



Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales

Cofnod y Trafodion The Record of Proceedings

[Y Pwyllgor Diwylliant, y Gymraeg a Chyfathrebu](#)

[The Culture, Welsh Language and
Communications Committee](#)

12/10/2017

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Cofnodir y trafodion yn yr iaith y llefarwyd hwy ynnddi yn y pwyllgor. Yn ogystal, cynhwysir trawsgrifiad o'r cyfieithu ar y pryd. Lle y mae cyfranwyr wedi darparu cywiriadau i'w tystiolaeth, nodir y rheini yn y trawsgrifiad.

The proceedings are reported in the language in which they were spoken in the committee. In addition, a transcription of the simultaneous interpretation is included. Where contributors have supplied corrections to their evidence, these are noted in the transcript.

Aelodau'r pwyllgor yn bresennol **Committee members in attendance**

Hannah Blythyn Bywgraffiad Biography	Llafur Labour
Dawn Bowden Bywgraffiad Biography	Llafur Labour
Suzy Davies Bywgraffiad Biography	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Neil Hamilton Bywgraffiad Biography	UKIP Cymru UKIP Wales
Bethan Jenkins Bywgraffiad Biography	Plaid Cymru (Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor) The Party of Wales (Committee Chair)
Dai Lloyd Bywgraffiad Biography	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales
Jeremy Miles Bywgraffiad Biography	Llafur Labour
Lee Waters Bywgraffiad Biography	Llafur Labour

Eraill yn bresennol **Others in attendance**

Christopher Catling	Ysgrifennydd, Comisiwn Brenhinol Henebion Cymru Secretary, Royal Commission on the Ancient and
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Historical Monuments of Wales

Tom Cosson	Uwch Gynghorydd Diwylliant a Thlodi, Cadw Senior Culture and Poverty Adviser, Cadw
Gwilym Hughes	Cyfarwyddwr Cynorthwyol, Amgylchedd Hanesyddol, Cadw Assistant Director, Historic Environment, Cadw
Paul Kindred	Uwch Ddadansoddydd Polisi, Llywodraeth Cymru Senior Policy Analyst, Welsh Government
Hywel Owen	Arweinydd Tîm Polisi'r Cyfryngau, Llywodraeth Cymru Media Policy Team Leader, Welsh Government
Peter Owen	Pennaeth y Gangen Polisi Celfyddydau, Llywodraeth Cymru Head of Arts Policy Branch, Welsh Government
Ken Skates AC/AM	Aelod Cynulliad, Llafur (Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi a'r Seilwaith) Assembly Member, Labour (The Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure)
Jason Thomas	Cyfarwyddwr Diwylliant, Chwaraeon a Thwristiaeth, Cadw Director Culture, Sport and Tourism, Cadw
Dr Eurwyn Wiliam	Cadeirydd Comisiwn Brenhinol Henebion Cymru Chair, Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales

Swyddogion Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru yn bresennol
National Assembly for Wales officials in attendance

Robin Wilkinson	Y Gwasanaeth Ymchwil Research Service
Steve George	Clerc Clerk

Lowri Harries Dirprwy Glerc
 Deputy Clerk

Manon Huws Cynghorydd Cyfreithiol
 Legal Adviser

*Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 09:31.
The meeting began at 09:31.*

Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau, Dirprwyon a Datgan Buddiannau Introductions, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

[1] **Bethan Jenkins:** Diolch a **Bethan Jenkins:** Thank you and chroeso i Bwyllgor Diwylliant, y welcome to the Culture, Welsh Gymraeg a Chyfathrebu. Eitem 1: Language and Communications cyflwyniad, ymddiheuriadau, Committee. Item 1: introductions, dirprwyon a datgan buddiannau. A apologies, substitutions and oes unrhyw beth gan unrhyw Aelod declarations of interest. Any Cynulliad i'w ddatgan ynglŷn â'r declarations from Members today sesiynau yma? Na. Ymddiheuriadau a please regarding these sessions? No. dirprwyon: cafwyd ymddiheuriadau Apologies and substitutions: we've gan Dawn Bowden ar gyfer sesiwn y had apologies from Dawn Bowden for bore, ond bydd hi'n dod i gyfarfod y the morning session, but she will be prynhawn, a bydd Lee Waters yn here in the afternoon session, and hwyr. Ni chafwyd unrhyw Lee Waters will be late today. We ymddiheuriadau eraill, ac nid ydym haven't had any other apologies, and yn disgwyl dirprwyon ar gyfer y we're not expecting any substitutes cyfarfod heddiw. for the meeting today.

09:32

Amgylchedd Hanesyddol: Sesiwn Dystiolaeth 1: Cadw Historic Environment: Evidence Session 1: Cadw

[2] **Bethan Jenkins:** Symud ymlaen **Bethan Jenkins:** Moving on to item 2: at eitem 2: yr amgylchedd the historic environment and hanesyddol a sesiwn dystiolaeth 1. Y evidence session 1. The witnesses tystion heddiw yw Jason Thomas, today are Jason Thomas, director of cyfarwyddwr diwylliant, chwaraeon a culture, sport and tourism; Gwilym

thwristiaeth; Gwilym Hughes, Hughes, assistant director, historic cyfarwyddwr cynorthwyol, environment; and Tom Cosson, amgylchedd hanesyddol; a Tom senior culture and poverty adviser on Cosson, sy'n uwch-gynghorydd behalf of Cadw, which is part of the diwylliant a thlodi ar ran Cadw, sydd Welsh Government, of course. We'll yn rhan o Lywodraeth Cymru, wrth be asking you many questions on gwrs. Byddwn yn gofyn nifer o different themes today and I'll start gwestiynau ar themâu gwahanol a off, if that's okay with you. The first byddaf i'n cychwyn y cwestiynau, os question I have is: when will Cadw be yw hynny yn iawn gyda chi. Y reviewing the impact of the Act that cwestiwn cyntaf sydd gen i yw: pryd is in force at the moment? We mae Cadw yn golygu adolygu effaith understand that not everything has y Ddeddf sydd mewn grym ar hyn o been put into force yet, and that bryd? Rydym ni'n deall nad yw subordinate legislation, for example, popeth wedi cael ei roi mewn grym will be required for that, but what eto, a bydd angen deddfwriaeth has been passed—the historic eilaidd, er enghraifft, ond o ran yr records, and so on—what's happened hyn sydd wedi cael ei basio—er with those? How are they going to be enghraifft, y recordiau hanesyddol, reviewed further down the line? ac yn y blaen—beth sydd wedi digwydd gyda'r rheini? Sut maen nhw wedyn yn mynd i gael eu hadolygu lawr y lein?

[3] **Mr Thomas:** Diolch, Chair, and thank you for inviting us here today to talk about Cadw and the historic environment. I think it's worth saying to start, really, that the legislation that received Royal Assent in March last year was groundbreaking. It was really pretty pleasing to see the evidence, particularly from the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, which said they see this as some of the most progressive legislation in the world, which was very nice of them to say and we wholeheartedly agree with that in our sector. I will pass over to Gwilym to give you some detailed responses.

[4] **Dai Lloyd:** The questions will get harder. [*Laughter.*]

[5] **Mr Thomas:** I'm sure they will. I'll pass over to Gwilym shortly. I'll just say, it's been around 18 months, and given the transformative nature of that legislation, obviously we're reviewing things constantly. That's just natural when you look at the impacts of the policies that you do, and, many of the things that we've done already, we've been able to see how they've impacted

on the sector. But I think we need to be taking a long-term view on this, and I think, really, it's going to be, I would say, about five years probably until we can really robustly look at the impact of this on the sector as a whole. If I may, Gwilym will be able to give some detail on that.

[6] **Mr Hughes:** Yes, sure. It's really heartening, actually, to see some of the evidence that's been provided—that people have agreed that it really is groundbreaking. And I know that colleagues outside of Wales have been very envious, actually, looking at the things that we've been able to introduce. You mentioned, Chair, the historic environment records. That's a classic example of where, in England and Scotland, they're actually quite envious that we've been able to introduce statutory records, which they've been aspiring to do for many, many years but have not been able to achieve. So, we are leading the way on this.

[7] We're already starting to evaluate the impact. We're already starting to collect information, the statistics, about, for example, the numbers of consultations and interim protections that are being put in place relating to the process of designation. Some of those measures only commenced in May of this year, so, clearly, it's far, far too soon. But, as Jason said, I think it would probably be about five years before we can really make an authoritative assessment of how effective the legislation and the impact have been.

[8] Can I just mention that some of the measures are about deterrents, so I'm rather hoping that there won't be very many cases where we have to report on damage, for example, temporary stop notices, enforcement? Some of them are deterrents to stop things from happening, strengthening the legislation in terms of protection. Others are about actually putting in better measures for more transparency, more accountability and more management.

[9] **Bethan Jenkins:** Ond a fyddwch chi'n adolygu popeth o fewn pum mlynedd, neu beth fydd y broses? A ydych chi'n dod ag adroddiad mas? A fyddwch chi'n gadael i'r Cynulliad drafod yr hyn sydd wedi cael ei ddatblygu yn rhan o'r ddeddf? Sut bydd hynny'n cael ei sgrwtineiddio?

Bethan Jenkins: But will you be reviewing everything within five years, or what will the process be? Will you be publishing a report? Will you be letting the Assembly discuss what has been developed as part of the Act? How is that going to be scrutinised?

[10] **Mr Hughes:** Well, one of the measures that was suggested, and, in fact, is actually in the explanatory note, is that we might use the proposed advisory panel, which is, of course, one of the privileges—

[11] **Bethan Jenkins:** But that's not in place yet, so—.

[12] **Mr Hughes:** It's not in place yet, no, but, obviously, in due course, when the advisory panel's in place, one of their roles might be to report back on the efficacy of the Bill and make suggestions for any tweaks or measures that might actually need to be introduced in the future.

[13] **Mr Thomas:** I'd also say as well, Chair, it's the general performance management, really, within the civil service. Obviously, this Bill and the implementation of the Bill forms a large part of the work of Cadw, so, the large team within Cadw, it's the expectation there that they do everything that they can to roll this out and work with the sector to make sure it's effective. So, there's constant performance management across the piece.

[14] **Mr Hughes:** And another thing I'd like to add to that, actually, which is quite related, is that we've been fortunate in that the core team that was responsible for supporting the Cabinet Secretary, and then the Deputy Minister, of course, in taking the Bill through is still in Cadw, and so the people who are actually responsible for supporting the development of the measures are still there, helping to monitor its impact.

[15] **Suzy Davies:** Just a quick question there: on performance management, obviously you're talking about members of Cadw here, but does that extend across into local authorities? I know you can't directly performance manage them, but to see whether they're actually using some of these powers they've got.

[16] **Mr Hughes:** Yes, absolutely. We've got fora for that conversation to take place, both the Historic Environment Group, which is a group for organisations within the sector to compare notes and collaborate, and also an organisation called the Built Heritage Forum, which meets regularly, both at the national level and at regional level, and—

[17] **Suzy Davies:** There may be some questions about that later, so I will leave that. I just wanted to know quite what the stream was. Thank you. Sorry to cut across.

[18] **Bethan Jenkins:** Na, mae'n iawn. Y cwestiwn arall sydd gen i yw bod Cymdeithas Tir a Busnes Cefn Gwlad wedi dweud, gyda'r hysbysiadau cadwraeth, pe bai'r rheini'n cael eu gweithredu y buasai'n drychinebus—maen nhw'n ei ddweud. Maen nhw'n defnyddio'r geiriau cryf hynny oherwydd y ffaiith y byddai'n ormod o risg i unrhyw brynwyr sy'n bwriadu achub adeilad sydd mewn perygl—ei gaffael, yn hynny o beth. Rydw i ar ddeall nad yw hynny wedi cael ei weithredu eto, ond beth ydych chi'n ei ddweud wrth y CLA sydd â'r consŷrn hynny reit ar ddechrau'r broses yma?

Bethan Jenkins: No problem. Another question I have is that the Country Land and Business Association have said that if the preservation notices proposed were implemented, it would be a disastrous change, according to them. They've used those strong words because they feel it'd be too much of a risk for any rescuing purchaser to acquire a building at risk—to procure it, as it were. I understand that that hasn't been implemented yet, but what would you say to the CLA, who have that particular concern right at the beginning of this process?

[19] **Mr Thomas:** We've addressed those concerns, really, so we've done a very robust piece of work. We've been looking at the whole issue of the implementation of preservation notices. That report was submitted to officials. In recent months, it's been submitted to our Cabinet Secretary and we are hopeful that we can publish that very shortly. Perhaps Gwilym can touch on some themes that went into the report?

[20] **Mr Hughes:** Yes, definitely. It's interesting, this question about preservation notices. It was quite a late non-Government amendment, and it did, of course, receive support from across the Senedd, and understandably so because, obviously, there are some problematic buildings that are deteriorating and Assembly Members wanted something to take action against negligent owners. That's totally understandable and we sympathise with that objective, but we do also recognise the CLA's observation there. We don't want there to be unintended consequences, and, obviously, the unintended consequence of people being reluctant to take on ownership of a listed building because they might be threatened by fines, putting it bluntly. So, we have to be very careful about how we shape any proposals. Of course, that will be subject to full public consultation, and because it is secondary legislation, as you rightly point out, it will be fully debated. So, there's plenty of opportunity for making sure that we do something that actually works.

[21] **Bethan Jenkins:** Y cwestiwn **Bethan Jenkins:** The final question I

olaf sydd gen i yw yr hyn rwy'n credu have relates to something that I y gwnes i ei godi ar y pryd, pan oedd raised at the time, when this Act was y Ddeddf hon yn mynd drwyddo, sef going through. A specialist in bod arbenigwr cynllunio yn dweud planning made the point that it may efallai y byddai wedi bod yn well i have been better to draw up a wneud Deddf cyfuno—*consolidation*. consolidation Bill. And the Land and A hefyd, mae Cymdeithas Tir a Country Land and Business Busnes Cefn Gwlad eto'n dweud bod Association also say that the current angen symleiddio'r Ddeddf bresennol Act needs to be simplified so that er mwyn i bobl allu ei deall. Beth people can understand it. What would yw'ch barn chi ar y ddau beth hynny? be your view on those points?

[22] **Mr Thomas:** Well, our Cabinet Secretary, in formulating the Bill that received Royal Assent last year, was very clear that he was hoping to see some consolidation in this space. And there is work going on on that, so maybe Gwilym can update us perhaps on that.

[23] **Mr Hughes:** I know that was a concern of Assembly Members, and I think, some members of committee, about that and the simplification of the law. There is a programme of looking at Welsh law and consolidation that the Welsh Government are undertaking at the moment, and, indeed, the Counsel General mentioned only earlier this year to the Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee the possibility of the historic environment legislation being, effectively, a pilot study for that, a pilot project for that. At the moment, there is a whole host of reasons, not least of which, of course, because this legislation is relatively new. It's only quite recently been passed, and we've been looking at it. And you're quite right about the CLA and the observation you've just made there about the complexity of the law. The 1979 Act, the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act, has now been amended by three different national administrations, and it is quite difficult to weave your way through it. And, so, there are some opportunities there to make it easier.

[24] Of course, it's all in English—mostly in English—apart from the amended bits. So, to have a consolidated Welsh law—. The Counsel General has recognised that and, indeed, the Cabinet Secretary has recognised that, and are suggesting, at an appropriate time—. There are some links between historic environment legislation and planning legislation as well. At the moment—some Members may be aware—there's a Law Commission exercise looking at the way in which planning law works in Wales, and, of course, those connections have to be carefully meshed before we take any steps in

this area. So, we're awaiting that.

[25] **Bethan Jenkins:** Sori, nid hwnnw oedd y cwestiwn olaf gen i. Y cwestiwn olaf yw hwn, sef y sefyllfa gydag enwau lleoedd. Yn amlwg, roedd trafodaeth ar y pryd, ac fe wnaeth rhai ohonom ni drïo rhoi diwygiadau i mewn ar y pryd. Ond ym mha amgylchiadau y byddech chi'n ystyried cryfhau'r cam diogelu yma? Mae'r rhestr yn dda ynddo'i hun, ond efallai y byddai rhai yn dadlau nad yw'n mynd yn ddigon pell. Sut mae e'n gweithio nawr, a sut fyddech chi'n gobeithio efallai ei gryfhau e?

Bethan Jenkins: Sorry, that wasn't the final question. This is my final question—the situation regarding historic place names in Wales. Of course, there was a discussion at the time on this and some of us tried to put amendments in at the time. But in what circumstances would you consider strengthening this particular protection? The list is a good thing in itself, but maybe some people would say that it doesn't go far enough. How does it work now, and how would you perhaps hope to strengthen it?

[26] **Mr Thomas:** I guess, similar to answers to previous questions really, I think we implemented the list—Gwilym will correct me if I'm wrong—in May of this year. It's still early days, but it's in force now, so we are reviewing how that's working. But I think it's going to be a process of constant review. If things aren't working, then we're going to look at them and see whether or not we can improve them. Maybe Gwilym can respond to that.

[27] **Mr Hughes:** Can I just start by saying this is a first for Wales? This, actually, is another area where we're taking a lead. I'm not aware of any other—. I might be ready to be corrected on this, but I'm not aware of any statutory list that exists anywhere else, and certainly not in the UK. But, anyway—. I think maybe Dai Lloyd is going to correct me on that. [*Laughter.*] But, anyway, it was, as Jason says, only launched in May, and there are a number of steps that have already been taken to raise the profile. Part of the objective is to raise the profile of the importance of historic place names in Wales, and we all know how important they are. The royal commission have been asked to actually prepare the list on the Welsh Minister's behalf, and they've done a great job. They've actually put a full-time officer in place to actually manage the process, and he will be collecting evidence from stakeholders about how the list is actually being used. We're also working with local authority place-naming officers and street-naming officers. They receive applications for changes to postal addresses, and I think that the Welsh Language Commissioner used evidence from the example of

Ceredigion, where they've been pioneers in this area, about how effective it is in raising awareness. Of course, the list of historic place names will really add to the ammunition or armaments that they will have to raise the profile. So, we'll need to see how that actually works and is effective.

09:45

[28] **Bethan Jenkins:** Dai, do you want to come in? Sorry, I have to move on.

[29] **Dai Lloyd:** Dim ond yn fyr: mae yna restr o enwau lleoedd hanesyddol yn eu gwahanol ffurf, ond yn ymarferol, os yw rhywun yn penderfynu ailenwi tŷ, neu os yw mapiau yn cael eu hailenwi efo enw Saesneg yn lle'r enw traddodiadol Cymraeg ar fynydd neu lyn neu rywbeth, mae'r ffaith bod gyda ni restr—nid yw'n stopio hynny o gwbl, ydy e?

Dai Lloyd: Just very briefly: there is a list of historic place names in their different forms, but practically speaking, if someone decides to rename their house, or if maps are changed to have English names, instead of the traditional Welsh name on a lake or a mountain or something, the fact that we have a list doesn't change that at all, does it?

[30] **Mr Hughes:** The list is about raising awareness, and I think we do need to clarify and, of course, provide a practical mechanism for recording and properly assessing the different historical names. After all, names have changed through time. They continue to change and that is part of history and archaeology—they do continue to change. So, we've got to put that historical time depth and perspective on the matter.

[31] There are obviously difficulties, but one area where we can potentially make a difference is through the work of local authorities on the place-naming exercise. There are other areas where there are obviously going to be problems of enforcement and of taking practical measures to actually control the way in which place names are being used, if that's what people want to do, of course. But I think what we have to focus on is making these particular measures work and seeing how effective they are. We are planning a new guidance document, which we'll be consulting upon in the new year. There's already guidance that is attached to the use of the historic environment records, where you can access the list of historic place names, but we're going to be following that up with even stronger guidance that we're working on with members of the sector. In fact, I'll just finish by saying that I understand there was a conference last week on historic place names, and,

again, there were quite a lot of congratulations actually for the progressive measures that have already been introduced.

[32] **Mr Thomas:** Just one small thing that I'd add to that is: you mentioned the work that we'll do next year, but, in November as well, we're going to be working with the Welsh Language Commissioner to look at further opportunities to raise the profile of the list as well. So, there's stuff that we've done and there are things that we're going to be doing, but just to, I guess, assure the committee, we are constantly going to be reviewing this to see how effective it is.

[33] **Bethan Jenkins:** I just want to say, before we carry on, that we've got quite a lot of questions, so if we can try and bear that in mind when we're responding, that would be great. Jeremy.

[34] **Jeremy Miles:** Thank you, Chair. Can I ask you some questions in relation to the protection of buildings and monuments that are already listed, rather than ones that are at direct risk, which we'll come on to shortly? Just to pick up the point that Suzy Davies was touching on in relation to the role of local authorities in terms of enforcement, we've had evidence from the CLA, in which they describe the 'paradox of enforcement', where local authorities focus on enforcing technical breaches rather than substantial, I guess, egregious breaches because it's better for hitting the numbers, essentially. Do you accept that is an issue, and—? Perhaps you can answer that first: do you accept that's an issue?

[35] **Mr Thomas:** We did see that evidence, and I think that we would challenge some of that because we haven't seen the evidence that would support that assertion. Gwilym knows this area, obviously, far better than me, but we would like to see more evidence to see if it supports it.

[36] **Mr Hughes:** I think it's a little unfair to local authorities—in Wales, anyway. Of course, they represent the whole of the UK—that organisation. I know examples where local authorities have taken on some really, really big challenges and have confronted buildings—. A classic example is Denbigh hospital, where they took a significant financial risk by going through with a particular course of action there. It is really, really challenging. I think the answer to this really is for local authorities to share expertise and experience, and we're encouraging them to do so.

[37] **Jeremy Miles:** And when they look to Cadw for guidance on this, what

are they told?

[38] **Mr Hughes:** Again, we're trying to provide a national framework for that. Actually, I'm very grateful to the CLA for recognising that the guidance we prepared on tackling buildings that are at risk was excellent, and I think they said that it was a leading example in the UK. So, yes, guidance and support and mentoring—that's our role at a strategic framework level.

[39] **Jeremy Miles:** But in terms of the bias towards the nature of breaches that they enforce, do you give guidance on that substantively, or not really?

[40] **Mr Hughes:** Managing change to listed buildings generally, that's right. Again, we have fora. I think I mentioned to Suzy Davies earlier that we have fora for having those conversations with local authorities and they have fora themselves where they talk to each other to compare best practice and experience.

[41] **Jeremy Miles:** Okay. Can we go to the evidence of the royal commission, which we've mentioned a few times? They say that

[42] 'Wales does not have any such programme of systematic assessment, survey and evaluation',

[43] and indicate that

[44] 'the lack of resources is a considerable restraint'.

[45] What's your view of that?

[46] **Mr Thomas:** I'll start, if I may.

[47] **Mr Hughes:** And I'll go on.

[48] **Mr Thomas:** The evidence from the royal commission was incredibly supportive, I think, of the work that we all do in Cadw, but on this one issue we actually think that Wales has just really led the way on this. We're actually ahead of the curve. So, there were examples cited of where there is a systematic approach in England and Scotland. You know, we did this in Wales over 10 years ago. We did the systematic survey of the entire—

[49] **Jeremy Miles:** So, you'd refute the fact that there's no—

[50] **Mr Thomas:** In one sense, because time does change and there's obviously going to be a need to review that, but we introduced a system of spot-listing. So, we believe that we do have a very thorough—. And we were pioneers in this field, so we would challenge that.

[51] **Mr Hughes:** Where I would agree with them is that there is a recognition—we recognise—that more recent buildings of, say, the later twentieth century—there is a gap there, and we have got plans to rectify that gap. What we have done—and this is why I want to kind of put the counter argument here—as Jason said, is that we did a systematic survey, community by community, of all the building stock across Wales against the criteria for listing and we completed that in 2005, over 10 years ago. Since then, yes, it's been a process of tidying that up and looking at spot-listing requests. As a consequence of that, we have 30,000 listed buildings in Wales. In Scotland, which has twice the population, there are 47,000 listed buildings, where there probably should be nearer 60,000—

[52] **Jeremy Miles:** Okay, right.

[53] **Mr Hughes:** Scheduled monuments are the same. I'm ignoring a lot of detail in this, but—.

[54] **Jeremy Miles:** The other point they raise is in relation to—. They say that there is an absence of strategy and guidance in relation to maritime archaeology and that infrastructure development, effectively, is a major issue here. What's your assessment of that?

[55] **Mr Thomas:** Was that on maritime, did you say?

[56] **Mr Hughes:** Maritime.

[57] **Jeremy Miles:** Maritime archaeology.

[58] **Mr Hughes:** We're actually actively doing something about that. We're in the process of writing guidance, and, in fact, the draft is being prepared as I speak, and we are intending to consult upon that early in the new year. And, of course, the provisions of the Act in terms of what we can schedule have extended the level of protection that we could make to offshore sites as well as onshore sites.

[59] **Jeremy Miles:** Okay. So, there'll be developments in the new year that address that, then.

[60] **Mr Hughes:** There'll be a consultation on managing change to marine historic assets in the new year.

[61] **Jeremy Miles:** Okay. On a similar theme, I guess, we've had evidence from the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists that agricultural activity is a significant source of damage to archaeological remains. What's your analysis of that?

[62] **Mr Thomas:** I think, in their evidence, they mentioned the England scenario, and it's a slightly different position in Wales, isn't it?

[63] **Mr Hughes:** They're again a UK-wide organisation, of course, and the difficulties faced especially from ploughing and agrarian activity is more pronounced in England than it is in Wales. That's not to be complacent here, of course, because we still have damage through agricultural activities in Wales. What we're doing about it is that we have a programme of inspection visits by our field monument wardens in Cadw, talking to farmers about managing the sites on their land. Another bit of guidance we're going to be consulting upon in 2018 is on managing the impact on scheduled monuments of agricultural activity and other activities. More importantly, actually—

[64] **Jeremy Miles:** Can I just get a sense—are you effectively saying that that isn't a particular issue in Wales?

[65] **Mr Hughes:** It isn't—. I'm saying it's an issue, but it's not as acute as it is in England, and we're doing other things to actually address that. The most effective way, actually, has been through countryside stewardship schemes, agri-environment schemes—for example Glastir—and cross-compliance and single farm payments. We actually protect sites, scheduled monuments, on land, and their farm payments are dependent upon not damaging sites. That's actually more effective than the stick approach.

[66] **Jeremy Miles:** Yes, I'm sure. Okay, thank you.

[67] **Bethan Jenkins:** Thanks. Suzy Davies.

[68] **Suzy Davies:** Thank you. I'm just going to move into the area of

buildings and monuments at risk, then, rather than those that are listed. The royal commission has identified farmsteads and post-medieval places of worship as categories of building—. The analysis of the at-risk databases across Wales has identified those two types of buildings as at risk. So, I'd like you tell me how you, as Cadw, are prioritising attention to that. But, at the same time, can you tell me—maybe it's through the fora—how local authorities themselves prioritise focus on their own data lists?

[69] **Mr Thomas:** I think similar things to—did you want to touch on this one, again? We have a duty, obviously, to support the sector to protect all assets within the sector. You mentioned a specific example there—was it about places of worship?

[70] **Suzy Davies:** Farmhouses and chapels, basically, I think. But obviously these at-risk registers will contain all kinds of buildings. Even though I want to know what Cadw's going to do about guiding on those two items I've mentioned, I want to know what local authorities themselves do about prioritising.

[71] **Mr Hughes:** I'm happy to respond to that. It's long been recognised that there are certain categories of listed buildings that are more vulnerable and more threatened, and the royal commission was quite right to highlight those two examples. The problem we have is where buildings are—. Their original use is no longer—. They're no longer being used for their original use. That's the problem. And so we've got to find adaptive reuses in order for those buildings to be economically sustainable into the future. So, yes, those are particular problems.

[72] With listed places of worship, Cadw has put together an action plan, which we've consulted upon across the sector. One of the outcomes of that action plan, one of the first activities, was to establish a Welsh historic places of worship forum.

[73] **Suzy Davies:** Another forum.

[74] **Mr Hughes:** Another forum. And that's the important thing: it's sharing experience and it's actually identifying and prioritising action, because we can't—. We don't have the resources to deal with everything, so we've got to target and prioritise. And who's better at prioritising than the experts who know those sites and know those buildings on the ground?

[75] **Suzy Davies:** Sorry, just to cut across you there, are you saying that Cadw, shall we say, advises—strongly advises—local authorities to focus, say, on those two examples, or are they saying, ‘Guys, it’s over to you. You decide what’s important locally’?

[76] **Mr Hughes:** It’s not just on those examples, because there are other categories. They’ve picked out those two, but former industrial buildings are also suffering as well, and there are many other types and categories. We have put together—. What we have done, as Cadw, is we have commissioned a condition survey of all listed buildings across Wales. We’ve come to the end of the first five-year cycle of that and identified those buildings that are most at risk. Local authorities have access to those lists and they can then start developing their own prioritised programmes of action. Some are more effective than others, inevitably, because of the resources that they have locally.

[77] **Suzy Davies:** I was going to ask: do they do that?

[78] **Mr Hughes:** Good examples are Swansea, Ynys Môn—I can pick out—

[79] **Suzy Davies:** You might have to help me on that Swansea one—maybe outside.

[80] **Mr Thomas:** I’d like to just add as well, I guess, through ourselves, we’ve got three—correct me if I’m wrong—regional conservation officers who work with the local authorities. So, there’s guidance, but we also support training and, in many ways, that also provides an opportunity to remind local authorities of the statutory powers that they have to do things in this space. Of course, we do recognise that a lot of this comes down to funding, when you get down to it. How do they actually fund making reparations and conservation to that? They are difficult decisions, obviously, that they have to take. We are obviously, as Cadw, extremely keen and supportive that they do that, but they have to balance their priorities and we understand that.

[81] **Suzy Davies:** Okay. So I’m getting the sense it needs a strong individual who’s proactive, otherwise these lists are just lists. I don’t mean to demean them in any way, but they could just sit there and nobody’s looking at them.

[82] **Mr Hughes:** Unless you’ve got lists, unless you are able to identify the problem buildings, you can’t start to take action against them. That’s what

we're trying to do. We're trying to provide local authorities with the information that they need in order to develop strategies. Some of them are going to be more successful than others in actually tackling that. They all have their own priorities, don't they?

[83] **Suzy Davies:** That's fine. That's what I wanted to—. They've got different priorities. Can I just ask you finally, then—again, it's our friends the Country, Land and Business Association who have raised concerns that these powers may not be being used and powers of intervention aren't being exercised against recalcitrant owners, shall we say? If they're refusing to use these powers, what can you do?

[84] **Mr Thomas:** I think it comes back to the very first question, doesn't it, about the new legislation that now underpins all of this. There are better procedures in place, more powers in place, so that they can actually do that, and we need to review whether the local authorities are actually doing that. One thing, if I could just really quickly touch on—

10:00

[85] **Suzy Davies:** Yes, by all means.

[86] **Mr Thomas:** —following the last question, is the power of communities in all of this. These buildings are precious to everybody, and communities can—. There's a role there, I think, to do everything that they can do to support those buildings, to actually gather momentum around doing it, because sometimes it's always, 'What's the Government going to do to do this? Where's the money?', but actually there's power in communities to help save these buildings. I'm not saying it's over to them; there's a role for all of us in this, but I just wanted to make that point.

[87] **Mr Hughes:** And we also recognise that the legislation was only part of the answer and solution. It was never going to be the whole solution, and that's why, right at the very beginning of the process, we recognised we needed to look again at the planning rules, we needed to look again at providing better support, management and guidance. So, already we've produced 10 guidance documents that have gone through full public consultation and I've now mentioned, I think, another three or four already, in this session, that we're intending to work on in the first part of next year. That whole suite, together, is kind of the glue that will be used, then, and can be drawn upon by our colleagues in local authorities to take action when

it's necessary.

[88] **Suzy Davies:** Can I just have one final one? I'm afraid you'll have to give me an anecdotal answer on this, I suspect, but have you got any sense of whether local authorities, who themselves own buildings at risk, focus more on those buildings and sorting them out and getting them up to scratch, or do they focus more on privately owned buildings, where they can actually use intervention powers? Do they worry more about themselves or other people?

[89] **Mr Thomas:** I'll give our own—. If I can use an anecdote, it'll be an anecdote from Cadw, I guess. It comes down to a question, I think, of accountability. So, if you look at Cadw's or my roles, we are directly accountable for 129 monuments.

[90] **Suzy Davies:** I was thinking more about local authority-owned—

[91] **Mr Thomas:** But it's the same point, because, if something were to go wrong at those monuments that we are directly accountable for, that comes back on us; they are our properties. We have a duty to the wider sector, but it's a non-statutory duty. Local authorities themselves will have their own buildings that they manage that they're directly accountable for. There'll be things in their own area that they'll want to help and support, but that line of accountability doesn't necessarily lie with those. So, that's a challenge.

[92] **Suzy Davies:** Okay, thank you.

[93] **Bethan Jenkins:** Lee Waters.

[94] **Lee Waters:** Just a brief follow-up: Mr Thomas just said that you need to review how local authorities are using the powers, so I'm just wondering what plans you have to do that.

[95] **Mr Thomas:** We did touch on that earlier, but do you want to come back on that point about how we're going to constantly look at how we're implementing the legislation?

[96] **Mr Hughes:** Yes. At the beginning of the session we talked about the evaluation and the impact of the measures that we introduced through the legislation, and it is a bit of a long game here because we're assessing that it would take at least five years before we have the full assessment of that. But,

at the same time, there's a whole series of other measures, of course, that we're introducing; I've just explained those. We have those opportunities to have those conversations with local authorities on a regular basis to assess how they're—. And the feedback—it's more than just quantitative, about, you know, how many buildings have been saved. It's also qualitative, to assess how effective those powers are being and are local authorities are actually using them. So, again, I point to another one of our documents, 'Managing Historic Buildings at Risk', which actually just, again, flags up and highlights the powers that are available to local authorities, notwithstanding the preservation notices we've talked about; they already have a suite of measures.

[97] **Lee Waters:** But the powers are a rather blunt instrument, given the capacity restrictions, aren't they?

[98] **Mr Hughes:** Exactly.

[99] **Lee Waters:** So, what creative thinking is taking place to help support local authorities?

[100] **Mr Hughes:** The creative thinking there is actually to support them in working together in collaboration. So, there are some good examples of that. The conservation officers from north Wales, they have a forum, and they've already come together to look at how they can actually produce a memorandum of understanding to share that expertise. At the moment, they're quite small authorities. They often have singleton conservation officers who may not have had experience of taking forward proceed to repair notices followed by a compulsory purchase.

[101] **Lee Waters:** It's not just an issue of experience, though. It's an issue of capacity, isn't it?

[102] **Mr Hughes:** And finance as well—

[103] **Lee Waters:** Yes.

[104] **Mr Hughes:** —and so it's about pooling and collaborating and sharing. So, we've also put in place and supported a task and finish group to look at the pan-Wales picture on this as well, and that task and finish group have just produced a report, which is now currently with the Cabinet Secretary for consideration, looking at the way in which the local authorities can take

forward that agenda more positively, and also looking at what Cadw can do, not just through the framework, the management guidance that we're preparing and that we've been consulting upon, but also how we can actually support them through mentoring and training, so we'll be taking advantage of their fora to help them with that.

[105] **Lee Waters:** Okay, thank you.

[106] **Bethan Jenkins:** Neil Hamilton.

[107] **Neil Hamilton:** The Cabinet Secretary announced the establishment of a strategic partnership last May. He came before this committee in July and told us that he'd receive a report in September on what progress had been made. Do you know if he's received that report, and, if so, what it contains and what it tells us about the state of collaboration in your sector?

[108] **Mr Thomas:** Thank you. He has received that report. He received a letter from the joint chairs of the steering group. Gareth Howells, who's the chief officer for Prospect, is a joint chair of the steering group, as is Christopher Catling, from the royal commission. So, they wrote to the Cabinet Secretary in September. If I could touch on some themes in there, really, I think there's been good progress. I've sat in every single one of those meetings with my Cadw hat on, and what I've seen—and this is touched on in the letter—over the five meetings, I think, that we've had now, is actually the value that you get when you get the senior leadership from each of those organisations around the table talking about real issues that affect the way we do things, that will affect the people visiting our sites and the people who work for us.

[109] We have made some real progress. We've put four different work streams in place. The first one that we've prioritised is looking at skills and how we can work jointly to help boost the skills within the sector. We've been looking at some things that I can't touch on here that are really commercial in nature, but I think could potentially be transformative in the way that we are working closely together. I can say that there's been real progress, and, in the five or six months that we've been looking at this, I think there are real tangible things that are going to be coming out of it, and there have been things that we've done already that have been successful.

[110] **Neil Hamilton:** So, everybody's working together very happily.

[111] **Mr Thomas:** Happily—. You know, yes, I think. I do. To be honest, we're talking about really challenging things in these meetings. You know, you're looking at—. We've touched on the work streams that we've agreed on and—Gwilym correct me, but we've got skills, commercial income generation, back-office functions, customer skills excellence. These are things that really go to the heart of each of these different organisations, and we've all got different objectives, as well, haven't we? So, we're trying to work out where the common ground is there, and sometimes there's give and take. So, 'happy' would probably be overselling it, but I think 'constructive' is the word.

[112] **Mr Hughes:** Can I just come in and just say that, yes, it's fine for us to say, 'Yes, everybody's working happily together,' but, actually, the evidence speaks for itself, doesn't it? I think that a lot of the evidence papers that you've received have been talking about the consultation that we do with the sector to make sure that they're with us and actually in order to form good change, good measures—good changes that are actually effective and that actually bite.

[113] **Neil Hamilton:** Well, we'll, I'm sure, come back to some of those issues, like commercialisation and so on, later on in the course of this session. I'd just like to take this one step further, because the royal commission told the committee that collaboration needs to go beyond the four bodies that are in the strategic partnership, and there are a lot of people who've got a stake in tourism in Wales that are not primarily concerned about the historic environment, but nevertheless they are tangential to it and an important element within the whole mix. So, what plans does Cadw have to expand your working connections with other bodies?

[114] **Mr Thomas:** I think it's important to state that it's not really—. Cadw's not driving it; this is a partnership between all the four organisations there. So, we've recognised, as a partnership, that there is a significant opportunity, over the long term, to broaden who's part of that partnership. What we've agreed so far is: we want to see material, constructive progress on these four work streams that we've put in place that lead to tangible benefits for the citizens of Wales and the people who work for us. When those are really working effectively, then we think we'll have something that we can really sell to those other bodies to come and join us. We've talked about different institutions—big institutions in Wales—that we think would add value. So, it's very much on the table. One thing that I've stressed, when I'm speaking in the partnership is that this isn't an initiative. It's not like a task and finish

thing. This is—you know, it's for life, not just a for Christmas-type approach, really. So, this is a long-term thing that we want to bring real value to the sector. So, it's very much on the table; I just don't think the time's quite right now.

[115] **Neil Hamilton:** Okay, fine. Well, several of the witnesses that we've had evidence from have noted the absence of an agreed historic environment strategy in Wales. Do you agree with that, and, if so, what plans do you have to do something about it?

[116] **Mr Thomas:** On strategy—. I was very fortunate, I would say, to have been in city hall, I think three weeks ago, when our First Minister delivered a speech to officials about the way we're going to do business as a Government going forward. It was great to be there because it was a real step change. He doesn't want strategy factories; he doesn't want everybody going around and constantly talking about, 'Well, what are we going to be doing?' He wants people out there delivering for the people of Wales. We have the strategy for the country, 'Prosperity for All', and I think in this sector we can do so much to deliver on the four themes in there and the five priorities. This does come to me a lot, not just in my Cadw hat, but in the other bits of my portfolio, and sometimes I feel it's deflection; people say, 'Well, let's talk about another strategy' and then you spend 18 months not doing stuff. This is like we want to do stuff, so that's—. So, I'm trying to—. It's kind of saying, 'I'm saying "no" to that, but I think it's for good reason.'

[117] **Mr Hughes:** Can I come in on that, Chair? I think that that's absolutely—. I agree with everything that you said there, Jason, and I'd add to that—and it kind of reflects back on your original question about extending the partnership. There is a historic environment group that already exists. I was there supporting them only on Monday of this week, and it's their opportunity, as a forum for sectoral groups, to respond to that strategy and to explain how they, as individual organisations, can actually contribute to that national strategy with a clear set of actions. I think that's where the meat of it is: what will they do? What can they do towards meeting those national strategies, and indeed the well-being goals?

[118] **Neil Hamilton:** I agree with you. I think there is a danger of getting into a situation where we're setting up a strategy for strategists rather than getting on with doing the day job, as it were. So, that is practical common sense in my view. Thanks.

[119] **Bethan Jenkins:** Okay. Hannah.

[120] **Hannah Blythyn:** Thanks, Chair. There have been calls for Cadw and other heritage bodies in Wales to have a much sharper commercial focus, and in your evidence to committee you said that 2016–17 was Cadw’s most successful year on record in terms of visitors to staff sites and income generated. What would you credit with achieving this in that year?

[121] **Mr Thomas:** Thank you for that question, it’s a very nice question. [*Laughter.*] I guess where I’d start is we—. So, Cadw, I think, is in a process of evolution from an organisation that for many years—quite rightly, that was what it was tasked with—was focused solely on conservation, protection, inspection and helping the wider sector. I think commercial performance and recognising the greatness of the attractions, for want of a better word, that we have in our estate was less of a priority; I think I could say that. What we’ve recognised over a few years now is, actually, we can’t have business as usual like that. Because of austerity, because of the funding that’s available to Cadw for the delivery of services, we have to do so much more to contribute to the income that we generate.

[122] So, I’ve got some figures, just to give you a brief example of the sort of numbers on what we’ve achieved and I’ll answer your question directly then. So, if you go back almost 10 years, the cost of running all our services was around £20 million, and that’s everything from the historic environment to running the sites; the income that we generated was under £4 million. So, it’s a £16 million gap to run Cadw. It was £16 million the year after that; it was £20 million the year after that. The figures were broadly similar for a number of years, and then, if you go back two or three years ago when we changed the focus, we said, ‘Well, actually, we can’t sustain this anymore’, we had to take a 13.5 per cent revenue cut to our budget to help the budget match up for the portfolio. So, business as usual wasn’t there. So, we completely—on the back of a really thorough commercial review of Cadw, we implemented sweeping reforms to the way in which we manage the business there. Commercial and visitor performance was at the heart and is now at the heart of everything that we do, and we’ve really come significantly forward on that. So, if you look at where we were last year, still the operating costs are around that sort of £19 million to £20 million mark, but our income is almost twice what it was 10 years ago. This year, we are significantly ahead of our budget after six months. So, we’re reducing, if I could call it, the burden to central Welsh Government to fund us. We’ve done that, really, by acting on the back of this review. We’ve focused on our top 10 sites.

10:15

[123] One thing that, I guess, has wound me up over the last couple of years is people saying about Wales, 'You know what? You haven't got a Stonehenge, you haven't got an Edinburgh castle' and that really drives me crazy. We have. We've got better than that—we've got Caernarfon castle, Conwy castle, Castell Coch. We've really underutilised them for years. So, we're actually focusing on that. I'm very passionate about this, as you can probably tell. But if you look at the way we price our monuments—Conwy, our most expensive monument: £8.95 to get in. When we put it up to £8.95, colleagues were like, 'That's ridiculous. No-one's going to come anymore. It's too high. You've put the price up too much.' You look at our competitors—Edinburgh castle is around £17; Dover: £19. The product is no different. They do things more commercially there at the most, but we're half of that. So, we've made massive inroads over the last couple of years, but we can go so much further. We've invested in digital. You can buy membership online from Cadw now, which most businesses were doing 20 years ago, but we've only been doing it for the last 12 months—

[124] **Bethan Jenkins:** Okay. We have to move on, sorry. I was just conscious of time.

[125] **Mr Thomas:** That's okay. I could go on for hours.

[126] **Bethan Jenkins:** I can feel your passion. It's fine.

[127] **Hannah Blythyn:** A very quick question on a related thing—you've covered a lot of what I was going to ask, but I'm just curious in terms of you're talking about the top 10 sites and looking in terms of staffed sites, and I don't know if you've got any way of measuring the value of volunteers to Cadw, and particularly when you look at those sites that, perhaps, aren't pay-to-visit and are understaffed, but are still very popular. How do you measure the value of them?

[128] **Mr Thomas:** This is a major priority for us going forward as well. I'll go back 12 months. So, it was only one of Cadw's sites where we had volunteers regularly working to help improve the visitor experience, and they do an amazing job—that goes without saying. That was at Plas Mawr up in Conwy. We have 50 volunteers who put in significant time every year to work at that monument. You look at other organisations like the National Trust, where

volunteering is a fundamental part of their business—it really adds to the mix, and speaking honestly, we’re nowhere near that.

[129] So, as part of this drive to make our visitor experience much better, we want to really make the experience more engaging, and you do that on a range of things, and volunteers is one of those. So, we’ve focused on it. We’ve got two members of the team who focus solely on promoting volunteering opportunities. They’re making significant progress this year. So, it’s something that’s core business for us now and we’re going to be constantly reviewing that. We totally support it.

[130] **Mr Hughes:** Can I just add to that? It’s not just the pay-for sites. You mentioned about the non-paying sites, and actually beyond Cadw’s own monuments, there’s a lot of work being done on trying to encourage volunteers. We just launched an event at Basingwerk Abbey, for example, quite recently—this last week, I think it was, or the week before—where a whole series of volunteers have been involved with actually promoting and supporting the work that’s been done on Basingwerk and the Greenfield Valley. But there’s also, beyond that, the work of the organisations that we support, including the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Wales and the Welsh Archaeological Trusts. We encourage them all to be actively engaged in volunteers and we’ve got other projects that are coming on-stream to help work, especially with young people, on voluntary work, assessing the impact of those volunteers and understanding the value they bring. It forms very much part of the requirement that we give them, those organisations we support, but they need to demonstrate not just the quantitative—how many volunteers have been involved and how many volunteer days they’ve actually been engaged in—but what is the added value that they bring, both to the heritage and also to themselves.

[131] **Bethan Jenkins:** Dai Lloyd.

[132] **Dai Lloyd:** Jest i droi yn fyr—yn nhermau amser, rwy’n sylweddoli’r amserlen y bore yma, Gadeirydd—at adroddiad y Farwnes Andrews ar ddiwylliant a thlodi ar waith, a sut mae diwylliant yn gallu gwneud rhywbeth am yr holl agenda tlodi ac, wrth gwrs, creu gwaith Fusion. Roeddwn i ond eisiau diweddariad ar **Dai Lloyd:** Just turning very briefly—I realise that time is against us this morning, Chair—to Baroness Andrews’s report on culture and poverty, and how culture can contribute to the poverty agenda and, of course, creating the Fusion work. I just wanted an update on what’s going on with Fusion and how

fel mae pethau yn mynd ymlaen efo that agenda is progressing.
Fusion a sut mae'r agenda yna'n dod
at ei gilydd.

[133] **Mr Thomas:** Thank you. It's progressing well. We have a number of projects in place this year. We ran a pilot programme for two years that was really effective. I'll pass over to Tom, who's the expert and has all the detail on this, but it's formed part of core business for Welsh Government—it's a real all-Government, all-public sector, all-stakeholder approach. So, we're seeing big gains with it, and I'll pass over to Tom who can perhaps give some more detail.

[134] **Mr Cosson:** Sure, thank you. So, Cyfuno-Fusion is an example—Wales is actually the only UK nation, and, as far as I know, anywhere in the world, with a national programme that's using culture and arts in this way, and heritage, to look at addressing poverty. So, it's a programme that works across Cadw, it also works with the museums, archives and libraries sector, and the arts in all their forms. So, it's quite a broad coalition of partners, as Jason says. I think it's hugely encouraging that so many bodies are engaging with it, first of all. So, it's a partnership between the national museum, Cadw, the royal commission, the national library, et cetera, et cetera. Very much in line with what Jason was saying about the healthy attitude to collaboration, that's definitely coming through very strongly.

[135] In terms of the Andrews report, the primary message that came through that report was that local cultural and community bodies needed to actually work much more closely together in order to reach the kind of people who we want to reach through Fusion, who are essentially people from disadvantaged communities and those termed hardest to reach, I think. So, we've seen a lot of progress in terms of the Andrews report. There were 33 recommendations in that report, and 11 of those have now been completed and another 19 of those are ongoing and seeing progress.

[136] As Jason mentions, we had a pilot phase in 2015–17, where we tried to establish a new way of working. The question was how to promote this kind of collaborative working at a local level, and also a national level. There was a lot of quite healthy attitude to experimentation, I think, which has been really encouraging. We've been evaluating what we do as we go along through that phase. Just as headline figures from that pilot phase, we worked with over 150 partners, and over 5,000 people participated in activities through the Fusion work. That includes more than 300 people volunteering,

1,500 young people supported to do better at school and over 100 people gaining a qualification.

[137] What that gave us was a real feeling for what kind of cultural work and what kind of interventions are most helpful, and we've been able to take that on this year with a new two-year programme. At the core of that programme is continuing this partnership approach, so we've funded eight partnerships in Wales. They're collaborations between local authorities, local arts, heritage, museums, archives and libraries, and also those community bodies that are essential, so, for example, the Flying Start programme for the younger parents and children, the Communities for Work programme, housing associations and so on.

[138] **Dai Lloyd:** Fine.

[139] **Bethan Jenkins:** Can I just ask quickly, if any of those projects are in current Communities First areas, what happens then with the transition funds and with many of the schemes coming to an end? Will there be new projects put in place, or will they come to an end with the Communities First funding?

[140] **Mr Cosson:** So, in the pilot phase it was very much targeted not just at Communities First areas, but also a lot of the funding was through the Communities First lead delivery bodies, so, mostly, local authorities. Now, obviously, with the changes to the Communities First programme, we needed to look quite hard at how we delivered Fusion, as well as a lot of other programmes we've had to look at in the same way. So, the approach now is not based on the Communities First programme, it's now standing slightly aside from that, because, obviously, it's not a sustainable model for Fusion to carry on. So, we're bringing in new partners such as the housing associations, for example, Communities for Work, which is ESF-funded—

[141] **Bethan Jenkins:** But those are still Communities First areas, though.

[142] **Mr Cosson:** They are, and the actual projects that are happening this year are almost exclusively in the old Communities First areas. Obviously, the programme is still ongoing for this year. So, the targeting hasn't changed. It's still being targeted very much at those communities that most need some support and help.

[143] **Bethan Jenkins:** Okay.

[144] **Suzy Davies:** Thank you very much. Part of the area I represent is Swansea, and, obviously, we've seen arts and culture help regenerate the High Street area around the station of Swansea, but that particular bit of Swansea has still got three buildings at significant risk and a really important old pub was demolished in the course of that. We've had a statement from the royal commission that says:

[145] 'Questions need to be asked about whether Wales is as active in regeneration as other parts of the UK, and if not why not?'

[146] I wonder if you can just explain whether there are any tensions between the slightly easier things to do, which are about arts helping to regenerate, and heritage being used to regenerate. You can refer to an example, if you want.

[147] **Mr Thomas:** I'd say that the arts stuff isn't easy to do. I think there's no tension. I would call it synergy. Part of what Fusion does is bring all these partners together. So, on the Fusion programme, you've got Cadw there, you've got arts and culture. We work closely together. You know, could we do more? Of course we could, but I think we do work closely—

[148] **Suzy Davies:** Can I help clarify my question, then? We've seen that the work of the arts has been very successful there, but we've still got those three buildings at risk. Does attention get diverted from the really difficult stuff on this?

[149] **Mr Thomas:** I would say—. I know that area well. When I was a transport planner, we invested in the High Street station around there, and we hoped that that would be a trailblazer and unlock all of this development around there. Still, seven years on, there is still a lot more that could be done, I think. There is more that could be done. That's all I could say.

[150] **Suzy Davies:** Okay, I'll accept that as an answer then, otherwise Bethan will be cross.

[151] **Bethan Jenkins:** Lee Waters.

[152] **Lee Waters:** Thanks. Just to move on to collaboration with the private sector, you mentioned in your approach to Cadw that there is clearly a far greater appetite to take a commercial approach, which I applaud, but in terms of the management of the historic heritage sector, that mindset

doesn't seem to be quite as prevalent—the sympathy with the private sector outlook. We've had evidence that suggests there's a public sector mindset and that that is a frustration to private owners of historically important buildings—that you don't just quite get it. So, I wonder if you can just tell me about the sort of evolution of this approach.

[153] **Mr Thomas:** I think that many in the sector can learn from what we've done in Cadw. We're here to help work with them—we're already doing that on many fronts—but also other leading organisations in this field, like the National Trust, like other organisations across the UK and beyond, really. I think I'd agree with that assessment. I've been working in this sector for a number of years. I think, sometimes, there can be a kind of 'business as usual' mentality: 'Don't tell us about commercialising this. You don't know it—if we start charging for things on this, it isn't going to work; people won't come.' What we've found in Cadw is that, actually, if you have a visitor product that is superb, people are prepared to pay for it. If you structure it in the right way, you can do that to get more people through the door and you're not prioritising certain people, really.

[154] **Mr Hughes:** Can I come in on this as well? Actually, we do recognise that the vast majority of historic assets and listed buildings are owned by private owners, are in the private sector. The vast majority of those people do the right thing for their buildings and their structures, and that is fully appreciated. The representatives of some of those organisations are involved in our fora and the ongoing discussions. So, I can pick out the Historic Houses Association and the Country Land and Business Association, for example, who are very active and have been providing us with enormous and good support and advice.

[155] **Lee Waters:** And they've called for more cross-sector co-operation in the promotion and management of historic assets. Do you have plans to do that?

[156] **Mr Thomas:** We touched on this with Historic Wales earlier on. I do think there is this real opportunity going forward where, if we can get our act in order with what I would call the leading institutions in this space then we can use that to have ripple effects across the whole sector. We've got a duty in Cadw where owners of listed buildings want to do things with their buildings sometimes. We've got to take a whole-Government approach. It's not just about the heritage sector. If they're doing things that are better for the future well-being of people, then we need to find ways to help them do

that. So, again, there's more we can do, but I'd say that we're on to it.

10:30

[157] **Lee Waters:** And just finally then, on the future status of Cadw itself, you mentioned that there was a report going to the Cabinet Secretary. Can you just tell us a little bit about the timing of that, and what the decision-making framework is? What's going to be the key driver to the final outcome?

[158] **Mr Thomas:** The report from the steering group that was chaired by Justin Albert came to the Cabinet Secretary in February. The Cabinet Secretary committed to reviewing the option on Cadw going outside Government, and he wanted a report by the end of September. That report was provided to him by the end of September, and there is an item on Cabinet agenda to discuss that in the very near future. So, I would expect that the outcome of that will be published shortly, if everything goes to plan. So, what I think I would say is that, genuinely, one of the most, detailed, robust, quality pieces of work that I've seen in my 17 years in Government has gone into the business case for that, and then we'll see the outcome of that in the coming months.

[159] **Lee Waters:** How important was accountability and public transparency to the future arrangements as part of that thinking?

[160] **Mr Thomas:** I don't want to trail things that are in there, because I think it's only right that Cabinet looks at that report and takes a view on it first, and it will all come out in the decision from there. If I start picking out bits from within it, then I'll be pre-empting what Cabinet might say and do. They might not agree with the report, and then, we're in a different place.

[161] **Lee Waters:** Okay. Thank you.

[162] **Bethan Jenkins:** Océ. Diolch yn fawr iawn i chi am ddod mewn yma heddiw. Diolch yn fawr am roi eich tystiolaeth. Os oes unrhyw beth arall gyda ni i ofyn, rwy'n siŵr y byddwn ni'n cysylltu gyda chi, ond diolch yn fawr iawn am ddod mewn. Cawn ni seibiant o ddwy funud cyn y tystion nesaf.

Bethan Jenkins: Okay. Thank you very much for coming in today. And thank you for giving us your evidence. If there's anything else we have to ask you, I'm sure we'll be in touch, but thank you very much for coming in today. We're going to take a two-minute break now, please, before the next witnesses arrive.

Gohiriwyd y cyfarfod rhwng 10:32 a 10:37
The meeting was adjourned between 10:32 and 10:37.

Amgylchedd Hanesyddol: Sesiwn Dystiolaeth 2

Historic Environment: Evidence Session 2

[163] **Bethan Jenkins:** Diolch a chroeso. Eitem 3, sef yr amgylchedd hanesyddol a sesiwn dystiolaeth 2, a chroeso i Christopher Catling, sef ysgrifennydd, prif weithredwr, Comisiwn Brenhinol Henebion Cymru, ac i Dr Eurwyn Wiliam, cadeirydd Comisiwn Brenhinol Henebion Cymru. Os yw'n iawn gyda chi, byddwn ni'n gofyn cwestiynau ar themâu penodol, a gallwch chi ymateb yn hynny o beth. Mae'r cwestiynau cyntaf gen i. Rwyf i jest eisiau gwybod o'ch persbectif chi, gyda'r Ddeddf a oedd wedi cael ei phasio ar yr amgylchedd hanesyddol, beth sydd wedi newid ar hyn o bryd sydd yn eich plesio chi, neu a oes unrhyw farn gyda chi am yr hyn sydd angen cael ei wneud? Fel rydym ni wedi clywed gan Cadw yn barod, mae lot o gyngor wedi dod mas—lot o ddogfennau *guidance*. A ydych chi'n credu bod hynny'n ddefnyddiol? A sut, wedyn, mae'r Ddeddf wedi dechrau gweithredu yn eich barn chi?

Bethan Jenkins: Thank you and welcome. Item 3: historic environment, evidence session 2. And welcome Christopher Catling, the secretary, CEO, Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, and Dr Eurwyn Wiliam, chair of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales. If it's okay with you, we have a series of questions on specific themes, and you can respond as you see fit. The first questions are from me. I just wanted to ask, please, from your perspective, in relation to the Act that was passed on the historic environment, what has changed up to this point that maybe pleases you, or do you have any particular opinion around what needs still to be done? As we've heard from Cadw already, there's been a lot of guidance documentation issued. Do you think they have been useful? How do you think that Act has begun to be implemented?

[164] **Dr Wiliam:** Ie, y gwirionedd ydy, wrth gwrs, mai dechrau gweithredu mae'r Ddeddf. Mae hi mewn bodolaeth ers blwyddyn, neu beth bynnag. Nid yw'r holl waith tu ôl i'r Ddeddf eto wedi'i gwblhau, ond

Dr Wiliam: Yes, the truth is that the Act has just started to be implemented. It's been in existence for a year or so, I believe, so all of the work behind the Act hasn't yet been completed, but I think it's

rydw i'n meddwl ei bod hi'n unigryw yng ngwledydd Prydain, yn sicr, fel Deddf, ac mae hynny'n wych o beth, ond rydw i'n meddwl y bydd hi'n flwyddyn neu ddwy eto cyn i ni weld sut mae hi yn setlo i'w lle yn iawn.

unique in the British nations, as an Act, and that's excellent to see, but I think it will be another year or two before we see how it settles into its place.

[165] Mae yna bethau hanfodol ar ôl, rydw i'n meddwl, sydd angen eu gwneud, ac mae hi'n fwriad, wrth gwrs, gan Cadw a'r Llywodraeth i hynny ddigwydd. Un o'r pethau sylfaenol yn ein barn ni ydy nad oes yna ddim eto yng Nghymru strategaeth i'r sector. Mae yna yn Lloegr; mae yna yn yr Alban; ond cam angenrheidiol cyntaf at greu'r strategaeth yna fyddai'r bwrdd ymgynghori yma sydd yn y Ddeddf, ac mae hi'n fwriad—mae'r Ddeddf yn mynnu bod yna fwrdd ymgynghori'n cael ei sefydlu. Nid yw hwnnw eto ddim wedi cael ei sefydlu, wedyn, buasem ni'n awyddus iawn, wrth gwrs, i hwnnw fynd ymlaen a chael ei sefydlu, ac unwaith mae hwnnw mewn lle, mae hwnnw yn rhoi fforwm a sianel i'r Llywodraeth a Cadw i greu strategaeth i'r sector wedyn. Rwy'n meddwl bod hynny'n hanfodol.

There are vital things remaining that need to be done, and it's an intention for Cadw and the Welsh Government for that to happen. One of the fundamental things, in our opinion, is that there's not yet in Wales a strategy for the sector. There is in England; there is in Scotland; but a vital first step towards creating that strategy would be that consultative advisory board that is mentioned in the Act, and it is an intention—the Act does demand that there would be an advisory board established. That hasn't yet been done. So, we would be very eager for that to be established, and once that is in place, then that gives a forum and a channel to the Welsh Government and Cadw to create a strategy for the sector as a whole. I think that's crucial.

[166] **Bethan Jenkins:** Fel rydych chi wedi clywed gan Cadw y bore yma, efallai, maen nhw'n dweud bod grŵp sydd yn bodoli yn barod, grŵp hanesyddol, sydd yn trafod y pethau yma. Cyn i'r grŵp gorchwyl ddod i mewn, oni fyddai hynny yn lle i drafod strategaeth?

Bethan Jenkins: As you may have heard from Cadw this morning, they say that there is a group in existence already, a historic environment group, which discusses these issues. So, before the new group is put into place, wouldn't that be a place to discuss this?

[167] **Dr Wiliam:** Rwy'n meddwl

Dr Wiliam: I think our view would be

mai'n barn ni fyddai, cyn i'r grŵp strategol/ arolygu/llywio newydd yma gael ei sefydlu, rwy'n meddwl y byddai'n—. Mae'r grŵp rydych chi'n cyfeirio ato—yr *historic environment group*—yn grŵp sy'n cynnwys prif weithredwyr a phenaethiaid yr holl sefydliadau. Hynny yw, mae'n cynrychioli'r sefydliadau—nid yw'n unigolion. Mae pawb sy'n dod iddo fo, er rwy'n siŵr eu bod nhw'n ceisio gwneud y gorau dros y sector ac nid eu sefydliadau eu hunain, yn anorfod, mae yna elfen o bledio achos sefydliad ynddo fo.

[168] Mae'n gyfrwng cydweithio, nid oes cwestiwn am hynny. Ond, beth sy'n angenrheidiol, rwy'n meddwl, ydy'r grŵp hollol annibynnol eu barn yma a fyddai'n cynghori'r Llywodraeth a'r sector ar y peth. Ond, rwy'n meddwl eich bod chi'n hollol iawn yn hynny o beth, tra ein bod ni'n aros i'r grŵp yna gael ei gychwyn a'i sefydlu, yn bersonol, fe fuaswn i'n meddwl ei fod yn hollol gywir i'r grŵp yma ddechrau meddwl am y math o bethau sydd yn angenrheidiol i'w gwneud.

[169] **Bethan Jenkins:** Jest i ddilyn ymlaen, beth ydych chi'n credu sydd heb gael ei weithredu eto yn y Ddeddf sydd angen cael ei weithredu ar frys? Hefyd, beth yw'ch barn chi ynglŷn â'r hysbysiadau cadwraeth? Rydym wedi clywed tystiolaeth, os ydyn nhw'n cael eu rhoi mewn i rym, y byddan nhw'n drychinebus ar gyfer y sector o ran y risg i bobl sydd yn

that, before the new strategic/steering group is established, I think it would be—. The group that you are referring to—the historic environment group—is a group that includes the chief executives and heads of all of the institutions. So, it represents the organisations—it's not individuals. Everyone who comes to that group, even though I'm sure that they try to do their best for the sector and not their own organisations, inevitably, there's an element of making the case for their own organisation.

It's a means of collaboration, there's no question about that. But, what's vital, I think, is that we have that entirely independent group that would advise the Government and the sector on these issues. But, I think you're entirely right in that regard, whilst we're waiting for that group to be established or initiated, personally, I would think that it would be entirely right for this group to start thinking about the kinds of things that are vital to be done.

Bethan Jenkins: Just following on from that, what do you think has not been implemented yet in the Act, which needs to be looked at urgently? Also, what is your opinion on the preservation notices? We've heard evidence that, if they're put in place, they would be disastrous for the sector in relation to the risk for any rescuing purchaser to acquire a

berchen ar adeiladau, neu ar yr hyn building, because of the risk posed
 sydd yn bodoli y maen nhw'n by that. What would your opinion be
 berchen arno. Beth yw'ch barn chi yn on that?
 hynny o beth?

[170] **Dr Wiliam:** Rwy'n meddwl y **Dr Wiliam:** I'll ask Christopher to
 gwnaf i ofyn i Christopher siarad ar answer that.
 hynny.

[171] **Mr Catling:** Thank you. I gave evidence to this committee when we
 were considering the Bill before it was passed. I made very strongly the point
 there that the best solution for buildings at risk is a voluntary agreement and
 working with owners. I think compulsion really does create problems and it's
 very costly on the local authority that decides to take that course of action.
 So, I'm still very much in favour of talking to owners.

[172] **Bethan Jenkins:** Okay. Lee Waters.

[173] **Lee Waters:** Thank you. You describe in your evidence a sort of ad hoc
 approach to designation. You talk about a lack of a programme of systematic
 assessment, survey and evaluation. You said this is the sort of thing you'd
 like to do but you don't have the resources to do it. Can you just tell us a
 little bit more about the impact of the failure to take that approach and the
 kind of resources that you would need in order to be able to fulfil that
 obligation?

[174] **Mr Catling:** England and Scotland both have in place a system of
 thematic survey that looks at building types and monument types across the
 nation and makes recommendations for those that should be listed, which
 then go to the relevant Minister or Secretary of State. It's a long time since
 we've had that in Wales and I think we have been criticised for lacking a
 sense of, for example, when nineteenth and twentieth-century buildings
 come up for development, what is special and significant about them. What
 are the best?

[175] A case in point is the BBC studios, which we are busy recording now
 because they're going to be demolished. Now, it might have been that,
 because they're purpose built, because they're very interesting
 architecturally, elements of those buildings might have been preserved
 rather than demolished if we had done a survey of twentieth-century
 buildings. I think there are some building types in Wales that cry out for a

survey of that kind. I think we don't know enough about public buildings, for example—you know, town halls, libraries, and buildings of that type. We don't know which ones are the best, which we would want to concentrate on preserving or conserving.

[176] **Lee Waters:** That's a very interesting example, the BBC building, isn't it?

[177] **Mr Catling:** Yes, it is.

[178] **Lee Waters:** Because a whole set of economic activities were predicated on that building being knocked down. Clearly, it is of architectural value and I think only now it's being threatened people are waking up to the fact that this is an important building.

[179] **Mr Catling:** Fortunately, we've been alerted in time. We're doing a very thorough survey and we're training BBC staff to do their own recording work so that we're not just recording the physical building, but we're actually recording it in use—people doing the things that they did in the building. So, we're going to preserve by record, and I think there's a proposal to preserve one of the studios, perhaps at St Fagans.

10:45

[180] **Lee Waters:** Right, but you'd have preferred to have seen the whole thing kept up.

[181] **Mr Catling:** No, not necessarily. I'm making a case for knowing what the resource consists of so that we can make sensible decisions about what to preserve. At the moment, I don't think we have that knowledge base to make those decisions. That applies to, I don't know, nineteenth and twentieth century places of worship that are under threat as well.

[182] **Lee Waters:** What's stopping that being developed?

[183] **Mr Catling:** Sorry, I missed that.

[184] **Lee Waters:** What's stopping that approach being adopted?

[185] **Mr Catling:** It's resources. It's as simple as that. We have a considerably lower budget now than we had 15 years ago. We've got 30 staff,

not 45. It's simply a question of not having the people to do the work.

[186] **Lee Waters:** You described it as the lack of a willingness to take a thematic approach. Is that a resource issue?

[187] **Mr Catling:** It is a resource issue. I'm sure the willingness is there.

[188] **Lee Waters:** Okay. Can I just touch on two particular areas that have come up through the evidence as areas of concern? One is the impact of agricultural activity and then, secondly, the issue of maritime archaeology. We heard, I think, from Cadw a little earlier that there is some work on guidance taking place as we speak on maritime, but if you can just touch briefly on both of those and what the state of play is.

[189] **Mr Catling:** The maritime one is urgent because the maritime resource is under development pressure—aggregates extraction, wind farms, tidal barriers and so on—and we simply don't have enough information about what lies under the sea. We're not just talking about wrecks here—we're talking about drowned landscapes from the Bronze Age, the Neolithic, the Palaeolithic.

[190] Successful policies are in place in England and Scotland whereby arrangements have been made with people who are doing work at sea—fishermen trawling and so on—who produce hand axes from the bottom of the sea so that we can record where they were found. That gives us a pinpoint on a map—somewhere we know where there's potential archaeology. We have not yet got that in Wales. We need a set of guidelines and we need to start talking to people who work in the marine environment and selling that idea to them.

[191] An interesting anecdotal story about that was that we have been working with fishermen in Wales on a voluntary scheme. They were very, very worried and very hostile at first, until we discovered that they were just worried because they'd got collections at home of stuff that they'd brought up in their nets and they thought they were going to get into trouble for not reporting them. So, we've reassured them about that and we're now working with them. But, it's voluntary, it's not a pan-Wales policy yet.

[192] The guidance that Cadw has been drawing up is taking—let me choose my words carefully—quite a long time to emerge, and I think we feel that there's an urgency that that comes quite soon.

[193] Farming—we're very lucky in Wales, it's largely arable farming so we're not ploughing up as much, say, as they are in East Anglia or Bedfordshire. But changes to the common agricultural policy, post Brexit, is the thing that's really worrying us. Not so much the damage that might be caused by farming to archaeological resources, but, neglect, abandonment, and a reversion to forest—tree roots are very, very bad for archaeology.

[194] **Lee Waters:** Okay, that's interesting. I just want to briefly ask you as well for your reflections on the evidence of the Country Land and Business Association. They talk about what they describe as a paradox of enforcement, where the nature of the system is to focus on technical breaches, rather than going after a small number of what they call

[195] 'malign and difficult owners who deliberately damage heritage.'

[196] Because local authorities inevitably are incentivised, or at least it's made easier, to go after the former.

[197] **Mr Catling:** It is. It's everything for an easy life, and I don't blame the conservation and planning officers in that position, they're under pressure. We've got evidence—I think you had papers at the last evidence session saying that the number of people employed in conservation officer and planning posts has diminished and is continuing to collapse. I think, to be honest, they're taking the easiest course of action. You know, it's only human nature to do that.

[198] **Lee Waters:** Is there any evidence of regional working and collaboration to try and mitigate some of that?

[199] **Mr Catling:** This is local authority planning, which I must say I don't understand and I'm not as well briefed as I should be on that. But, there has been talk in the past of creating a regional body, a centre of expertise, a pan-Wales planning and conversation consultancy, if you like, with local authorities working together, but I don't think it's ever gone beyond a paper dream.

[200] **Lee Waters:** Because the pressure is going to get more intense, isn't it, if you look at the local government settlements for the next few years.

[201] **Mr Catling:** It is. We've got evidence that the numbers of conservation

officers—. When conservation and planning officers leave, they're not being replaced. So, it's a diminishing resource fighting a growing problem.

[202] **Lee Waters:** Finally, Chair, sorry, is the sector doing any sort of lateral thinking of different models that could try and overcome this?

[203] **Mr Catling:** We're working with Cadw to try and train and upskill those people who are left in the post, and we're taking them out with us when we do field work and giving them—because some of the people who are being recruited haven't quite got as much experience as those they're replacing. As I say, an idea was discussed a couple of years ago about creating a central consultancy of experts that all local authorities in Wales could draw upon, but I don't think it's got anywhere.

[204] **Lee Waters:** Do you think that should be revisited?

[205] **Mr Catling:** I think it's an interesting idea.

[206] **Bethan Jenkins:** I don't know if I'm right in this, but I think that was as a result of discussion over opencast mining and not having the expertise. They were sharing expertise between local authorities and mineral planning officers, and then Carl Sargeant, who was the Minister at the time, said that he would try and create this expert group that would be able to advise on that. So, we may ask the Government, perhaps, for some more information on that. That might help our progress on this piece of work. That's really interesting, thank you. Dai Lloyd.

[207] **Dai Lloyd:** Diolch, Gadeirydd. **Dai Lloyd:** Thank you, Chair. I think the questions I have already been answered in part, because I wanted to focus on protection for buildings and monuments at risk now.

[208] Rwy'n clywed beth rydych chi'n ei ddweud, yn naturiol, ynglŷn â beth sy'n ymarferol i'w wneud ar y llawr, ond pan rydym ni'n sôn am bethau fel hen ffermdai a mannau addoli ôl-ganoloesol ac ati, mae yna gonsyrn am hynny—hynny yw, sut I hear what you say, naturally, about what is practical to do on the ground, but when we're talking about things such as farmsteads and post-medieval places of worship and so on, there is a concern there with regard to how we can tackle the issue

rydym ni'n gallu mynd i'r afael â'r now.
broblem rŵan.

[209] Rwy'n clywed beth rydych chi'n ei ddweud ynglŷn â beth sydd angen ei wneud, ond beth yw lefel y gweithgaredd sydd mewn lle rŵan, a beth fedrwch chi ei wneud i ddiogelu'r llefydd hanesyddol yma sydd mewn perygl rŵan?

I hear what you say about what needs to be done, but what's the level of activity that's happening now, and what can you do to safeguard these historic places that are at risk now?

[210] **Dr Wiliam:** Rydym ni'n gwybod llawer iawn mwy nag yr oeddem ni ychydig flynyddoedd yn ôl am addoldai, er enghraifft, yn enwedig capeli anghydfurfiol. Mi fu'r comisiwn ei hun yn gweithio dros sawl blwyddyn ar gynllun mawr ar hynny. Felly, rydym ni'n gwybod cryn dipyn. Nid ydy hynny'n dweud bod pob un y dylid ei warchod wedi ei warchod. Rydw i'n siŵr bod yna gryn dipyn o waith i'w wneud yn fanna.

Dr Wiliam: We know a lot more now than we did a few years ago about places of worship, for example, especially nonconformist chapels. The commission itself worked over a period of many years on a large plan related to that. So, we do know quite a lot about that area. That is not to say that every one that should be protected is being protected. I'm sure there is still some more work to do there.

[211] Y pethau eraill, wedyn, fel—. Fe gyfeiriodd Christopher, mewn ymateb i gwestiwn blaenorol, at adeiladau ffarm, er enghraifft. Mae yna ddifrodi enfawr i adeiladau ffarm hynafol—fy maes arbenigol i, fel y mae'n digwydd, flynyddoedd mawr yn ôl—maent yn cael eu gadael yn wag ac yn mynd i ddistryw. Nid oes cynllun cenedlaethol wedi bod o gofnodi hen adeiladau ffarm. Mae hynny'n un o'r meysydd y mae galw mawr amdano fo.

Other issues, then, such as—. Christopher mentioned earlier, in answer to a previous question, farmsteads, for example. There's been a lot of damage in relation to ancient farm buildings—that was my area of expertise, as it happens, many years ago—they're being left empty and falling into ruin. There has been no record on a national level of recording those buildings, and there's a great call for that.

[212] Flynyddoedd yn ôl, mi gyhoeddodd Cadw lyfryn hynod ddefnyddiol ar sut i fynd ati, fel petai,

Many years ago, Cadw published a very useful booklet on how to do this, but there has been no national

ond nid oes yna arolwg cenedlaethol survey on this, and that is one of the wedi'i wneud, ac mae hynny'n un o'r other issues that perhaps you could pethau eraill yma y medrwch chi add to the long list of things that ychwanegu at y rhestr lled hirfaith o should be done. waith y dylid ei wneud.

[213] Ac, allan o hynny, wrth gwrs— And from that, then, of course—a o astudiaeth o'r math yna yn study of that type on a regional or rhanbarthol neu yn genedlaethol—fe national level—you could then fydddech chi wedyn yn medru dewis a choose the best examples and make dethol yr enghreifftiau gorau a sure that they fit into that system of gwneud yn siŵr, wedyn, bod y being conserved. But that work has rheini'n ffitio y tu mewn i'r to be done first. gyfundrefn o'u cadw a'u gwarchod. Ond, mae'n rhaid gwneud y gwaith yna gyntaf.

[214] **Bethan Jenkins:** Neil Hamilton.

[215] **Neil Hamilton:** Well, first of all, I'd like to assure Mr Catling that there's absolutely no reason to think that Wales is going to revert to scrub and ancient forest when we're outside the EU, because agriculture is a devolved responsibility and the Welsh Government will ensure that everything's preserved in top-notch condition.

[216] **Mr Catling:** That's very good news.

[217] **Neil Hamilton:** Anyway, back to the business of the day. The royal commission told the committee earlier that collaboration needs to go beyond the four current participants in the Historic Wales strategic partnership to embrace all those bodies with a stake in Welsh tourism. Can you perhaps expand upon what the advantage would be of this? I presume you're thinking of bodies like the National Trust, which obviously have a synergy, but are there others that are less obvious?

[218] **Mr Catling:** Let me just first of all give you a quick progress report on Historic Wales. We are having very productive meetings at roughly six-week intervals. It's a voluntary partnership. At an earlier stage, there was a proposal to merge us all into one body, but I think we all agreed that we didn't want to get enmired in two to three years of bureaucratic merger and so on, and that we would make faster progress by working together on a

voluntary basis. Actually, that is working superbly. There are eight people around the table—

[219] **Bethan Jenkins:** It's a very pretty version of what happened, I must say. *[Laughter.]*

[220] **Mr Catling:** Okay. Well, speaking as a member of the Historic Wales partnership, I won't touch on the very early vigorous defence of the museum to retain its independence—

[221] **Bethan Jenkins:** I was talking about yourselves.

[222] **Mr Catling:** Well, we've got eight people around the table who have come to trust each other.

[223] **Neil Hamilton:** A bit like this committee.

[224] **Mr Catling:** Yes. And a mindset that says, 'Let us, in future, not act on our own. Let us recognise that we're part of a historic environment sector and let's bring issues to the table that could be resolved as a partnership rather than individually'. So, we've started, for example, to think in terms of one workforce. We are lending a member of our staff to Cadw to work on the statutory parks and gardens project that's in the Act, because he happens to have a particular expertise in that area and is the best person to do that work.

[225] We're trying to find funding for a big advance in our digital delivery programme—what we can make available to people via the internet. Although we lack the budget ourselves, there is underspend in capital budgets elsewhere within the sector that we might be able to draw upon. Training—we're developing apprenticeships and training placements whereby people come in and spend time with each of our organisations and get a good overview.

[226] So, what we're actually doing is laying down the foundations for the four national institutions now. Then, we want to build on that and embrace the wider sector, and that definitely includes the National Trust—it's an enormously important and influential player, not only because of the properties that it opens to the public but the fact that it owns so much farmland in Wales—

[227] **Neil Hamilton:** And coastline.

[228] **Mr Catling:** And coastline—the members of the Historic Houses Association, the Country Land and Business Association, and the local authorities that own and run historic properties. At the end of the day, that objective is not only ensuring that we work together, but that we make an offer to the visitors of Wales that is easy to understand and coherent and looks as if we're working together.

[229] **Neil Hamilton:** Cadw have been talking about the success of the commercialisation of their properties not in conflict with curatorial responsibilities and so on. This collaborative working does seem to have got off to a good start.

[230] **Mr Catling:** Yes, it does.

[231] **Neil Hamilton:** So, you've answered the second question that I was going to ask—for an update on such activities—unless there's anything else you want to provide.

[232] **Mr Catling:** The other thing that we're doing—. In the report that we gave to the Cabinet Secretary in February, on what we propose to do to work more closely together, we identified four work streams—four themes. What we're doing now is setting up individual work groups to take each of those forwards. So, we've got a steering group and four work groups that report into it. The model is a little bit like People's Collection Wales, which is another collaborative venture, where each institution that's part of that partnership leads the work strand that it is strongest in. So, we're leading the innovation strand, for example.

[233] **Neil Hamilton:** Reference has already been made today to an agreed historic environment strategy for Wales. When I asked this question of Cadw, earlier on this morning, they thought that this was a bit of a distraction, really, and that a more practical approach is to deal with specific issues and problems. 'We don't need an overarching strategy' seems to be their view, because Wales has been full of strategies and a strategy for strategies, et cetera.

[234] **Mr Catling:** I have a lot of sympathy with that view, but I do think that the number of problems that we face requires us to do a little bit of prioritisation. I think that's what my preference, rather than strategy, would

be. Where are we going to concentrate our limited resources?

[235] **Neil Hamilton:** Right, and what would your suggestion be on that, or is that too broad a question?

[236] **Mr Catling:** No, no, no. We've already hinted at it, which is that there are areas of the historic environment in Wales that are particularly under threat at the moment that we need to focus on. They are: maritime heritage, coastline heritage, under-the-water heritage, public buildings, nineteenth and twentieth century places of worship.

[237] **Neil Hamilton:** Good. Okay, that's very interesting, thank you.

11:00

[238] **Bethan Jenkins:** Okay. Hannah.

[239] **Hannah Blythyn:** Thank you. I'm going to turn now to the emphasis that there's been in recent years in terms of maximising and broadening the value of our heritage tourism, particularly moves to improve the commercial approach of heritage bodies in Wales. I notice in the royal commission's evidence to the committee, you talk about how currently the skills capacity in the sector is still tilted towards, perhaps understandably, the curatorial, archives and the historic environment experience, and there's a lack of those kind of skills in terms of business planning and fundraising. In your view, what steps are being taken to address this and what else needs to be done in the short and medium term?

[240] **Mr Catling:** One of the work strands that the Historic Wales voluntary partnership is looking at is customer service, and that embraces everything from the branding and the marketing to the reception that people get when they visit. It is early days on that one, but I think there is a general recognition that we do need that expertise that comes from people who've got experience of marketing and the travel trade. These are not things that we were trained in ourselves as historic environment specialists. We've acquired some of those skills as we've gone along. What we need to do is work more closely with Visit Wales, which is the natural home for people with those skills. I just said that I felt that there was a very warm rapport between all the members of the Historic Wales voluntary partnership, but I must pay credit to Jason Thomas who has brought a new level of communication between us in the historic environment sector and Visit Wales, which he now

operates. That is something, really, that—. I think that's a very promising avenue that will lead to us eventually developing those skills.

[241] **Hannah Blythyn:** And do you think we're working towards striking the right balance between the revenue raising and marketing side but also actually making sure you've still got those skills in terms of the conservation of the historic environment as well?

[242] **Mr Catling:** Well, the one pays for the other. The intention is, the model is that the more we increase the revenue, the more we have to spend on succession planning and skill.

[243] **Dr Wiliam:** If I might add to that one, in our particular case, the case of the royal commission, we appreciate that budgets are tight—nobody's going to rain money on us, sadly—so what we're doing is taking the road of establishing a separate charitable body with the aim of fundraising for us. Because we are not ourselves a charity, unlike the national museum and the national library, we are therefore not eligible for certain grants that are there solely for charitable purposes. So, we're ineligible. But by creating this new body, which we are in active work on at the moment—that, hopefully, should open a new income stream for us.

[244] **Bethan Jenkins:** Okay. So—

[245] **Neil Hamilton:** Can I just follow that up? Why are you not eligible for charitable status? Is there something in the legislation that sets you—

[246] **Mr Catling:** Yes. We are a peculiar constitutional body as a royal commission. We've taken QC advice, and they've told us that in order to be—. We are undoubtedly charitable in our work, but we cannot register as a charity if we want to continue to be a royal commission, and we feel that the benefits of being a royal commission outweigh the benefits of a charity, so we're going to set up a subsidiary charity.

[247] **Bethan Jenkins:** Suzy Davies.

[248] **Suzy Davies:** Thank you. I think you might have partly answered my question, actually. Obviously, being part of the strategic partnership—. I note what you say that you and the national library aren't seen as big income generators—

[249] **Mr Catling:** As part of the tourist economy, yes.

[250] **Suzy Davies:** Nevertheless, because you are in the strategic partnership, presumably they've given some advice or done some talent spotting about how you can raise income. So, I accept that you've got this semi-trading arm being set up. Have they given you any other ideas?

[251] **Mr Catling:** Well, we've contributed the ideas. What we really want to do is trade our intellectual property, which is a very posh way of saying that we've got loads of pictures in our collection that are valuable to publishers and the media and to other people—private individuals who want a nice picture of their home as it was in the nineteenth century on their walls.

[252] **Suzy Davies:** So, less of producing the lovely books now because—

[253] **Mr Catling:** Well we are producing a lovely book on Wales and the sea next year to celebrate the Year of the Sea. So, what we need is investment in an e-commerce platform that will enable people to come to our sites, identify things they want to buy from us and buy it at the click of a button. At the moment, it's much more elaborate than that and it's standing as a barrier to increasing our income.

[254] **Suzy Davies:** Just one example is fine there, really. Thank you for that.

[255] **Jeremy Miles:** A gaf i droi at adroddiad y Farwnes Andrews ar y cysylltiad rhwng tlodi a diwylliant? Yn eich tystiolaeth, rydych chi wedi dweud nad oes diffyg uchelgais, ond bod diffyg adnoddau i allu cyrraedd yr amcanion sydd yn yr adroddiad hwnnw. Rŷm ni wedi clywed gan Lywodraeth Cymru y bore yma eu bod nhw'n teimlo bod y cynllun Cyfuno, er enghraifft, yn llwyddiant. Felly, beth yw'ch sylwadau chi ar hynny, ac a allech chi roi enghreifftiau o'r diffyg adnoddau a beth sydd wedi digwydd yn ymarferol i atal cyflawni'r amcanion yn yr adroddiad?

Jeremy Miles: Can I turn to the Baroness Andrews report on the link between culture and poverty? In your evidence, you said that there's no lack of ambition, but the lack of resources is an issue in order to carry out the schemes in that report. We heard from Welsh Government this morning that they feel that the Fusion scheme, for example, is successful. So, what would your comment be on that, and could you perhaps give us some examples of the lack of resources you have and what's happened practically to stop these being implemented?

[256] **Mr Catling:** Fusion has been enormously—. What we said in our written evidence is that we've not had direct access to the people we want to help; we've had to work through the agencies that help and support them and they were initially sceptical about what we could bring to help their clients. Where we've won them over, we've had very good results. If there's one criticism of what we've tried to do, I think we tried to hit too many targets, and I think, increasingly, what we are doing is identifying mental health as one of the areas that we can focus on. Because it's very often mental health that underlies poverty, and we've had conspicuous success with helping people who suffer from depression and anxiety and helping them to—giving them a new structure to their life, a new motive to get up in the morning. You know, people who previously wouldn't have gone out of the house who are now volunteering at their local museum and teaching other people how to embroider—all that sort of thing. I would say that it's not so much—. What we now need is the means to scale up the work that we're doing and the lessons that we've learnt, to be more targeted and to try and help more people, and I think that you will see, emerging from us, now that we've got that understanding and realisation, a better plan for how we're going to tackle that.

[257] **Jeremy Miles:** There's a suggestion in your evidence that—and you've alluded to it now—there's a sort of scepticism, if you like, among some of the local authority employers and social services employers about the value. Where you have had success, how have you been able to achieve that in terms of overcoming that scepticism?

[258] **Mr Catling:** Where we've had a sympathetic social worker or local authority employee who has seen what we can bring, and they have designed programmes for working with their clients that have involved us, it's been extremely successful. The best example I can think of is where we've got involved in school literacy projects with children who've yet to acquire basic literacy skills, and involving them and their whole families in activities at museums and heritage sites that have excited and incentivised them, so that their learning isn't, 'Now you're going to learn to read', it's 'Let's go and have some fun' and learning to read has become the by-product, if you see.

[259] **Jeremy Miles:** And is there a sense—? Obviously, there's a sort of relationship with yourselves, but also, is there a relationship between peers in the same sector where this positive experience might spread and what you've learnt—

[260] **Mr Catling:** We have published case studies and we're busy trying to promote those case studies and we are gradually persuading more people. But as I say, we need to be more targeted.

[261] **Jeremy Miles:** Okay, thank you for that.

[262] **Suzy Davies:** The Country Land and Business Association has called for more cross-sector co-operation in the promotion and management of historic assets, and you've already explained to us that the strategic partnership perhaps isn't ready to expand—give it a chance to get its act together first. Heritage partnership agreements aren't in yet and, of course, they will be pretty significant in the management of the historic assets. But on a wider scale, you talked about the need for prioritisation, perhaps, rather than a strategy. Should that be done nationally, regionally, or very locally? What would be your view on that? If you don't have one, that's fine.

[263] **Mr Catling:** Partnership agreements have been pioneered east of Offa's Dyke. The sort of people who've come on board are organisations like the National Trust, like large estates where there is a full understanding of conservation values—identifying what's significant historically and architecturally and protecting and enhancing that, but giving you greater freedom where it doesn't have an impact on that. So, organisations that have been able to sign up to those principles—Oxford and Cambridge colleges, the National Trust, and other bodies like that—have secured these kind of agreements and they are very happy with the consequence. It cuts out a lot of costly bureaucracy and I do see a great deal of potential for that here in Wales as well. Does that answer the question?

[264] **Suzy Davies:** It does, but I was just wondering if you thought that—. Those are going to be very place specific, aren't they?

[265] **Mr Catling:** Yes. They tend to involve quite large estates, which is what the CLA—well, no, the CLA represents smallholders as well, doesn't it?

[266] **Suzy Davies:** Yes. I will leave it there, because I just wanted to ask you about Cadw's future status. You said in your evidence that, because Cadw is potentially going to do the same work as English Heritage and Historic England, we can't afford to do that because Cadw's too small, but that,

[267] 'keeping Cadw intact...probably means staying close to Government in some form'.

[268] Why would you say that, necessarily?

[269] **Mr Catling:** We couldn't have had the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016, I suspect, if Cadw hadn't been in Government. Earlier somebody was asking a question about how effective it's been and we made the point that the guidance papers are only just being written, but those guidance papers have been written with the help and collaboration of other parts of Welsh Government—planning, for example. They reality-checked them: 'Is this actually going to work? Is it practicable?'

[270] When I worked in heritage advocacy in England, I set up the Heritage Alliance and I couldn't get near a civil servant, let alone a Minister or a Cabinet Secretary. We're very, very fortunate in Wales that we have a much closer working relationship and it benefits everybody in terms of the practicality of what emerges.

[271] **Suzy Davies:** Would you say it's a real risk, then, that if the arm were to get longer, if I can put it like that—is there a risk there?

[272] **Mr Catling:** I think that there's a real risk that the influence that Cadw currently has on policy on the historic environment would be more difficult to achieve. The other point about Cadw is that it is a very small organisation. So, whereas in England they have split into Historic England and English Heritage, there are 1,000 plus employees there. We're talking about a much, much smaller body here. And a lot of people in Cadw do more than one—they straddle, as it were, the property presentation side and the conservation side and the policy side. If you split the body, you're going to have big extra costs in creating—.

[273] **Suzy Davies:** I just want to test that, if you'll give me a minute. I understand that it's much smaller, but we were talking earlier about the fact that Cadw at the moment is refocusing its work on the more commercial end of things. Bearing in mind that Cadw is part of the strategic partnership now, it is possible perhaps to separate those two sets of powers, because the commercial end of it will be working more closely with—

[274] **Mr Catling:** Indeed. Within the one organisation, it is possible to separate them, but what I'm arguing for is not splitting into two separate

organisations with two sets of back-office and administration and so on.

[275] **Suzy Davies:** No, but it is an argument for collaboration rather than separation.

[276] **Mr Catling:** Absolutely, yes.

[277] **Suzy Davies:** That's great; that's what I wanted to get to, thank you.

[278] **Bethan Jenkins:** Jest i orffen, os nad oes gan unrhyw un arall gwestiwn, rwyf eisiau gofyn am y rhestr enwau llefydd. Yn amlwg, roedd Cadw wedi dweud mai chi sydd yn gwneud y gwaith ar hyn ac roeddwn i eisiau cael diweddariad. Hefyd, a ydych chi'n meddwl fod modd cryfhau'r hyn sydd yn digwydd o ran y system yma yn y dyfodol?

Bethan Jenkins: Just to conclude, if nobody else has a question, I wanted to ask about the list of historic place names. Clearly, Cadw said that you're responsible for the work done on this and I wanted an update on it. Also, do you think there's a way to strengthen what is happening with regard to this system in the future?

[279] **Dr Wiliam:** O dan y Ddeddf, mae'r cyfrifoldeb o greu a chadw a chynnal y rhestr wedi'i roi i'r comisiwn brenhinol. Mae'r gwaith yna yn symud ymlaen yn arbennig o dda. Pan lanswyd y cynllun rhai misoedd yn ôl, roeddem ni wedi cofnodi 350,000 o enwau. Ers hynny rydym wedi ychwanegu 100,000 arall o enwau ac, wrth gwrs, bydd hwnnw'n tyfu. Mae gennym ni grŵp llywio sydd yn ein cynghori, sy'n cynnwys yr holl bobl y buasech chi'n eu disgwyl—yr arbenigwyr ar y pwnc—ac mae hynny'n mynd ymlaen yn dda.

Dr Wiliam: Under the Act, the responsibility for creating and maintaining the list has been given to the royal commission. That work is moving forward very well. When the scheme was launched a few months ago, we recorded 350,000 names and, since then, we've added another 100,000 names. That, of course, will grow. We have a steering group that is advising us, which includes all of the people who you would expect—the experts on the subject—and that is progressing well.

[280] Y camau nesaf angenrheidiol, wrth gwrs, ydy gwneud yn sicr bod unigolion, ac yn bwysicach fyth awdurdodau lleol, yn ymwybodol bod yr adnodd yma yna iddyn nhw ei

The next vital steps, of course, are to ensure that individuals and, more importantly, local authorities are aware that this resource is available to them to use, and that it's a

ddefnyddio, a'i bod yn ofynnol, yn ôl y Ddeddf, iddyn nhw ei ddefnyddio fo. Dyna'r cam pwysig nesaf. Rydym ar ganol rhaglen ar y funud o addysgu, fel petai, swyddogion perthnasol yr awdurdodau lleol am fodolaeth hyn. Bu cyfarfod yn ddiweddar, ac rydw i'n meddwl roedd yna 13 o'r awdurdodau lleol yn bresennol.

requirement under the Act for them to use it. That's the important next step. We are in the middle of a programme now of educating, as it were, relevant officials in local authorities. We had a recent meeting, and I think there were 13 local authorities present.

11:15

[281] **Bethan Jenkins:** A oes yna swyddogion ym mhob ardal leol?

Bethan Jenkins: Are there officials in every local authority?

[282] **Dr Wiliam:** Ie.

Dr Wiliam: Yes.

[283] **Bethan Jenkins:** Mae yna un.

Bethan Jenkins: There's one in every area.

[284] **Dr Wiliam:** Ie. Mae pob awdurdod lleol yng Nghymru â—. Nhw sydd a'r swyddogaeth o warchod enwau lleoedd nawr, wrth gwrs.

Dr Wiliam: Yes, every local authority in Wales—. They're the ones who have the function of safeguarding these place names.

[285] **Bethan Jenkins:** O, ie, rwy'n deall hynny, ond mae gyda nhw y swyddog yn lleol i allu gwneud hynny.

Bethan Jenkins: Yes, I understand that, but they do actually have a local officer in place, do they?

[286] **Dr Wiliam:** Ydyn, ydyn. Ydyn, ac wedyn mae rhai ohonyn nhw—. Roedd un neu ddau—. Na, roedd yna dri awdurdod, yn sicr, eisoes yn arbennig o dda am wneud hyn. Wel, nawr rydym ni'n gobeithio bod hwn yn mynd i wella. Mae'n gynnar eto i ddweud, wrth gwrs, ond, ar y funud, mae'n argoeli'n dda.

Dr Wiliam: Yes. Yes, they do, and then some of them—. I think one or two—. No, I think there are three authorities who already are excellent in doing this, and now we're hoping that that's going to improve again. It's early, of course, to draw any conclusions, but, at the moment, it's looking good.

[287] **Bethan Jenkins:** Ond beth am y cwestiwn wnes i ofyn ynglŷn â'i gryfhau e? A fydddech chi'n dweud bod angen gwneud asesiad o'r rhestr a sut mae'r awdurdodau lleol yn ymwneud â hi cyn mynd ati i weld beth fyddai'n bosib i unrhyw newid neu ddatblygiad yn y maes hwnnw?

Bethan Jenkins: And what about the question that I asked with regard to strengthening this scheme? Would you say that there needs to be an assessment of the list and how the local authorities are using it before thinking about what it would be possible to change or to develop in this field?

[288] **Dr Wiliam:** Nid ydy'r rhestr, wrth gwrs—. Nid yw'n rhan o'n swyddogaeth ni o dan y Ddeddf i greu ffurfiau. Yn aml, mae yna ddewis o ffurfiau—enwau ar bentref neu ardal neu beth bynnag. Nid yw hi'n rhan o'm swyddogaeth ni, ac nid yw'r gallu gennym ni i nodi un ffurf fel dyma'r ffurf ddewisol. Mae yna fodd, rydw i'n meddwl, i gyrff eraill—. Nid ydw i'n gwybod beth ddigwyddith i swydd y comisiynydd iaith, er enghraifft, a'i swyddfa hi, ond mae ganddi hi, ar y funud, grŵp sy'n ei hymgyngori hi ar enwau lleoedd. Wel, mae, rydw i'n meddwl, ffordd o weithio rownd hyn ac atgyfnerthi'r adnodd canolog yma mae'r comisiwn yn ei weinyddu, felly.

Dr Wiliam: The list itself, of course—. It's not part of our function under the Act, of course, to create forms of words. Sometimes there is a choice of forms of names and different types of names for a particular village or area. It's not part of our function, and we don't have the ability, either, to note one name as the specific given name. I think other bodies—. I'm not sure what will happen to the language commissioner's post, for example, and her office, but at the moment she has a group that advises her on place names. I think, therefore, there is a way of working around that and strengthening that particular resource on a centralised basis.

[289] **Bethan Jenkins:** Océ. Diolch yn fawr iawn i chi am roi tystiolaeth y bore yma. Mae'n siŵr y byddwn ni mewn cysylltiad ynglŷn â'r hyn sydd yn digwydd gyda'n hadroddiad, ond diolch yn fawr eto am ddod i mewn i roi tystiolaeth ger bron.

Bethan Jenkins: Thank you very much to you both for giving evidence this morning. I'm sure we'll be in touch with you again about what's happening with our report, but thank you very much for giving your evidence.

[290] **Dr Wiliam:** Diolch yn fawr iawn.

Dr Wiliam: Thank you very much.

Papurau i'w Nodi
Papers to Note

[291] **Bethan Jenkins:** Rydym ni'n symud ymlaen yn awr at eitem 4 a phapurau i'w nodi. Mae papur 4.1, adolygiad annibynnol o gymorth ar gyfer cyhoeddi a llenyddiaeth yng Nghymru, tystiolaeth ychwanegol, ac wedyn 4.2, newyddiaduraeth newyddion yng Nghymru, tystiolaeth ychwanegol gan Google. Fe wnaethon nhw ysgrifennu atom ni. Fe wnaethom ni ofyn iddyn nhw ddod i mewn, ond o leiaf fe wnaethon nhw roi tystiolaeth a oedd yn ddefnyddiol iawn. Wedyn 4.3, llythyr gan y Llywydd, menter Senedd@. A oes yna unrhyw sylwad ar un o'r llythyrau hynny?

Bethan Jenkins: We move on now to item 4, which is papers to note. We have paper 4.2, the independent review of support for publishing and literature in Wales, and additional evidence, and then paper 4.2, news journalism in Wales, additional evidence from Google. They wrote to us. We did ask them to come in, but at least they gave evidence that was useful to us. Then 4.3, a letter from the Llywydd on the Senedd@ initiative. Do you have any comments on those letters?

[292] **Suzy Davies:** Just one question: whether we are actually going to do Senedd@Delyn.

[293] **Bethan Jenkins:** Yes. We are planning—plans are in train to do that.

[294] **Suzy Davies:** That's fine.

[295] **Bethan Jenkins:** Yes, definitely. [*Interruption.*] Or minibus, yes.

[296] Unrhyw sylwadau eraill? Na. Any other comments? No.

[297] 11:17

**Cynnig o dan Reol Sefydlog 17.42 i Benderfynu Gwahardd y Cyhoedd
o'r Cyfarfod ar gyfer y Canlynol: Eitem 6, 7 a 10**
**Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to Resolve to Exclude the Public
from the Meeting for the Following Business: Item 6, 7 and 10**

Cynnig:

Motion:

bod y pwyllgor yn penderfynu gwahardd y cyhoedd o'r cyfarfod ar gyfer y canlynol: eitem 6, 7 a 10 yn unol â Rheol Sefydlog 17.42(vi).

that the committee resolves to exclude the public from the meeting for the following business: item 6, 7 and 10 in accordance with Standing Order 17.42(vi).

Cynigiwyd y cynnig.

Motion moved.

[298] **Bethan Jenkins:** Eitem 5, cynnig o dan Reol Sefydlog 17.42 i benderfynu gwahardd y cyhoedd o'r cyfarfod ar gyfer y canlynol: eitemau 6, 7 a 10. A ydy pawb yn hapus gyda hynny?

Bethan Jenkins: Item 5 is a motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting for the following business: items 6, 7 and 10. Is everyone content with that?

[299] **Dai Lloyd:** Bodlon.

Dai Lloyd: Content.

[300] **Bethan Jenkins:** Diolch.

Bethan Jenkins: Thank you.

Derbyniwyd y cynnig.

Motion agreed.

Daeth rhan gyhoeddus y cyfarfod i ben am 11:18.

The public part of the meeting ended at 11:18.

Ailymgynullodd y pwyllgor yn gyhoeddus am 12:49.

The committee reconvened in public at 12:49.

**Newyddiaduraeth Newyddion yng Nghymru: Tystiolaeth gan
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi a'r Seilwaith
News Journalism in Wales: Evidence from Cabinet Secretary for
Economy and Infrastructure**

[301] **Bethan Jenkins:** Grêt, diolch i bawb. Eitem 8 ar gyfer y pwyllgor yma heddiw yw newyddiaduraeth newyddion yng Nghymru a

Bethan Jenkins: Great, thank you very much, everyone. Item 8 for this committee meeting today is news journalism in Wales and evidence

thystiolaeth gan Ysgrifennydd y from the Cabinet Secretary for
Cabinet dros yr Economi a'r Seilwaith. Economy and Infrastructure.

[302] Rydym ni wedi cael We have received apologies from
ymddiheuriadau gan Jeremy Miles y Jeremy Miles this afternoon.
prynhawn yma.

[303] Felly, rydym ni'n croesawu'r We welcome the witnesses, Ken
tystion, sef Ken Skates, Ysgrifennydd Skates, Cabinet Secretary for
y Cabinet dros yr Economi a'r Economy and Infrastructure, Hywel
Seilwaith, Hywel Owen, arweinydd tîm Owen, media policy team leader for
polisi'r cyfryngau, Llywodraeth the Welsh Government, and Paul
Cymru, a Paul Kindred, sef uwch Kindred, who's the senior policy
ddadansoddydd polisi, Llywodraeth analyst for the Welsh Government—
Cymru—*posh* iawn, rhaid dweud. very posh, I have to say.

[304] **Mr Kindred:** For the whole of the Welsh Government. [*Laughter.*]

[305] **Bethan Jenkins:** Fel sydd yr **Bethan Jenkins:** As usual, we have
arfer, mae gyda ni themâu ar gyfer y themed questions that we will ask, if
cwestiynau, os yw hynny'n iawn. Fe that's okay with you. We'll ask our
wnawn ni ofyn yn seiliedig ar y questions based on those themes.
themâu hynny. Felly, mae'r So, the first set of questions come
cwestiynau cyntaf gen i, a jest gofyn from me, and just to ask in general
yn fras i'r Ysgrifennydd Cabinet a wyt to the Cabinet Secretary whether you
ti'n cytuno â'r hyn roedd bwrdd agree with the analysis of the Ofcom
ymgynghorol Ofcom yn ei ddweud, advisory committee that:
sef:

[306] 'Wales is served less comprehensively, outside the BBC, than any of
the other UK Nations, with weaker print media'.

[307] A ydych chi'n cytuno gyda'r Do you agree with that analysis?
analysis hynny?

[308] **The Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure (Ken Skates):**
Yes.

[309] **Bethan Jenkins:** Oh, great. Well, it's not great, obviously, but that was
a short answer.

[310] **Ken Skates:** Yes, sorry. I do, and recent consolidation of the print media has not helped at all. Do you mind if we can exchange ideas and views on this? I'm conscious that I could just talk for hours when it comes to the print media.

[311] **Bethan Jenkins:** We've only got an hour so I'll try and be strict, if that's okay. So, just around that point, because I have a few more, obviously on other themes.

[312] **Ken Skates:** Okay. There's a major problem that we face in terms of the print media, in terms of the media as a whole and specifically with regard to the provision of primary source information regarding what's happening in this place, what's happening in Welsh Government, what happens within the business community, what happens in local government at guild halls, at city halls. I've got concerns that there are too few well-resourced newsrooms now that are actually going beneath the surface of what's happening in Welsh society and drilling into what the real issues are that really count in people's lives. I've got concerns, for example, that if we were to, God forbid, lose just a handful of journalists in Wales, scrutiny of this place, exposure of what's happening in this place, would be seriously damaged. You can probably name some. If we were to lose, for example, from Media Wales the likes of David Williamson, Martin Shipton, Sion Barry in one go, that would be a major blow to democracy in Wales, because there are so few in the print media who are actually drilling into what's happening here. And it would leave us then with, what, a really small but dedicated team in ITV Wales and a team in BBC Wales in terms of the English language media that's looking at what's happening in this place right now. We need to strengthen the fourth estate and, above all, we need to strengthen what's happening within print media.

[313] Now, that's not to say that there is no role for hyperlocal or for digital-only news—there is—but my concern is that there's a paradox right now. We have more news than ever before being circulated, but let's not mistake repeated information for primary-sourced news, for original content. And, whilst each and every one of us can now be a broadcaster, we can be a writer, what we cannot be are investigative journalists, and that's my fear, that there are too few journalists in the old style, if you like—in the traditional style of what a journalist is. There are too few I'm afraid who are being properly trained and qualified in journalism, particularly in print media journalism, which can be very distinctive and different to broadcast. So—

[314] **Bethan Jenkins:** Do you have a problem with the—? At the moment,

there's a big—. You know, obviously, Wales Online, it's become expansive in relation to the—. It's just bought the *South Wales Evening Post*. Do you think that there's a problem with plurality? Do you think there is a crisis like the National Union of Journalists have said?

[315] **Ken Skates:** I think there is. I think there is, yes. If we look at media ownership—and, here again, it's a really complex picture, media ownership. The people own a huge amount of power now by virtue of being able to share online information at a hyperlocal level, but also information about what's happening around the world, but where is that information actually coming from? The origins of that information are in the hands of too few people and too few owners of media operations. In Wales, that amounts to just a tiny handful now of news groups, and that can't be good for democracy at all. It's not good for people to be sharing news that is commanded and which originates from just a small number of news providers.

[316] **Bethan Jenkins:** And what do you think about this theme that we're hearing about, obviously, a move to digital news? But many journalists have said to us, 'Well, it's more to do with click activity than it is about really digging deep into the public issues of the day; they may not be as sexy as those things.'

[317] **Ken Skates:** It depresses me, Chair, that you need only to go to any news site now and just look along the sidebar of what are the top-clicked stories and, by and large, they're lifestyle stories. Stories that generate the greatest advertising revenue online are those stories that are read the most, and therefore journalists are being encouraged to be not so much reporters but repeaters of what might be found on social media, on people's Facebook sites, on Twitter. And I'm afraid too much journalism now is about repeating what's happening that's perhaps salacious, but of little consequence to the long term, rather than actually do what I believe journalists are there to do, which is to dig beneath the service, to challenge people like you and I, to expose injustice—

[318] **Bethan Jenkins:** But they say that they're just putting on what people want to read. So, that's why those types of stories are coming up in your timeline.

[319] **Ken Skates:** McDonald's, KFC, they give people what they want to eat, but it's not necessarily healthy. I should just correct myself there and say

that I'm sure KFC and McDonald's do provide very healthy and nutritious food. [*Laughter.*] But in all seriousness, fast food for the soul, which is what I'm afraid this situation is encouraging—. It's instant news, which is salacity and just encourages people to spread gossip and not actually consider the issues that are of far greater consequence to our lives. It's not good. It's not good for our well-being. It's not good for democracy. It's not good for the country, and is actually quite the opposite. In many instances, it can be debilitating for individuals to be seeing constantly images and stories of a lifestyle nature, which encourages us actually, I'm afraid, to think worse of ourselves.

[320] I don't want to sound like I've got a real downer on social media, but I do attribute some of the problems with body image to social media. I do attribute some of the problems that we have with bullying and prejudice to social media. And I'm afraid I do think that too much journalism now is based on repeating what is happening on social media. But, equally, Chair, I shouldn't be too negative about the provision of information on social media, because I look at some Facebook pages—. I was visiting my parents in Pantymwyn at the weekend. I decided to have a look at the Facebook Pantymwyn and Gwernaffield webpage, and it has a significant number of followers. There's really good provision of news on there and a good degree of debate. So, people are really well informed about what's happening on their street, but what people are missing right now, and my real concern, as I say, is that we're not getting the scrutiny that we need necessarily of this place from news providers right across Wales.

[321] **Bethan Jenkins:** So, what would you say they need to do, before I move on to Suzy's question? You seem quite angry about it, so what are you doing as Cabinet Secretary?

[322] **Ken Skates:** Okay. So, I have a few ideas. And one of the ideas that I wanted to pursue, but I've held back from doing so because—. I'll come to the idea, but the reason I didn't pursue it at the time was because the Llywydd was looking at commissioning a piece of work, which has now reported. But it's been my view that we can't step in to plug a gap that commercial media should be filling, and that they have a duty to fill. However, I do think that, in some cases, a huge proportion of people in Wales are simply not getting information about what's happening in Welsh Government, and the Welsh Assembly, and in other areas of civic life—in guild halls, as I've said, and city halls. And, therefore, perhaps we do need to give attention to the potential provision of a Wales newswire service. I believe

the work of the taskforce is very helpful, but one thing that I think we need to extend beyond is the desire to navigate around, if you like, some of the existing news media to get straight to people's inboxes and Facebook pages, which is what was proposed largely. I think we also need to recognise that the UK national media is still incredibly influential and persuasive over the people of Wales, and therefore we need to provide information that can be accessed by UK— London-based largely—media, but which can also be accessed, and I believe, free of charge—

[323] **Bethan Jenkins:** So, you would fund that, or run it, or—

[324] **Ken Skates:** I think it could be funded. And this is what I was interested in looking at, in collaboration potentially with the Assembly Commission: I think that it could sit neatly with the BBC local news initiative, and potentially could be backed up, I think, by the £200,000 over two years budget deal with Plaid Cymru. And I've got views on how that could be potentially very—

[325] **Bethan Jenkins:** We've got more questions on that.

[326] **Ken Skates:** Okay. I'll carry on a little more, if I may, with the idea of newswire, because I think the taskforce report's very helpful. One concern I had with the recommendations, though, was the degree to which there would be true editorial independence and freedom to be incredibly critical where necessary. There was a story—. We were featured on the front page of the *Western Mail* in the last Assembly term together. We weren't alone; we were with the other members of this predecessor committee. We were criticised for giving the go-ahead to, I think it was, the translation service, and the cost of the translation services. I disagreed with the angle of the story. However, I then wrote an article saying, 'Whilst I disagree with the angle that's been taken, I defend the *Western Mail's* right to scrutinise us, challenge us and to criticise us.'

13:00

[327] I'm not convinced that what is being proposed would actually lead to a sufficiently independent news service within this place to enable it to actually scrutinise and criticise to that degree. If we were to establish a newswire service that could disseminate information and news centrally from here to both UK, London-based national media but also to regional and local papers and hyperlocal news sites, we'd have to find a mechanism by which it would

have complete editorial independence, and I think what we could do is look at—it's only a suggestion—the National Union of Journalists potentially taking a lead role in this regard, and thereby ensure that we have trained, skilled, dedicated, independent, committed journalists scrutinising what's going on in this place, scrutinising what's happening in—

[328] **Bethan Jenkins:** So, would it be run by—? You said the BBC earlier, so it wouldn't be run by the BBC.

[329] **Ken Skates:** No, sorry. I was talking about the BBC—. The BBC Local news service is a different initiative that the BBC have proposed.

[330] **Bethan Jenkins:** So, this would be a new, say, fund?

[331] **Ken Skates:** I think it could complement it really well.

[332] **Bethan Jenkins:** Run by the NUJ.

[333] **Ken Skates:** Potentially. That's only a suggestion, because I'd want it to be sufficiently distant from any of the forms of legislature or of government that we have in Wales, but it could operate—it might be expensive to operate this way—on a hub-and-spoke model as well. It could be based here, but we could also, on a regional footing, have hub facilities that really scrutinise what's happening on a regional basis within local government, within business, and so forth. I've not done any number-crunching on this. It's only an idea. I had it before the taskforce began its work, but I thought it would be prudent to await the outcome of the taskforce work. I think that's very close to what I've been considering, but it all—

[334] **Bethan Jenkins:** So, when will you be putting this together, because obviously I need to move on?

[335] **Ken Skates:** Well, this is something I want the independent media forum to now look at. I also think that it could sit quite neatly with what the BBC are proposing, because the BBC are looking at, if you like, planting journalists within existing news establishments. Now, I don't know whether I've got time to embark on a different narrative and different analysis of that—.

[336] **Bethan Jenkins:** We've got questions on these things, so if I let Suzy

ask—

[337] **Ken Skates:** Okay, but I think there could be quite neat alignment with this, and it could address the challenge that we have. It would be a UK first, I think, but, given the unique challenges that Wales faces, I think we do need to do something bold. But what we can't do is do something that gives the public any impression whatsoever that we have any strings attached to the news that is coming from here.

[338] **Bethan Jenkins:** Okay, fine. We'll probe that further, but Suzy's got questions on the independent media forum.

[339] **Suzy Davies:** Yes, and thank you, Cabinet Secretary. You've actually covered a little bit of what I wanted to ask about. Are you going to be leaving it to the independent media forum to do a thorough analysis of business models? Obviously, you've mentioned some of your preferred models, but it would be quite useful to know that that was a preferred model as measured against a wider selection of potential models.

[340] **Ken Skates:** I think it would be safer to invite the independent media forum to carry out that work, for the reasons that I've already highlighted. Perceptions or real, any belief that Government or bureaucracies of any nature have a sway over decisions that are being made with regard to the provision of information could be very damaging, and so I think the independent media forum could play a very important role in this regard, but I also think that the NUJ could have an important role in this as well.

[341] **Suzy Davies:** Okay, so who would co-ordinate that, then, because what I'm picking up is that you'd like the forum to do this work and then advise you on potential models that Government might be prepared to support?

[342] **Ken Skates:** Personally—and, again, this is my immediate view—I think that any action that's taken in this regard would probably be best taken jointly with the Assembly Commission, and for an added reason, actually. You scrutinise us in Government and, therefore, there is a natural tension that is very healthy. If we were to separate our interventions, again there is a risk of people perceiving our interventions as serving our purpose, but, by doing it together, I think people would recognise and respect the fact that the Assembly—the Chamber—scrutinises the Government, and so there is a very healthy check and balance already in existence, and therefore I think it would probably be best to come from both.

[343] **Suzy Davies:** Does Alun Davies share your view on how this forum could be used in that way, because obviously he set that up?

[344] **Ken Skates:** Yes, and the work programme for the forum, I think, will be pretty exhausting, but I think this is an absolutely vital area of work to address, and I do think that there is merit in examining this, along with examining the proposal from the taskforce, and also the sustainability of business models that are being operated at the moment, to examine whether such an intervention would really be required if existing commercial news media could take a little more of a realistic and reasonable approach to the level of profits that are expected in the print media today.

[345] **Suzy Davies:** Thank you. Just one final question; it's up to you how long you spend answering this. Obviously, there are two ministerial voices on this patch: your own and Alun Davies's. Can you give us a sense of how that actually works and how that influences the work programme of the independent media forum, because, as you say, they've got a lot to do? I don't really know that much about the composition or their work programme, but have they got any influence so far on your thinking, or—?

[346] **Ken Skates:** Okay. So, if I just address the first point and how our work aligns and is split, if you like, I'm responsible for media, including print media and print journalism. Alun is responsible for broadcasting and Welsh language. The work of the media forum, I expect, will focus primarily on issues concerning the BBC and the charter and S4C, and also the role of digital in the media. I would also hope that the forum would be able to assess the ideas that are being put forward not just by myself, but also by the Assembly Commission, and the forum could potentially form an early view on the effectiveness of the BBC's proposal for local news journalism to be shared.

[347] **Suzy Davies:** Is there a print media representative on that board?

[348] **Ken Skates:** The forum, at the moment—

[349] **Suzy Davies:** The forum, sorry.

[350] **Ken Skates:** The appointment process is being undertaken. I think Alun Davies is very keen to see a chair appointed this side of Christmas. The chair will then assist in the appointment process of other members, which

will happen as soon as possible once that chair is appointed. I think it would be important though—you do raise a very significant question about the skills mix of the forum, and I would expect somebody from the print media to be represented on the forum.

[351] **Suzy Davies:** Thank you.

[352] **Bethan Jenkins:** And how is that independent, then? Who decides? Are they Government appointments, or are they done through the Nolan principles and such that we know they're truly—? We've got another session with you later about people who sit on panels, so that's why I'm asking this question now.

[353] **Mr Kindred:** Yes, absolutely. The intention is that there will be an open competition for the chair, and then the chair, once appointed, will then be involved in setting up the open competition for the other members of the forum, which will then follow on afterwards. So, we'll be looking for representatives from right across the media sector and stakeholders, consumers as well, the unions, the broadcast and media operators, universities—anybody who has an interest really. So, it will be an open competition and we'll be looking for a balance of skills and a balance of individuals, but we'll be doing it with the chair, once the chair is appointed.

[354] **Suzy Davies:** Can I just check something, Chair? Bearing in mind there's a level of independence in there, does that mean that the deliberations will be made public?

[355] **Ken Skates:** I would expect so.

[356] **Suzy Davies:** Okay.

[357] **Ken Skates:** Given the significance of this area and the need to demonstrate that it is truly independent, and given that it concerns the media, I think there has to be as much transparency as possible in the work that is carried out and in the reporting that takes place.

[358] **Suzy Davies:** Okay, that's great. Thank you.

[359] **Bethan Jenkins:** Okay. Hannah.

[360] **Hannah Blythyn:** Cabinet Secretary, you were keen to talk about—. You

were itching to get on to talk about the BBC Local journalism plans earlier. From your point of view, what assessment has the Welsh Government made of those plans, and have you had any conversation with the BBC about them at this time?

[361] **Ken Skates:** Yes. In my response, I think it was to charter renewal, I—. Was it on charter renewal that I raised this issue with the BBC?

[362] **Mr Kindred:** Yes.

[363] **Ken Skates:** I'm going to give a cautious welcome to this. If we get the number of journalists that we would deserve on the basis of proportion of population, I think we'd probably get between seven and eight journalists. Now, I think we need clarity on a number of fronts. One: the provision. The planting of a BBC journalist within an established and validated news organisation should not come at the expense of existing journalists within that organisation; it cannot be used to plug a gap, to fill a resource that should be filled by those news organisations. I think one of the main points that I raised with the BBC when I took this up concerned the sharing of information. What this cannot be is just the BBC producing news for itself and then sharing, on a subsequent basis, the news that it's intended to provide to its audience and its viewers. Instead, there has to be a defined purpose to what those journalists are going to be doing, and there also has to be clarity about the editorial independence and the lines of accountability for those journalists.

[364] **Hannah Blythyn:** They were some of the concerns that have been brought up with us in previous sessions. One of the other issues that was raised with us was which media organisations are going to be able to benefit from these BBC journalists, because there is not a level playing field for who has the ability to have access to the information, access to the systems to apply. There may be smaller newspapers or organisations that are trying to go forward but they might not feel that they're in a position to actually benefit from that.

[365] **Ken Skates:** Oh, absolutely. That's one of my big concerns with this. My other concern is that you'll have shareholders of media organisations rubbing their hands over the prospect of getting a free journalist. I do worry about that—that it's the big operators that might benefit. I think it's incumbent upon the BBC to do as they have outlined in their vision, which is to support local media and to support the provision of news from across

Wales right down into local communities. That can't be done just by planting journalists in the big organisations where cuts have been made and where newsrooms have gone right down to the bone, and often beneath the bone. Instead, this proposal from the BBC must serve to benefit the whole of Wales and, in particular, local newspapers, hyperlocal news organisations that potentially have the most to benefit from this scheme as well and whose audience and readers potentially have the most to benefit from the scheme.

[366] **Hannah Blythyn:** That leads me on quite nicely to my next couple of questions on hyperlocal and voluntary journalism—

[367] **Ken Skates:** If the Member's content, I can provide a copy of my letter concerning my observations on this particular initiative, which was sent to the BBC.

[368] **Bethan Jenkins:** Yes, because I just wanted to add to Hannah's question. When we did have WalesOnline in, they seemed to suggest that conversations were quite developed in relation to their potential to work with the BBC on this. I think we would be concerned that they would be taking services away, like they have, and then putting these types of journalists back in to where they should actually be covering anyway. So, I think that's something that we would still be concerned about.

[369] **Ken Skates:** I'd be vehemently opposed to that sort of action. This is not an alternative way of recruiting journalists. It shouldn't be provided to fill gaps that should be filled by those news organisations themselves. This should be additional, this should add value to what's happening right now.

[370] **Bethan Jenkins:** Yes, okay. If we could see that letter, that would be great.

[371] **Ken Skates:** Absolutely.

[372] **Mr Kindred:** I think it's just worth saying very quickly that the letter that you sent in was in 2016 and that it was part of responding to an internal review that the BBC did of news provision as part of their preparation for charter, and we're still actually waiting to see the formal outcome of that review. The Minister for Lifelong Learning and Welsh Language has written to Tony Hall to remind him of that fact in the last week or so.

[373] **Ken Skates:** Where I think Media Wales could be very excited in this

regard is with the sharing of news content. What journalists within Media Wales do very well is report at a level that the BBC may miss and report on stories that the BBC may not have the capacity to be able to drill into and investigate. There could be very complementary news reporting from both BBC and WalesOnline and indeed other news organisations. And so I think it could be, potentially, very exciting if the likes of Media Wales and the BBC and others were able to cross-reference stories, to share stories a little more. At the end of the day, what they are all striving, I would hope, to do is to better educate and better enlighten the population. So, sharing stories, making stories available across respective—. I see a Member shaking his head. That's what I would hope. That's what I would hope they're striving to do.

[374] **Neil Hamilton:** Hope springs eternal. [*Laughter.*]

[375] **Bethan Jenkins:** Okay. Hannah, carry on, sorry.

[376] **Hannah Blythyn:** Thanks very much.

[377] **Ken Skates:** I'm an optimist. [*Laughter.*]

[378] 13:15

[379] **Hannah Blythyn:** On the hyperlocal and voluntary journalism, which we've all seen a huge growth of in Wales over the last few years, and you've seen it in your own area with wrexham.com and across Wales, in your opening responses, you did mention concerns that there is a platform now, where everybody can write, everybody can broadcast, but there is that worry that there isn't that training and support there. And also it's about whether that's a viable career option for people—people can't survive being volunteers. So, what assessment have you made of the strength of the sector and the growth of it in Wales, and what can be done to support it?

[380] **Ken Skates:** The sector, I think, is—. Apologies, because I probably will talk too long on this subject as well.

[381] **Hannah Blythyn:** I'll interrupt you, it's okay.

[382] **Ken Skates:** Thank you. The sector, I think, in terms of volume is quite healthy in Wales. We've got about 11 to 12 per cent of the hyperlocal sites across the UK here in Wales. Where I think the health of the sector is not so

good is with the sustainability of hyperlocal sites—the ability to raise revenue. I'm also concerned that a number of hyperlocal sites do not have journalists who are qualified and properly trained and experienced.

[383] I went through several years of learning on the job to get an NVQ and what I got from my NVQ is probably more valuable to me, certainly in that job, but probably more generally in my career as a whole, than my degree. And I would like to see more journalists, on a hyperlocal news basis, undergoing the training and getting the qualifications that would not just better equip them for their roles with those hyperlocal newsrooms, but also equip them, potentially, in other areas of work, should their careers in journalism not continue. For example, there are some great transferrable skills that you can take from journalism across to public relations and marketing and—

[384] **Hannah Blythyn:** I thought you were going to say politics then. [*Laughter.*]

[385] **Ken Skates:** I'm a bad example for that. [*Laughter.*] And this is where I think, Chair, the budget agreement could really, really benefit hyperlocal news sites. I think £100,000, or £200,000 over two years, could be used very cleverly to help address the skills shortage within hyperlocal—. It would require fleshing out, but I really think it's a golden opportunity, because, at the moment, it's 40-something per cent of journalists working on hyperlocal news sites who actually possess the skills or qualifications that you'd expect within an established print or broadcast newsroom. So, there is an opportunity there.

[386] I also think that there are issues around the funding model for hyperlocal sites. Advertising revenue online is nowhere near what revenue is being generated for the print material. Again, it's a paradox. We've got a huge audience number for online news provision, but a tiny revenue take compared to a much smaller number of readers of print material but a much larger revenue take. So, the business model doesn't yet work. There are all sorts of ideas out there concerning how we could support hyperlocal sites. I think some of them are very valid. I think philanthropic giving is a valid call. Unfortunately, a lot of sites don't get enough of that. I think statutory notices could be another area that should be encouraged, and I've certainly been encouraging councils to do more with online hyperlocal sites. Also, I would hope that, as we see advertising revenues pick up for online news provision, again, the models may become more sustainable. But I would also expect

over that time, potentially, more consolidation as well.

[387] You pointed to wrexham.com, and I point to deeside.com as excellent examples—exemplars—of hyperlocal sites, both of which, incidentally, fill a huge gap in the news media market within that part of Wales. Both will report on issues, for example, that, just across the border, are of significant interest to the audience that they serve. For example, if there was a car crash on the M56 that tragically killed somebody, it might not make it onto *Wales Today*, but it would make it onto wrexham.com or deeside.com, because of the 10,000 or so people living within that catchment area who use that road. So, it's a really important provision, and I think, often, the role of hyperlocal news sites is really underestimated and misunderstood.

[388] **Hannah Blythyn:** You're saying about them plugging that gap—to what extent do you think there is the ability there amongst hyperlocals yet to plug the gap that's been left in our communities by the traditional media?

[389] **Ken Skates:** I don't think they should have to—sorry, I'll row back on that. I don't think they should have to plug that gap. I don't think we should be looking at hyperlocal sites as the alternative to print media—not just yet. I think print media, over time, will move more and more online, and so the likes of the *Western Mail* will shift more coverage and generate more online in revenue than it does at present, and it will see a drop in revenue, potentially, in terms of the advertising space in the printed material, but I don't think that hyperlocal news provision as currently exists can plug the gap that could come about if some of our big titles, and some of our smaller titles as well, were to be lost. I think it should be seen as complementary, and serving a slightly different purpose as well.

[390] **Hannah Blythyn:** Thanks.

[391] **Bethan Jenkins:** Mae gan Dai **Bethan Jenkins:** Dai has questions on gwestiynau ar y materion ariannol yn financial matters arising from the deillio o'r drafodaeth ar *hyperlocal*. hyperlocal discussion.

[392] **Dai Lloyd:** Ie, wel, yn rhannol, **Dai Lloyd:** Well, yes, the question has mae'r cwestiwn wedi cael ei ateb yn been partially answered already rhannol am y £100,000 y flwyddyn about the £100,000 a year that will yma sy'n mynd mewn grantiau i be available as grants to start gychwyn busnesau newyddion hyperlocal businesses. Just in terms hyperleol. Jest er mwyn y manylion— of the detail—how will you assess the

sut fuasech chi'n asesu'r ceisiadau? A bids for this funding? Are they ydyn nhw yn gyfan gwbl ddibynnol ar entirely dependent on economic ddatblygiad economaidd—hynny yw, development—that is, on making ar wneud elw—ynneu a fydd budd profit—or will there be a positive cymdeithasol, ac nid o reidrwydd yr social outcome there, and not angen i greu elw, yn dod i mewn i'r necessarily the requirement to make achos, neu'r cais i dderbyn yr arian a profit, when it comes to the o'r cyllid yna? A beth sy'n gwneud y applications? And what makes this cyllid yma yn wahanol i'r cyllid arferol funding different from the generic i ddechrau cwmnïau? business start-up funding?

[393] **Ken Skates:** Okay. There are a number of questions there. I'll begin with the last one. There's nothing really that makes this different to what we already provide through Business Wales, other than this would be, from what I understand, ring-fenced. We already—Business Wales's support is of the tune of £80-plus million in European funding to provide support and guidance to small and medium-sized enterprises. Existing hyperlocal operators could access Business Wales support. This, as I understand it, is a ring-fenced fund. I'd like to—

[394] **Bethan Jenkins:** But that it's used for more than just the business advice is what—? Can they apply for that money for the ongoing progress of a hyperlocal?

[395] **Ken Skates:** Sorry, Chair. We've operated a number of non-repayable grants in recent years that could be accessed by hyperlocal media operators or, indeed, by print media operators, or by commercial broadcasters. But what's unique about this is that it's been ring-fenced for one purpose. I would like to explore, potentially with Plaid Cymru, the opportunities that could be had with this money in using it for a very sustainable purpose, that is to train up journalists in hyperlocal media. One of the concerns that I have with using it just as a grant is that, if it's only going to be conducted over two years, knowing the fragility of hyperlocal media, are we offering grants and setting up—this is a very important question we must ask, and it will be asked—hyperlocal media to fail, and/or are we offering grants with the expectation that further support could come? So, I think we just—

[396] **Bethan Jenkins:** 'Well, I would like to have had more money, so if you could have given extra money for that as well'—you can always negotiate as we speak. [*Laughter.*]

[397] **Ken Skates:** But this is why I'd like to just continue this discussion and explore how this money can be used to best effect. Because what I don't want to do is see people employed, last two years and then be out of business without the skills to then transfer over to a different—.

[398] I hope Members appreciate the position I'm coming from, because we couldn't operate this fund, I don't think, in a different way to other funds that we've operated recently on the basis of economic development and sustainability of the business model. However, that said, I also think that there would be wider social benefits to this. Whilst it may just be judged on the economic benefit and the credibility of each and every bid and the sustainability of business models, I also think there would be those obvious social benefits in having a greater degree of news provision.

[399] **Bethan Jenkins:** Okay. Lee Waters.

[400] **Lee Waters:** I do worry about these budget deals where we are agreeing headline figures and policy areas without any of the underpinning policy work having been done in advance. It does seem that there are lots of gaps to be filled here as we go along, and perhaps that's a role the committee can play.

[401] **Bethan Jenkins:** I don't want to go into confidentiality, but we certainly did give ideas at that time—just for the record.

[402] **Ken Skates:** And we can explore further.

[403] **Lee Waters:** Can I just return to the point about the wire service for Wales?

[404] **Ken Skates:** Yes.

[405] **Lee Waters:** This is something we recommended ourselves back in February in our report on broadcasting. So, has no work been done on it since then?

[406] **Ken Skates:** Not since February, no. This is something that—. The work that's been carried out by the taskforce is very similar as well, I think.

[407] **Lee Waters:** Sorry, what taskforce is this?

[408] **Ken Skates:** The taskforce for the Llywydd. The Commission.

[409] **Lee Waters:** Sorry, the Assembly's taskforce. Right. Okay.

[410] **Ken Skates:** So, it's been very similar. I'd wished to wait until the taskforce reported back. That's now happened. I think it would be beneficial now for the forum to consider the respective ideas and then to produce something that really does sit on very solid ground.

[411] **Lee Waters:** The taskforce is just to do with the reporting of the Assembly; the recommendation we made was much broader. It was about areas where the market had withdrawn, so court reporting, council reporting.

[412] **Ken Skates:** Absolutely. I think we probably need to start—. Unless we have the available resource and unless we could get local government to contribute, and get other organisations and bodies to contribute, it would be very expensive to roll out a newswire service that would cover all areas of news provision. So, I think there's potential to start with Government and the Assembly, given that the Llywydd has given a very strong indication that she believes that there is a lack of reporting of what happens here, and given that we in Government are concerned that the UK media is not capturing in the right way, in an accurate way, what's happening in Wales. So, I think we could do something together to begin with, with Government and the Assembly, but then potentially widen it and roll it out in a way that I outlined earlier, with the idea of hubs.

[413] **Lee Waters:** So, our suggestion was to try and use the BBC money to fund this service, rather than fund these embedded—. Would you be open to trying to have a conversation with the BBC on if their Welsh allocation could be used to fund this instead?

[414] **Ken Skates:** I think that would make probably more sense than what is being proposed, and it's certainly a conversation—. If this is the view of the Assembly committee, I would be more than happy to take that up with the BBC, and with your permission, so that it's something that the Assembly Members and the Assembly committee believe would be more beneficial to Wales.

[415] **Lee Waters:** Just on the timeline of the forum, because I think Alun Davies initially said that he had hoped to have that in place before the summer, we're now not going to have a chair until sometime in the autumn.

When are you assuming the whole thing will be up and running and beginning its first piece of work?

[416] **Ken Skates:** I'd need to check with Alun, I'm afraid, but I would anticipate, with the appointment happening during this term, it'd be up and running in the spring, with work being conducted then.

[417] **Lee Waters:** All right. So, we're probably not going to get the first outcomes until this time next year, I guess.

[418] **Ken Skates:** No, I think it'll be before then. Task and finish work can be conducted on a tighter time frame.

[419] **Lee Waters:** But this isn't task and finish, is it?

[420] **Ken Skates:** It would be for the forum, though. The forum would report back on pieces of work, I would imagine, on a more regular basis than—.

[421] **Lee Waters:** So, you would be commissioning the forum to do particular pieces of work, rather than giving a free hand to—

[422] **Ken Skates:** Sorry, no, it would have a free hand, but what we would do is invite the forum to look at issues that are raised within this place, within this Assembly as well. Now, it's independent, so it could choose to reject that, but I think it would be entirely reasonable for the independent forum to be open to suggestions from the Assembly.

[423] **Lee Waters:** Well, if we are going to try to influence the BBC to spend that money differently—

[424] **Ken Skates:** It has to be quick.

[425] **Lee Waters:** —we can't wait that long.

[426] **Ken Skates:** No, I know. I know. That's why I say, Chair, if committee supports the idea, then I'm more than happy to take it up on behalf of the committee and on behalf of Government.

[427] **Lee Waters:** Okay, thank you. Can I just go back to the hyperlocal issue?

[428] **Ken Skates:** Yes.

[429] **Lee Waters:** You said, a few minutes ago, that statutory notices were an area where we should do something, and you said you encourage councils yourself to engage with hyperlocals. We've had a fair bit of evidence that the rules on statutory notices should be changed to make it more reflective of the digital landscape, rather than the old classified model. Is that something that the Welsh Government would be receptive to trying to bring about?

[430] **Ken Skates:** The rules shouldn't have to change. I need to be clear here that legislation does not prevent statutory notices from going online only. I believe that's correct, isn't it? It's based on geographical coverage, and it's based on audience. I've been at pains on numerous occasions to say to local government that consideration of hyperlocal media should be given in publishing statutory notices—often because they have a wider spread and they have a far greater volume of visitors as well.

[431] **Lee Waters:** So, being as the legislation isn't a barrier, and being as you've just said that we should do more, what is it the Welsh Government can do?

13:30

[432] **Ken Skates:** It's largely for local government. We can consider, through our procurement service, the publication of statutory notices. I think some, actually—. In fairness, I believe there are some instances where statutory notices are published both online and in print. But I do think that through the procurement service we can examine—especially given the growth in digital media and given the growth in audience numbers, we can look at improving the provision of statutory notices online. It's certainly something that I've taken up already with our procurement service to ensure that there is equal and fair play being applied to both hyperlocal and print media.

[433] **Lee Waters:** So, the Welsh Government does publish some of your own statutory notices.

[434] **Ken Skates:** I'd need to get a paper to you on this.

[435] **Mr H. Owen:** I think the aim of the notices is that they reach as many people as possible, so I think that's the aim. So, obviously—. But we can

provide you a note with that.

[436] **Ken Skates:** I'd like to confirm and clarify that.

[437] **Lee Waters:** Okay. So, there's not been much work done on that to date, has there?

[438] **Ken Skates:** Not to examine the proportion of Welsh Government statutory notices. But it's my understanding that a significant number, or a majority, of statutory notices come from local government bodies, rather than just from Welsh Government.

[439] **Lee Waters:** Okay, and just finally, to finish then, just to go back to this point about the agreement on the business support for hyperlocals, when do you expect to be able to flesh that out?

[440] **Ken Skates:** This is with Business Wales at the moment, and officials within Business Wales are examining the options of this additional resource, so it's not going to be applied to any existing funding stream. I would hope to be able to bring back a firmer proposal soon. I would like to consult Plaid Cymru on the proposals and the more detailed support that we can give. I'm afraid I cannot give an assurance of when that will be that I bring back proposals. It will be as soon as we can reach agreement.

[441] **Lee Waters:** Given that Cardiff University has a centre of excellence on hyperlocals, will you be involving them in the development of your thinking?

[442] **Ken Skates:** I'd like to involve more—. If we're going to involve external partners, I'd like to involve more than just Cardiff. Given that part of the concern that has been expressed on numerous occasions is that we don't have a good geographical spread of news provision across Wales, I think it would be beneficial to also involve a few others if we are going to reach out to external stakeholders, so potentially Cardiff, and I know there are other good journalism departments in other universities and other—

[443] **Lee Waters:** It would be nice to have some academic rigour behind this policy before we spend £100,000 on something.

[444] **Ken Skates:** I would agree.

[445] **Lee Waters:** Okay, thank you.

[446] **Bethan Jenkins:** Well, it was based on some research in that area, to be honest, that that—. Well, given the information here, it was based on information from the very people that you've quoted, so nothing was done on the back of a fag paper, so—.

[447] **Lee Waters:** A transparent process it was not. So, we have no information about what it involved.

[448] **Bethan Jenkins:** Well, hopefully, now, when we discuss further, some of that information will come out. We'll move on to non-funding streams, and that's Neil Hamilton.

[449] **Neil Hamilton:** You've mentioned skills, journalistic skills, in this session. Have you made or has the Government made any assessment of skills capacity in what we might call the hyperlocal news sector?

[450] **Ken Skates:** I've already said I think the—. I don't know the exact percentage, but it's between 40 and 50 per cent of journalists in the hyperlocal sector have the skills and training that you would expect within a print media environment.

[451] **Neil Hamilton:** Right, because we're just talking about basic communication skills, aren't we, in a sense.

[452] **Ken Skates:** No, a little bit more than that. Knowledge of the law is one.

[453] **Neil Hamilton:** Well, I was coming on to that.

[454] **Ken Skates:** Shorthand might be another, but it's a long time since I undertook my national vocational qualification; I don't know whether it's still an integral part of the NVQ; I believe it is—I think it may have moved on from the form of shorthand I learnt. But, certainly, legal, shorthand and ethics as well, which are very strong in print media. You may disagree. [*Laughter.*]

[455] **Neil Hailton:** I've been on both sides of the fence, and my experience is just the same. [*Interruption.*] So, observed in the breach more—

[456] **Ken Skates:** Chair, I must stress, and perhaps I'm prejudiced in favour of the training of journalists, but the skills that are acquired through

vocational opportunities are very, very valuable to journalists and give journalists confidence. I wouldn't have had the confidence to write and publish stories in my name had I not had the training that I went through when I was at North Wales Newspapers. It can be an incredibly difficult environment in which to operate as a journalist. You're going to hate me talking about when I was a journalist—

[457] **Neil Hamilton:** No.

[458] **Ken Skates:** But, honestly, it can be an incredibly difficult environment in which to operate, where you have—and, Lee, you'll probably appreciate this as well—arrows shot at you from every direction on a daily basis. It's even worse, Chair, than being in politics. And, in order to navigate through safely such an uncomfortable environment, you need to have the confidence that what you are doing is legally right and ethically right as well. So, I do value the training that journalists go through, but, equally, I think it would be wrong to assume that there aren't exemplars in the hyperlocal sector where pretty much all of the journalists are trained in this way. And, again, I could point to some hyperlocal sites where their journalists are fully trained and equipped to be able to deal with any story and to be able to conduct themselves in a way that is absolutely proper.

[459] **Bethan Jenkins:** Neil.

[460] **Neil Hamilton:** I do agree with you about the necessity of knowledge of the law, obviously, and that's not something that you can easily get off your own bat; it does need formal training. So, is the Government able to come forward with specific proposals in this area?

[461] **Ken Skates:** Well, through our all-age apprenticeship offer, through the employability plan, I would hope that new organisations would take advantage of the skills training provision and the support that we can offer. The problem that we face is that, all too often today, news organisations, because they've cut their news rooms to the bone, cannot release, even for one day a fortnight, their journalists to undergo training, and that's a real tragedy. And, again, Chair, that might be where we could put to use the resource we've already talked about. We're spreading that pretty thin now, but I do think that that's an area that could be addressed with this.

[462] **Bethan Jenkins:** Dawn.

[463] **Dawn Bowden:** Yes, thank you, Chair. I have just a few questions around Welsh-language journalism.

[464] **Ken Skates:** Okay.

[465] **Dawn Bowden:** We've seen that Welsh-language journalism is getting grants at the moment—or certainly in 2015–16—of over £1.6 million a year, compared to just over £600,000 or nearly £700,000 for English-language journalism. What assessment has the Welsh Government made in terms of the value for money that that provides?

[466] **Ken Skates:** Hywel, I'll ask you to answer these questions.

[467] **Mr H. Owen:** O ran y Gymraeg, mae'n cefnogaeth ni o ran newyddiaduraeth yn mynd, o fewn portffolio'r Ysgrifennydd Cabinet, i'r cyllid sy'n mynd drwy'r cyngor llyfrau i gyhoeddiadau fel *Golwg360* a chylchgronau ar yr ochr Gymraeg ac ar yr ochr Saesneg, ac wedyn, trwy uned iaith Gymraeg y Llywodraeth, i bethau fel papurau bro. Felly, dyna'n prif bethau ni.

Mr H. Owen: In terms of the Welsh language, our support for journalism lies within the portfolio of the Cabinet Secretary in the funding that goes through the books council to publications such as *Golwg360* and Welsh and English language magazines, and then, through the language unit at the Government, we support things such as the *papurau bro*. So, those are our main things.

[468] Ar yr ochr Saesneg, er enghraifft—gyda *Golwg*, yn amlwg, ar yr ochr Gymraeg, heb *Golwg*, ni fyddai plwraliaeth; dim ond y BBC a fyddai ar gael. Ar yr ochr Saesneg, wrth gwrs, nid oes gwasanaeth newyddion drwy'r Saesneg sy'n debyg i *Golwg360*. Yn amlwg, mae hwnnw'n rhywbeth y mae nifer o bobl sydd wedi rhoi tystiolaeth i chi wedi sôn efallai y dylai gael ei sefydlu.

With regard to the English side of things, for example—without *Golwg*, there wouldn't be plurality; the BBC would be available alone. On the English side, of course, there's no English-medium provision similar to *Golwg360*. That's something that several people who've given evidence to you have spoken about, that that's something that should be established.

[469] Yn amlwg, mae'r farchnad ar yr ochr Gymraeg yn wahanol. Felly, yn amlwg, ni fyddem ni'n diystyru sefydlu rhywbeth ar yr ochr Saesneg

The market on the Welsh-language side is different. So, we wouldn't discount establishing something on the English side similar to *Golwg360*,

tebyg i Golwg360, ond yn amlwg but we would have to undertake byddai'n rhaid gwneud ymchwil ac research and look at funding edrych ar flaenoriaethau cyllid er priorities to establish that. mwyn sefydlu hwnnw.

[470] **Dawn Bowden:** But I think my question was: does the Welsh Government consider that nearly £1.7 million is proven value for money in terms of Welsh-language journalism at the moment?

[471] **Mr H. Owen:** O beth rŷm ni'n ei weld, yn sicr. Er enghraifft, mae'r arian sy'n mynd tuag at *Golwg*—mae yna 18 o newyddiadurwyr yn cael eu cyflogi gan *Golwg*. Felly, heb hwnnw—a wedyn mae'r cyllid sy'n mynd ar bethau fel *Barn* ac ati. Mae llai o newyddiadurwyr, ond mae rhai rhan amser fanna. Felly, mae yna newyddiadurwyr ar yr ochr Gymraeg yn cael eu hariannu ac yn cael eu penodi.

Mr H. Owen: From what we see, certainly, yes. The funding that goes towards *Golwg*—there are 18 journalists employed by *Golwg*. So, without that—and then there's the funding that goes to things such as *Barn*. They have fewer journalists, but there are some part-time journalists there. So, there are journalists on the Welsh-medium side that are funded and appointed.

[472] Yn amlwg, ar yr ochr Saesneg, nid ydym ni'n yr un sefyllfa, wrth gwrs. Yn amlwg, mae hwnnw'n rhywbeth efallai bydd yn rhaid i ni ystyried wrth fynd ymlaen.

But, on the English side, we're not in the same situation, clearly, and that's something that perhaps we will have to consider as we move forward.

[473] **Ken Skates:** I think, Chair, if I just may add to this, there are wider economic and social benefits as well, because those 18 journalists, it's my understanding—correct me if I'm wrong—I'm not sure any of those are based within Cardiff.

[474] **Mr H. Owen:** There's only one based in Cardiff; the majority are in Lampeter, five in Caernarfon and one in Swansea.

[475] **Ken Skates:** I think that's really important both in terms of sharing wealth-creating opportunities, but also making sure that the respective regions of Wales are well catered for and well represented.

[476] **Dawn Bowden:** So, do you have any plans to change the current level

of funding for Welsh language journalism? Up or down? Stay the same?

[477] **Ken Skates:** It would largely be a decision for the Welsh Books Council. We don't get involved.

[478] **Mr H. Owen:** On the Welsh language, we don't get involved with funding decisions, and obviously *papurau bro* are funded through the Minister for Welsh language's portfolio.

[479] **Ken Skates:** If the committee wishes to have an additional paper from the Minister for Lifelong Learning and Welsh Language we would be happy to facilitate that.

[480] **Mr H. Owen:** Obviously, with the Welsh language, all these issues within your portfolio contribute to delivering the Welsh language strategy.

[481] **Dawn Bowden:** That would be useful. Just a couple of other quick questions. I just wondered whether you feel that the Welsh Government's funding of Welsh language journalism sets a precedent, in a sense, for where we can find proof of market failure.

[482] **Mr H. Owen:** As I said earlier, I think without our support—going back to Golwg 360 and the plurality there—in the Welsh language, without *Golwg* the BBC would be the only provider there.

[483] **Dawn Bowden:** It would be the only one. So, in that sense it does. Do you think the Welsh Government successfully manages concerns about impartiality of state-funded news? Because it's something generally governments move away from, but we clearly have state-funded news here. It's about impartiality I guess.

[484] **Mr H. Owen:** The publications I've just mentioned, we don't get involved in any way with them.

[485] **Dawn Bowden:** You don't get involved. It's arm's length in that sense. Okay, that's fine.

[486] **Ken Skates:** It's one of the advantages of channelling it through an arm's-length body.

[487] **Dawn Bowden:** That's fine.

[488] **Bethan Jenkins:** I just wanted to add a tiny bit to that. You are satisfied—. Do you do a review of—? I know you say you don't get involved in the editorial decisions, but do you get involved in making some sort of analysis of its effectiveness? Are the 18 journalists, for example, enough? Are they able to cover all bases? Are they able to perform the roles effectively? That type of thing.

[489] **Mr H. Owen:** The Cabinet Secretary has meetings, for example, with the books council and *Golwg* have been to see you fairly recently. We have meetings with the Welsh Books Council. So, these issues are all discussed at those meetings.

[490] **Bethan Jenkins:** Océ. Os nad **Bethan Jenkins:** Okay, if there are no oes cwestiynau ychwanegol, rydym further questions, we're going to yn mynd i gael seibiant am gwpwl o take a break now just for a couple of funudau nes ein bod ni'n cael y minutes before the next session with sesiwn arall gyda chi. Diolch yn fawr you. Thank you very much. iawn.

[491] **Ken Skates:** Can I thank you, Chair, and the committee, for taking a keen interest in this subject area? I really appreciate it.

[492] **Bethan Jenkins:** Thank you.

Gohiriwyd y cyfarfod rhwng 13:42 ac 13:49.

The meeting adjourned between 13:42 and 13:49.

Adolygiad Annibynnol o Gymorth ar gyfer Cyhoeddi a Llenyddiaeth yng Nghymru: Tystiolaeth gan Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi a'r Seilwaith

The Independent Review of Support for Publishing and Literature in Wales: Evidence from Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure

[493] **Bethan Jenkins:** Rydym ni'n **Bethan Jenkins:** We're moving on now symud ymlaen yn awr at eitem 9: yr to item 9: the independent review of adolygiad annibynnol o gymorth ar support for publishing and literature gyfer cyhoeddi a llenyddiaeth yng in Wales, and evidence from the Nghymru, a thystiolaeth gan yr Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Ysgrifennydd Cabinet dros yr Infrastructure. We have already

Economi a'r Seilwaith, ac rydym ni wedi yn barod croesawu'ch tîm, heb law Peter Owen, sef pennaeth cangen polisi celfyddydau Llywodraeth Cymru. Croeso yn ôl i chi i gyd, a chroeso i Peter yn benodol.

[494] Eto, mae gennym ni themâu o gwestiynau ar y pwnc penodol yma sydd wedi tanio dychymyg y byd llenyddiaeth yma yng Nghymru. Fy nghwestiwn cyntaf i i chi fel Ysgrifennydd Cabinet yw: pam ydych chi'n credu bod yna wahaniaeth barn syfrdanol rhwng yr hyn y mae Llenyddiaeth Cymru yn ei ddweud a'r hyn y mae'r adroddiad gan Medwin Hughes yn ei ddweud am y sefyllfa bresennol?

welcomed your team, apart from Peter Owen, head of the arts policy branch with the Welsh Government. Welcome to all of you and to Peter specifically.

Again, we have themed questions on this particular topic, which has certainly sparked the interest of the literary world here in Wales. My first question, therefore, to you as Cabinet Secretary is: why do you think that there's been such a disagreement between what Literature Wales say and what the report that Medwin Hughes has produced has to say about the situation?

[495] **Ken Skates:** Thank you, Chair, and thanks for the opportunity for me to appear today. I imagine that both organisations—or the panel and Literature Wales—and others will have given their views on why they feel so passionately about this review and the subsequent report. It's the first time that there's been an independent review of this nature. What I should say, I think, is that it won't be the last, because I do believe that there should be a requirement to regularly review publishing and literature, and, indeed, any other area of delivery that attracts taxpayers' money. I think it's also imperative that we recognise there were more than 50 recommendations, but the criticism, the anger, the upset, is focused on a small number. It's therefore important that we recognise that there are areas where there is agreement, and those areas could and probably should be taken forward.

[496] Inevitably, whenever an organisation is criticised, it will seek to defend itself, and so I'm not surprised that those organisations—. Certainly, within the arts, people are rightly upset if they are criticised in terms of delivery, and so I would expect it. What I would also hope for, though, is an ability to be able to recognise that changes must be made, and whilst I've made no decision on the recommendations that have been forwarded to me, I certainly think that the status quo is no longer acceptable.

[497] **Bethan Jenkins:** A oes gennych chi farn ynglŷn â'r ffaith bod y sefydliadau yma wedi cymryd nid yn unig y ffaith—nid yn unig Llenyddiaeth Cymru ond y cyngor llyfrau—? Mae yna feirniadaeth o bob sector wedi cael ei thanlinellu yn yr adroddiad, ond a ydych chi'n cael y syniad bod pobl wedi derbyn hynny neu'n gallu gweld ynddo'i hun fod yna bethau mae'n nhw'n gallu eu gwella? Achos nid ydw i wedi cael yr argraff honno, yn eistedd o'r gadair, eu bod nhw wedi gweld bod angen gwneud hynny.

Bethan Jenkins: Do you have an opinion on the fact these organisations—not only Literature Wales, but the books council also—? There has been criticism from all sectors noted in this report, but do you have the idea that people have accepted this, or can people see that there are things they can improve upon? Because I haven't had that impression at all, sitting here, that people are able to see that improvements need to be made.

[498] **Ken Skates:** I must scrutinise, to be honest, the evidence that's been given by those organisations to this committee to really judge whether the acceptance for change has really been the case right across all the organisations. I do think, though, that change must happen, and whilst criticism is sometimes very difficult to bear, I do believe that there are opportunities for the sector to be strengthened, and I think it's absolutely essential that all organisations that are involved, that have been criticised, that are part of this review process, look to the sector as a whole for who they should deliver to. This is about making sure that we make best use of taxpayers' money, that we strengthen the sector, that we serve the interests of the sector, and, ultimately, the interests of the people of Wales.

[499] **Bethan Jenkins:** Roeddech chi wedi dweud eich bod chi'n credu bod yr argymhellion, ac rydw i'n dyfynnu, yn—. Rydych chi'n disgrifio

Bethan Jenkins: You have said that you think that the recommendations, and I quote, here—. You describe

[500] 'cryfder a grym y dystiolaeth a ddaeth i law'

'the significant weight and compelling nature of the evidence received'

[501] yn yr adroddiad hwnnw. A ydych chi wedi cael unrhyw dystiolaeth bellach sydd wedi peri

in the report. Have you had any further evidence that has made you rethink this situation, or are you still

ichi ailasesu'r farn honno, neu a of the opinion that the report is quite ydych chi dal o'r farn bod yr strong in its content? adroddiad yn gadarn yn ei gynnwys?

[502] **Ken Skates:** Well, the report is based on evidence from more than 800 respondents, which is one of the largest numbers of responses that we've ever had to a consultation, so it did provide a compelling evidence base. I've met with a number of the organisations since the report was published. I've met with the panel as well. I do believe that there are areas of service delivery that are outside the core funding and core functions of some of the organisations that are carried out superbly, and I have been dwelling on that over the summer months. For example, in terms of Literature Wales, the delivery of major event supported activities is second to none. In terms of Roald Dahl and so forth, Literature Wales have carried out an excellent job. That is not part of the core funding; that's project funding as part of a partnership approach between Literature Wales and other organisations. So, in reflecting on additional service areas, I think it's fair to say that whilst the report focuses largely on the core functions, there are additional areas of service delivery that deserve to be recognised.

[503] **Bethan Jenkins:** Lee Waters.

[504] **Lee Waters:** I'm just wondering if you feel you've been well served by the report.

[505] **Ken Skates:** Yes, I do. I do. I've gone through it, I've had additional meetings with the panel. I think the report makes some incredibly valuable observations and recommendations. As I said in the summer, I'm minded to accept them. I'm going to await the outcome of this committee's inquiry before I reach a definitive position on each of the recommendations, but I do think I've been very well served. Again, I've got to go back to the start when I say this is the first review of its kind that's happened, and therefore it was always going to be controversial because the organisations involved in it have not been reviewed in this way. So, it didn't come as a surprise to me that there was some vociferous criticism. Since the review was published, we have had further correspondence, but it's worth saying that it's roughly even—the correspondence that we've had back—in terms of volume for and against. I think we've had 40 or so letters: about 20 critical of the panel's report, around about 16 in favour, and I think four pretty neutral. So, by and large, if you compare the 40 to 800 plus responses, I think it demonstrates that the panel's recommendations are largely in line with the sector that

responded to the consultation.

[506] **Lee Waters:** But surely this can't be a quantitative exercise. In the evidence we've received, there are some significant question marks about the rigour of the judgments that have been reached based on the evidence.

[507] **Ken Skates:** I'd welcome the committee's views on that and the evidence to back that up—I really would. And that's why I say I'm going to await the outcome of this inquiry before I reach a final position on each of the recommendations. But I would welcome—. Anything to elaborate that, I'd very much welcome. It would be helpful.

[508] **Lee Waters:** Can I just make one final general point? It was a point I raised with you when you made the statement in Plenary on this. There seems to be a fundamental intellectual flaw in the case, because on the one hand the report makes a series of criticisms against Literature Wales, and on that basis justifies moving functions to the Welsh Books Council, which it concedes would need to make significant changes itself to be in a position to carry out these functions. So, I'm not entirely sure, just on the basis of intellectual consistency, how they can say on the one hand, 'This organisation isn't up to the job,' but 'Neither is this one yet, but we're still going to go ahead and give it all these functions.'

[509] **Ken Skates:** I think the Member makes a fair point. That's why I said in the Chamber that I was only 'minded' to accept the recommendations. I've been considering them further and I will await this committee's report before reaching the final decision on those recommendations.

[510] **Lee Waters:** Thank you.

[511] **Bethan Jenkins:** Suzy Davies.

[512] **Suzy Davies:** Thank you. You've mentioned it twice in your most recent answer, there, the 800 responses, and I appreciate you wouldn't have seen a big pile of documents, but I wonder if you can just give us an assurance that you will investigate that figure a little more closely, because my understanding is that one of the questions asked in reaching that 800 figure was 'Are you a reader?' Well, I would imagine that everybody else who responded to that was going to say 'yes'. I suspect—but obviously don't know—there was a huge element of duplication in arriving at that figure.

[513] **Ken Skates:** Chair, I did ask my officials to carry out a quality assurance process on the responses. I can ask Paul—.

[514] **Mr Kindred:** The 829 figure is the number for individual responses to the survey. I think that's the question you were asking.

[515] **Suzy Davies:** Were they all from 829 different people?

[516] **Mr Kindred:** People or organisations, yes. I mean, the survey was—.

[517] **Suzy Davies:** That's what I'm trying to establish.

[518] **Mr Kindred:** To be absolutely clear, the survey was an anonymous survey, so we didn't collect the names of individuals.

[519] **Bethan Jenkins:** So, they could have done it again. They could have filled in quite a lot anonymously.

[520] **Mr Kindred:** That's potentially possible with any survey of this type, I suppose, but it doesn't—.

[521] **Mr H. Owen:** The individuals who responded—not all of them—provided very detailed comments as part of their responses, and they were different responses. They weren't the same.

[522] **Suzy Davies:** You've answered my question, really, because it's very easy, isn't it, on something like this, to just put in 500 responses that are all the same.

[523] **Mr Kindred:** Yes.

[524] **Ken Skates:** Chair, the Member, actually—. Suzy raised this in the Chamber when I made the statement, and it was following Suzy Davies's question that I then asked officials to go through all of that evidence again, so that we could have a level of confidence—a good level of confidence—that there were no repeat submissions.

[525] **Suzy Davies:** Well, thank you for the answer.

[526] **Mr Kindred:** It certainly isn't the case that there's sort of a standard answer that's been repeated many times.

[527] **Bethan Jenkins:** Yes, template answers.

[528] **Ken Skates:** It's not like planning applications, where you often get the same—.

[529] **Suzy Davies:** Thank you very much. Thanks, Chair.

[530] **Bethan Jenkins:** Okay. Dai Lloyd.

[531] **Dai Lloyd:** Diolch, Gadeirydd. **Dai Lloyd:** Thank you, Chair. Part of the challenge for us as a committee when we're trying to scrutinise this difficult situation in trying to compare who said what to whom is the fact that we can't see all of the reports. Naturally, the Medwin Hughes report is available, but there are influential elements that did influence the findings of the panel that we can't see. For example, the report of the arts council on their client, Literature Wales—we haven't seen that report. The Arad report that Professor Medwin Hughes also mentioned quite substantially in the several letters that we've received since then—so there's that Arad report as well as the details about this 800. Is it possible for us to see those reports, because we are scrutinising this process and we're trying to decide on a way forward?

Rhan o'r her i ni fel pwyllgor i drio craffu ar y sefyllfa digon anodd yma a thrio cymharu pwy a ddwedodd beth wrth bwy ydy'r ffaith nad ydym ni wedi gallu gweld yr adroddiadau i gyd. Yn naturiol, mae adroddiad Medwin Hughes, ond mae yna elfennau dylanwadol gwnaeth ddylanwadu'n helaeth ar gasgliadau'r panel nad ydym ni'n gallu gweld, megis, dywedwch, adroddiad y cyngor celfyddydau ar eu cleient, Llenyddiaeth Cymru—nid ydym ni wedi gallu gweld yr adroddiad hwnnw. Mae adroddiad Arad yr oedd yr Athro Medwin Hughes hefyd yn sôn amdano'n eithaf helaeth, wel, yn y sawl llythyr rydym ni wedi'i gael ers hynny—felly, mae'r adroddiad Arad yna hefyd, yn ogystal â'r manylion am yr 800 yma. A ydy'n bosib i ni gael gweld rheini, achos rydym ni yn craffu ar y broses yma ac yn trio penderfynu ar y ffordd ymlaen?

14:00

[532] **Ken Skates:** I think Dai Lloyd raises a very valuable question. If the committee would provide me with a list of the reports that you'd wish to see, we'll consult with those who provided the reports. If they're content for them

to be shared with you, I'm happy to make them available. In terms of the responses, we will seek to redact any information that would give away the identity of individuals and, again, I'd be happy for you to see the responses.

[533] **Mr H. Owen:** And to release the Arad report is one of the recommendations of the report. So, obviously, when we respond, you know, we will be fully responding to that, yes.

[534] **Dai Lloyd:** But also the—.

[535] Yr un y cyngor celfyddydau There's the arts council report as well
hefyd ar Llenyddiaeth Cymru. on Literature Wales.

[536] The arts council.

[537] **Ken Skates:** The what, sorry, I didn't—?

[538] **Mr H. Owen:** Investment review.

[539] **Bethan Jenkins:** The investment review.

[540] **Dai Lloyd:** Yes, the original, yes.

[541] **Ken Skates:** Yes.

[542] **Bethan Jenkins:** Ond a ydym **Bethan Jenkins:** But can we see the
ni'n gallu gweld yr un Arad cyn i ni Arad report before we provide you
roi tystiolaeth gerbron chi? with evidence?

[543] **Mr H. Owen:** Mae'r un Arad, ar **Mr H. Owen:** Well, the Arad report, at
hyn o bryd—. Mae'r crynodeb ar gael, the moment—. The summary is
felly, os ydych chi'n mynd i'r wefan available of the Arad report, so, if
berthnasol gallwch chi gael yr you do go to the relevant website,
adroddiad llawn nawr. you can get the full report now.

[544] **Bethan Jenkins:** Rydym ni'n **Bethan Jenkins:** We can get the full
gallu cael yr adroddiad llawn. report.

[545] **Mr H. Owen:** Ydych. Os rydych **Mr H. Owen:** Yes. If you apply for it,
chi'n gwneud cais amdano fe, you can have it now.
gallwch chi gael ef nawr.

[546] **Bethan Jenkins:** O, gwneud **Bethan Jenkins:** Oh, apply. Okay, fine. cais. Ie, iawn.

[547] **Mr H. Owen:** A dyna un o'r **Mr H. Owen:** And that's one of the pethau mae'r panel wedi'i awgrymu— things the panel have dylai'r adroddiad llawn gael ei recommended—that the full report ryddhau. Felly, mae'r adroddiad—. Os should be released. So, as long as rydych chi'n gwneud cais, gallwch chi you make an application for that, you gael yr adroddiad llawn nawr. can have it now.

[548] **Bethan Jenkins:** Ocê. Grêt, **Bethan Jenkins:** Okay. Great, thank diolch. Dawn Bowden. you. Dawn Bowden.

[549] **Dawn Bowden:** Thank you, Chair. I think I'm just going to follow up a little bit on some of the points that Lee was raising. I think you may have covered this in other responses, Ken, but initially you were talking about how you were minded to accept the report, and that seemed to be based on the weight of evidence, but were there any particular grounds at that initial stage that made you take the view that you were minded to accept those recommendations, or have you kind of moved on a little bit from that now?

[550] **Ken Skates:** That would be often the normal course of action, to state that you'd be minded to accept them, based on an initial reading of the report, based on initial access to the information that backs it up. I felt that I required additional time to give to further analysis of the report. I also felt it important to engage with the organisations that were featured very heavily within the report, and, for that reason, I thought it would be more sensible to say that I was minded to accept the recommendations than to, at that point, accept them all.

[551] **Dawn Bowden:** Okay. So, if I understand you correctly, then, your current thinking in terms of implementing any of those recommendations is that we still have a bit of a way to go yet in terms of the evidence coming to this committee and—

[552] **Ken Skates:** I would like to see the outcome of this committee's work for reaching a position on the recommendations.

[553] **Dawn Bowden:** Right, and that would include the transferring of functions from Literature Wales to the Welsh Books Council. Is that right?

[554] **Ken Skates:** Yes.

[555] **Dawn Bowden:** That's fine, thank you. Can I just ask you a couple of questions then on the process itself, the review process itself? If you could tell us how Welsh Government officials fed into the review process—in other words, you know, was it officials who were suggesting the areas for the topics of discussion or were you just merely an enabling—?

[556] **Ken Skates:** It was secretariat—.

[557] **Mr Kindred:** Do you want me to take that?

[558] **Ken Skates:** Paul, please.

[559] **Mr Kindred:** So, in practice, it was actually Hywel and I who provided the secretariat to the review panel. Our job was to support their work. So, within the terms of reference that were set upfront by the Welsh Government, it was for them to decide who they wanted to speak to, which topic areas they wanted to look at, and our role was as—

[560] **Dawn Bowden:** So, you were facilitating.

[561] **Mr Kindred:** An enabling role, absolutely.

[562] **Dawn Bowden:** So there wasn't any kind of direction or recommendations from you about those areas?

[563] **Mr Kindred:** No, no.

[564] **Ken Skates:** No, none whatsoever.

[565] **Dawn Bowden:** Okay. And so can you just explain then how your existing understanding of the publishing and literature sector in Wales fed into the report?

[566] **Mr Kindred:** Sure. Hywel and I are the media policy team, so we're obviously available to them to answer questions on our area of work. So, for example, Hywel leads on our relationship with the books council, so he was available to them to answer questions on that. But, separately, the panel called officials to give evidence from the arts policy team—Peter came to one

of the meetings of the panel. Also, Welsh language officials appeared before the panel and gave evidence, similarly, officials from education who are involved in the production of educational resources in Welsh and English. So, a number of officials from across Welsh Government who either interact with publishing and literature or are engaged with stakeholders or are affected by what goes on in the sector gave evidence to the panel during its work.

[567] **Dawn Bowden:** Sure, that's fine. Okay. That's fine. Okay, thank you, Chair.

[568] **Suzy Davies:** So, following up that question, it would have been clear to the panel what the Welsh Government expected publishing and literature to mean, so that the final report wasn't prepared on something that was too narrow or too wide in its focus. I appreciate there are terms of reference there, but there are always fuzzy edges to those, aren't there?

[569] **Mr Kindred:** The panel were appointed on the basis that they were experienced and knowledgeable of the breadth of the sector. I understand where the question is coming from, and I think the chair of the panel tried to address that point last week in terms of how they took evidence from across the breadth of the sector.

[570] **Suzy Davies:** Okay, thanks.

[571] **Bethan Jenkins:** Dai Lloyd.

[572] **Dai Lloyd:** Gan barhau â'r broses adolygu, a diolch yn fawr iawn ichi, gyda llaw, Ysgrifennydd Cabinet, am yr addewid yna i geisio rhyddhau adroddiad cyngor y celfyddydau, yr adolygiad buddsoddi yna, a hefyd adroddiad Arad. Rydym ni'n ddiolchgar iawn am y cymorth yn fanna. Ond, yn fwy cyffredinol rwan, a oedd yna unrhyw beth yn y broses adolygu ei hunan a fuasai'n peri i chi fel Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet neu eich swyddogion ddisgwyl yr ymateb llafar a gafwyd gan rai yn y sector, neu a ddaeth o'n syndod llwyr ichi, yr

Dai Lloyd: To continue with the review process—thank you very much, by the way, Cabinet Secretary, for that promise to try to release the arts council report, that investment review, and the Arad report. We're very grateful to you for that support. But, more generally now, was there anything in the review process itself that would cause you as Cabinet Secretary or your officials to expect this vociferous response that came from some in the sector, or was it a surprise to you when the response came?

ymateb, pan ddaeth o allan?

[573] **Ken Skates:** Not in terms of the process. I'm content with the process. But, as I've already indicated, given that this was the first time such a review had been undertaken and given that there was criticism of organisations within the review, that vociferous response did not surprise me. What I should say is that, whilst I accept that emotions have been running quite high on this, I do not believe that the criticism, and, at times, attacks, that some of the panel members have had to endure have been acceptable whatsoever.

[574] **Dai Lloyd:** Diolch yn fawr am hynny. Felly, yn nhermau unrhyw broses adolygu tebyg yn y dyfodol, nid ydych chi wedi gallu gweld unrhyw ddiffygion yn y broses adolygu y tro yma wnaeth ddod â'r broses adolygu yn gyffredinol. Dyna beth rwyf eisiau gyrru ato.

Dai Lloyd: Thank you very much for that. With regard to any similar review process in future, have you been able to identify any deficiencies in the review process now that caused that vociferous response? Do we need to change the process in general? That's what I'm driving at.

[575] **Ken Skates:** I think it's important that we all learn lessons. I think it's important we all take criticism if it's going to be levelled at you and if it stands on good grounds. One thing that I would accept is that, in the future, a similar review—and these reviews will happen again—should be preceded by a level of engagement with the organisations that are going to be reviewed to gain their confidence that individual panel members cover a wide range of subject areas. I think one area that was of concern at the beginning of the review process involved publishers and whether there was somebody with sufficient experience of publishing on the panel. In the future, what I'd like to do is make sure that all organisations, all the representative bodies, are confident that all of the skillsets are represented on the panel.

[576] Now it subsequently—I think I'm right in saying this, Chair. It was subsequently found that, actually, because of the evidence that was taken from publishers, that there was confidence that the expertise of the publishing industry was being taken account of. But, in the future, I'd like to ensure that all of the organisations are content with the skillset of the panel.

[577] **Dai Lloyd:** Diolch yn fawr.

[578] **Bethan Jenkins:** Just for me to add before I bring Lee in, I think what I found quite odd was that there were some comments made on the culture in Literature Wales, when, potentially, the panel may not have been able to have made that type of analysis, having not lived that experience outside of that panel discussion. So, I'm just wondering what views you had on some of the perhaps more generalised criticisms that are not from the 800 representations you had about some of those—. I feel that some of those criticisms are based perhaps on individuals' attitudes at meetings and then that was carried through to how, potentially, they would work in another setting, as opposed to a judgment on the evidence that was given.

[579] **Ken Skates:** Chair, I think there were tensions during the review process, tensions between individuals, between the panel and some of those who gave evidence. It's probably a question that's best channelled towards the panel, because I think the views that were expressed by the panel were evidence-based, but, in terms of commenting on the culture within organisations, I think that is something that perhaps the panel could, or panel members could, give more insight into.

[580] **Bethan Jenkins:** Okay, thanks. Lee Waters.

[581] **Lee Waters:** As far as I'm concerned, I don't think anybody's emerged from this with any credit. I think the only judgment that has come out of it well is your original one that this was a sector that needed to be reviewed. Based on the performance we've seen, I welcome what you said, that there'll be further reviews—

[582] **Ken Skates:** Yes, absolutely—

[583] **Lee Waters:** —because I think my level of confidence that the cultures and personalities within the sector are the ones that you'd want to see is severely in doubt. You just said that the evidence was clear. There's one piece of contested evidence I wonder if your officials, perhaps, could help with. It relates to the judgment that's been quoted a number of times that Literature Wales was at red risk by the Arts Council for Wales and that, on that basis, the panel decided that there were question marks about their suitability to continue these tasks. The panel have told us that they had a very clear understanding from the arts council that there was a generic statement of red risk against Literature Wales; they confirmed that to us last week. The chief executive of the arts council has said in writing, and again before this committee, that the red risk applied only to the fact that

Literature Wales was going through this review and that in itself raised a question mark about its future, and therefore it was at risk.

[584] Now, there was a meeting in October 2016, which your officials were present at. The notes of that meeting are not publicly available, but, from what we understand about that meeting, the arts council did say that the company has always been at red, which is different from what they said to us last week. So, I wonder if you'd just clarify your understanding of that meeting and what the nature of this red-risk assessment was.

[585] **Ken Skates:** Chair, I'll ask my officials to do that, but, before they do, could I say that, if we are able to provide the minutes that Lee Waters refers to, I'd be happy to do so.

[586] **Lee Waters:** Thank you.

[587] **Ken Skates:** If we're able to do that, I think it's very important that the committee sees them.

[588] **Mr Kindred:** So, I think what you've just said about what was actually said at the meeting is correct. There was a discussion about how red-risk scenarios were managed in terms of the governance of not just Literature Wales but national companies generally by the arts council. This issue about red risk had previously been acknowledged in evidence from the arts council and, at that meeting, was discussed again. The arts council, as far as I recall—and the notes of the meeting tally with this recollection—didn't raise any change in the status.

[589] **Lee Waters:** So, in your understanding, the arts council did regard Literature Wales as being an organisation generally at red risk—not just the fact that they were going through this process.

[590] **Ken Skates:** Peter, do you—?

[591] **Mr P. Owen:** They have that red-risk rating, but I think it's important to understand that red risk in the arts council's view does not necessarily represent that an organisation is (a) either unfit to receive public funds, or (b) in imminent danger of collapse. It means that the organisation is facing a number of challenges and, as you've already pointed out, it may also just reflect the fact that there are external factors, like this review, that potentially have the ability to threaten the organisation in some way. I think

you heard evidence from the arts council the other day saying that one of the challenges with it is that it's a relatively new organisation. I know the word 'new' has become in itself quite contentious in the context of this review, given that the organisation is five or six years old, but, certainly, given the history of bringing those disparate organisations together under one banner, I think we, as officials, would accept that it was right that the arts council continue to regard this as an organisation that needed some nurturing and assistance. But, as the Minister's already pointed out, we certainly weren't hearing anything as officials from the arts council that it felt that Literature Wales was in danger as an organisation and potentially not able to carry out its work.

[592] **Lee Waters:** It would be very helpful to us to be very, very clear about this. So, can you just confirm that you think the panel was reasonable in believing that there was a general risk around Literature Wales that went beyond the fact they were going through this review—that was a reasonable conclusion for the panel to draw?

14:15

[593] **Mr Kindred:** The panel were told about red risk status. I think this issue about general red risk has been slightly misunderstood, and I think the chair of the panel tried to get this point across in his evidence. Peter's absolutely right—there can be red risks attached to various different types of activity within an organisation, and that was just one of a number of factors that influenced the panel's conclusions. But obviously the discussion about the six-year history of Literature Wales, which involved evidence from the arts council about red risks throughout that period, predated the constitution of the panel and predated the review. So, I absolutely accept that there could be a red risk because of the review now, but, clearly, the panel were taking evidence from the arts council about the history of the organisation, and some of that predated the constitution of the review.

[594] **Lee Waters:** So, you're saying the panel was right in thinking that there was a general level of risk. That was a reasonable conclusion to draw, was it?

[595] **Mr Kindred:** The panel were given information about red risk and various different categories across the organisation. I think a general red risk—that's something that's an over-inflation—.

[596] **Lee Waters:** Well, I think it's really important. I hate to go on about it,

but it's a really important point, because Literature Wales were saying, with the backing of the arts council, that this issue of red risks referred only to the fact they were going through the review. The panel, quoting the arts council at this meeting in October, is saying, 'No, it's not that—it goes beyond that. There was a broader risk to the organisation.'

[597] **Mr Kindred:** It isn't just about the risk of the review, because there were red risks attached to Literature Wales prior to the constitution of the review. That is the evidence that the panel received from the arts council.

[598] **Lee Waters:** Right. I think we need to pursue that with the arts council, because there's a tension between what they've said there, I think.

[599] **Ken Skates:** I feel there's an unease at this contradiction, and, again, I'd like to facilitate any discussion, if I may, between the committee and the respective organisations so that this can be dealt with properly.

[600] **Bethan Jenkins:** Can I just for the record as well we have received the minutes of that meeting, but we didn't want to indicate that we had earlier, because we weren't sure of the status of that? But we have received it, so there's no need for you to send it to us. But we just wanted to clarify that so that it was correct for the record.

[601] **Ken Skates:** Thank you.

[602] **Bethan Jenkins:** But can I just ask you, before I bring Suzy in—

[603] **Lee Waters:** I've got one more question, actually.

[604] **Bethan Jenkins:** Okay. Sorry. I just want to clarify, though, because what I wasn't sure of last week is whether Medwin Hughes knew what the red risk meant. So, they were given an explanation, were they, of what that was—the detailed breakdown of what a red risk was?

[605] **Mr Kindred:** There was extensive correspondence back and fore between the panel and the arts council. It wasn't just about a particular evidence session. So, there was quite a detailed explanation given, yes.

[606] **Bethan Jenkins:** Okay. Is it on this, or shall—

[607] **Ken Skates:** Chair, would you like us to—?

[608] **Suzy Davies:** [*Inaudible.*]

[609] **Ken Skates:** Sorry, would you like to ask whether that correspondence could be made available to you on a confidential basis?

[610] **Bethan Jenkins:** Yes, please.

[611] **Suzy Davies:** And that was also my question.

[612] **Bethan Jenkins:** That was your question, was it?

[613] **Suzy Davies:** Because there'll be several key performance indicators against which risk is assessed, and we didn't get any sense of that from anybody. So, thank you.

[614] **Bethan Jenkins:** Yes, please.

[615] **Ken Skates:** I'll ask for that.

[616] **Lee Waters:** As well as providing us with that note that we have, it would be useful for us to be able to publish that note. So, if you're able to check whether or not we can do that.

[617] **Ken Skates:** Yes. I want us to be as transparent as we possibly can in this regard, because there have been vociferous comments and a vociferous response from many, and I think it's absolutely imperative that we provide a complete, transparent picture of what's been happening and what has occurred, and make sure that people have confidence in the report.

[618] **Bethan Jenkins:** Okay. Did you have anything else, Lee?

[619] **Lee Waters:** Yes, there's just one other thing. I'd appreciate the clarification of another of the judgments that they came to. So, the review concluded that Literature Wales

[620] 'did not contain the right composition of skills and experience to run a body spending public money'.

[621] Can I ask your officials whether or not there is evidence they're aware of that bears out this judgment? Is that accurate and fair?

[622] **Mr P. Owen:** Certainly, from my perspective, I attend the regular monitoring meetings between arts council and Welsh Government, and I also attend arts council board meetings as an observer from time to time, and certainly, no, I've not had any reason from either of those fora to believe that arts council considered Literature Wales in that way.

[623] **Lee Waters:** So you don't think that's a fair judgment to reach.

[624] **Mr P. Owen:** I think it's difficult because, obviously, they couldn't focus on that issue in quite as forensic detail as the arts council does day to day, but I think personally that is probably not a fair judgment to reach.

[625] **Lee Waters:** This is my concern, Cabinet Secretary, because you said earlier this is an evidence-based report, but once you start pulling at the threads, they start to unravel. These are fairly central judgments they've reached, and if on these two points there is doubt, and on that latter one your officials think they are wrong, then that surely does question mark the whole basis of their conclusions.

[626] **Ken Skates:** I think it might be helpful if the committee had access to some of the red risk reasons, the analysis of the red risk status, because I think that may give Members a degree of confidence in terms of the report's findings.

[627] **Lee Waters:** But this isn't a point about the red risks; this is a point of whether they are fit to spend public money, on which your officials have just said that is not an evidence-based conclusion.

[628] **Mr Kindred:** With all due respect, the panel did not say that Literature Wales isn't fit to spend public money. The panel said—

[629] **Lee Waters:** 'did not contain the right composition of skills and experience to run a body spending public money'.

[630] **Mr Kindred:** Yes, thank you, and that's not quite the same thing. The panel was saying that, at that point in time, it had identified, following evidence that it had received from Literature Wales, from others, from stakeholders, and that it concluded that there were skills and experience gaps that needed to be filled. To be fair to Literature Wales—

[631] **Ken Skates:** And the arts council.

[632] **Mr Kindred:**—and the arts council—they've acknowledged that, and we're aware that Literature Wales are already looking to address some of those issues, and that's to be welcomed.

[633] **Lee Waters:** But your colleague has just said, based on his experience of these meetings, that's not a fair conclusion.

[634] **Mr P. Owen:** Based on the information that I was party to and made available to me at those meeting.

[635] **Lee Waters:** I'm now confused.

[636] **Mr Kindred:** Well, the point is the panel's conclusions are the panel's conclusions, and—

[637] **Lee Waters:** And I asked your colleague did he think that was a fair judgment to make, and he said 'No'. Now you're saying it is a fair conclusion.

[638] **Mr Kindred:** No, I'm saying that the panel saw significant evidence of—and to be fair to the panel, they acknowledged diverse evidence they'd received about the work that Literature Wales does well. They also cite significant evidence from stakeholders about concerns around governance and leadership, and not all of that evidence—on both sides—is currently included in the report. The report contains a summary of the evidence.

[639] **Lee Waters:** But they—I'm sorry, I'll finish on this—concluded in their recommendations to the Minister, which he's minded to accept, that Literature Wales did not contain the right composition of skills and experience to run a body spending public money. That is a highly significant statement, which Peter Owen just said was, in his experience, not based on evidence, was not fair. So, I ask again the Government to go away and reflect seriously on this, because the implications for these bodies are huge, and if there are significant doubts about the veracity of that statement, then surely you must pause and reflect on that.

[640] **Ken Skates:** I agree with the Member, which was one of the reasons why I said I was minded to accept; the other reason why I believe that it is important to scrutinise the red risk register and reasons why Literature Wales is considered at risk to such a degree. So, again, I've made the offer that I

will attempt to get that red risk reasoning to you—potentially on a confidential basis. I think that would help to resolve this issue.

[641] **Bethan Jenkins:** Okay. Suzy Davies.

[642] **Suzy Davies:** Thank you. Well, yes, obviously the evidence that Lee's just been talking about has helped us conclude—in my case, anyway—that some of the responses to the evidence has been disproportionate to the concerns raised, and that in itself, then, leads questions back to the composition of the panel itself. Obviously, you're going to want to reassure us that it meets all public standards, and so forth. I wonder if you can just tell us a little bit about, actually, how the panel was appointed. I know we've covered a bit of this in Plenary, but I think we need to ask a few more questions on the back of these concerns.

[643] **Ken Skates:** I don't think the expertise or the integrity of the panel members is in question. I think the—

[644] **Suzy Davies:** How were they appointed, though?

[645] **Ken Skates:** They were appointed on a task-and-finish basis. So, a list of names was drawn up by officials and presented to the then Minister and me, as Deputy Minister, from which the current panel was drawn. It was carried out on a task-and-finish basis. It was the normal process that's used in these sorts of circumstances and, again, I don't think that the integrity of those individuals can be questioned.

[646] **Suzy Davies:** No, it's just reassuring us, or just explaining to us this wasn't an open competition—

[647] **Ken Skates:** No. It wouldn't normally be.

[648] **Suzy Davies:** They were chosen by you, effectively.

[649] **Ken Skates:** That's something that, given the contentious nature of this subject and the review, I think, next time around, that sort of process might be more desirable.

[650] **Suzy Davies:** That's interesting to hear. We are talking about a small sector and a small group of people, so the pool from which you could draw was actually relatively small, but, having said that, then, it's even more

important than usual, perhaps, to make sure that any conflicts of interest were well covered off. You've explained you were already aware of potential conflicts of interest, or those that were perceived there. What reassurance did you—. Actually, what level of control did you have over the processes to manage conflicts of interest, or was that left to the panel itself to put in place?

[651] **Ken Skates:** Paul, would you like to address the question?

[652] **Mr Kindred:** Yes.

[653] **Ken Skates:** I should just say, I received a very, very detailed explanation on this from the panel just last week, and I'm confident that the registration of interests was comprehensive and there were no conflicts of interests that were not identified or dealt with in an appropriate way. But, Paul.

[654] **Mr Kindred:** Yes, I think that's absolutely right. So, conflict of interest statements were taken from all of the panel members at the outset of the review process, which they and we as the secretariat bore in mind during all of their deliberations and their meetings. Where there was a potential conflict of interest, that was pointed out by the member concerned and they generally didn't get involved in that discussion. If their expertise was required, they just took part in providing an information basis, or they left the panel meeting entirely for the duration of that agenda item. And I think, actually, there's something in the minutes that you've seen that bears that out. And at the end of every meeting, they reassessed their potential interests and declared any other interests that they felt were relevant following the discussion that they had at that meeting.

[655] **Suzy Davies:** Obviously, you're observing this in real time. Were there any occasions when you thought that somebody might have overstepped the mark inadvertently? I'm not suggesting any deviousness involved in this.

[656] **Mr Kindred:** I don't recall any occasion of that, no.

[657] **Suzy Davies:** Okay, and at the end of the meetings when the reassessments were conducted, were there many new conflicts of interest identified as a rule?

[658] **Mr Kindred:** No, I think the original register of interests—those

interests were restated. There were one or two additions that were along the lines of they'd spoken to somebody and a member of the review panel acknowledged that they'd met them previously and in what context—that kind of thing.

[659] **Mr H. Owen:** For example, the discussion on academic publishing. To be clear, that was outside the terms of reference but the chair wasn't involved in any discussions around it; they left the room.

[660] **Suzy Davies:** That confirms the evidence they gave us, actually. I think that's all I've got to ask on that. Thank you.

[661] **Bethan Jenkins:** Thanks. Hannah.

[662] **Hannah Blythyn:** Thanks. I think one of the things we've had in evidence before was surprise and concern that the panel didn't feature a publisher, given what the review's focus was on. Is there a reason for that?

[663] **Ken Skates:** The process of identifying the panel, as I've outlined earlier, I think in the future could be amended so as to ensure that all skill sets are represented on the future panel of any review. The concerns I think that were expressed about the absence of somebody from the publishing industry was subsequently eased by virtue of attracting so much evidence from people within the publishing industry. I accept at the outset that was a concern, but I also think that it was dealt with during the course of the evidence-gathering process.

[664] **Hannah Blythyn:** You said in response to my colleague, Suzy Davies, that, in future, the way that the panel is appointed needs to be looked at. What are the learning points that you think you can take away from this, and do you think we need to perhaps have a more transparent process for appointing such panels in the future?

[665] **Ken Skates:** Yes. I've said as well that I think, in the future, it will be important to learn lessons from this process, and ensuring that all of the organisations that are essentially going to be reviewed are content with the skill set, not necessarily—because it's such a small, if you like, gene pool that we're selecting from—content with the individuals, because I think from what we've learnt on this occasion, there are some individuals that wouldn't want to be neighbours. And I think what's important is that all skill sets are represented on a future panel and that, as far as possible, we can have an

open recruitment process as well. Of course, that will lead to initial and immediate criticism, I'm in no doubt, because we'll have more applicants than we can give places on the panel to. I'm pretty sure that we'll then attract criticism for excluding X, Y or Z, but I do think that that will be an important learning lesson that we take forward.

[666] **Bethan Jenkins:** Neil Hamilton.

[667] **Neil Hamilton:** It's not unknown in the world of the arts for personal feuds to be prosecuted, sometimes for immense lengths of time, over matters which to an outside observer might appear either recondite or trivial. So, has the reaction to this review revealed anything new to you about the degree of harmony that is found in the world of publishing and literature in Wales?

[668] **Ken Skates:** I'm not entirely convinced that there is harmony in the sector at present. But, equally, I'm not convinced that it's because of the review. I suspect that there have been disagreements and there have been competing interests within the sector for some time and that this review has drawn those competing interests and tensions out. I would invite everybody within the sector to take a Kennedy-esque approach and ask what they can do for their country and for their sector moving forward. And crucially—.

14:30

[669] **Neil Hamilton:** Kennedy was assassinated, you know. [*Laughter.*]

[670] **Ken Skates:** I should watch myself then today. [*Laughter.*]

[671] Seriously, I think there is a real need to see a greater degree of partnership working and collaboration in the sector. It may be small in terms of the overall budget that it receives from Welsh Government and from the taxpayer, nonetheless, it serves a crucially important purpose in society, and, equally, even though it's not a huge sum of money in the great scheme of things, it is, nonetheless, taxpayers' money and the taxpayer should expect best value and should expect those delivering services to be working together in the interests of the country.

[672] **Neil Hamilton:** That said, what can you do to improve joint working in this world?

[673] **Ken Skates:** I think there are some recommendations that can facilitate joint working. There are some recommendations that would be more difficult to implement because there'd be consequences in the way that lottery funding is administered, and so, in those instances, we could look at a greater deal of collaboration and joint working. In terms of services such as providing bursaries and so forth, again, I think there's a greater degree of collaboration that could be taking place across organisations.

[674] I think we now need to recognise that there are differences. There are character tensions, there are differences of opinion, conflicting and competing interests. They've been laid bare now. Having been laid bare, I would hope that those individuals and those organisations can recognise that, to the outside world, all that people want is the best service delivery, and, to do that, they must work together collaboratively and put whatever individual competing interests they have to one side.

[675] **Bethan Jenkins:** I know that you've said that you'll wait for this committee to arrive at whatever we arrive at, but I just wanted to ask in relation to—. Literature Wales said, obviously, they've suffered in relation to potential new work. If there were any changes to—. For example, if you took the recommendations and enacted them as is, obviously that takes away a chunk of their work now. Would you then be reassessing what they would be able to do if that happened, because, obviously, they base their working programme on the current structures that they have? So, would they be able to then adapt sufficiently to be able to do that?

[676] **Ken Skates:** I think, Chair, this is a really important consideration, and I think also we need to recognise that Literature Wales served the purpose of providing from more than their core functions. There are projects that are funded by Welsh Government and other organisations that are very, very important in terms of what Literature Wales do. But, in terms of the core functions, I think this report is very valuable, and we will need to consider in greater detail the implications of transferring functions, because, as I say, there could be consequences in doing so in terms of the impact on other organisations as well, such as the arts council.

[677] **Bethan Jenkins:** Okay. Unless there are other questions, we'll bring this session to an end and thank you. We'll write and confirm what information we need from you. I think that will be simple considering it seems to be a few documents. Thank you very much coming in today.

[678] **Ken Skates:** And I look forward to returning after the next review.
[*Laughter.*]

[679] **Bethan Jenkins:** Okay. Let's hope that it's a smoother running review.

[680] **Ken Skates:** Thank you.

[681] **Bethan Jenkins:** Diolch yn fawr iawn.

[682] **Ken Skates:** Thanks

[683] **Bethan Jenkins:** Rydym yn symud ymlaen at eitem 10 ac ôl-
drafodaeth breifat yw hon. Rydym ni wedi cytuno i fynd i mewn i sesiwn breifat yn barod. Diolch.

Bethan Jenkins: We are moving on now to item 10, which is a private discussion. We've already agreed to enter into a private session. Thank you.

*Daeth rhan gyhoeddus y cyfarfod i ben am 14:34.
The public part of the meeting ended at 14:34.*