisis and additional costs following increases to National Insurance Contributions, sufficient?**

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

**18. What are the key opportunities for the Welsh Government to invest in supporting an economy and public services that better deliver against the well-being goals in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015?**

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

