



CYMRU WALES

21st November 2019

Mared Llwyd
Deputy Clerk
Culture, Welsh Language & Communication Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff CF99 1NA

Dear Mared,

My thanks for your letter to my colleague Andy Collinson highlighting the committee's request for further information following our evidence session of 10th October 2019.

The first area covered 'the reform required to address the decrease in the value of the ITV Cymru Wales licence.'

The measures that I had in mind were those outlined in section nine of our written evidence to the committee, entitled 'Wales, Westminster and a Globalised World.' This outlined some of the challenges facing ITV and other commercial public service broadcasters from global organisations such as Google and Facebook. It also outlines ITV's response by innovating and investing (9.5). We identified how we are growing our global content production business, our video on demand, innovating in advertising and entering the video subscription on demand market developing Britbox in partnership with the BBC.

We also highlighted the need for radical reform to the current PSB settlement. This includes:

- New legislation to maintain the prominence of PSB onto new global platforms (Par 9.9)
- A fair system allowing PSBs to monetise that prominence and build a direct relationship with viewers (Par 9.10)
- A new inclusion regime which guarantees PSB universality whilst allowing the broadcasters to negotiate fair commercial terms with platforms. (Par 9.10)
- A long term commitment from the UK Government and Ofcom to offer spectrum to Digital Direct Television facilitating the ongoing popularity of Freeview (Par 9.11)

Such measures help maintain the long term value of the ITV Cymru Wales licence as part of the wider commercial PSB sector.

Secondly, you ask: 'what more could be done to ensure there is more Welsh content with a higher profile?' On this, I promised to come back to the committee with three bullet points. Can I suggest the following as a starting point?

- Empowering Creative Wales to offer strategic leadership to the sector, taking in issues such as training and diversity - maintaining the best that we have and getting us to work in partnership for the greater economic and cultural good of the nation and the Welsh creative sector!
- Widening the already very successful efforts that have made Wales a go-to destination for high end film and television. In particular, support the growth of returning series and high volume ongoing series which offer the bread and butter work that can form the bedrock of a commercial content production sector.
- Remove some of the barriers to production which face production teams when arranging location filming. Programmes such as Coast & Country, which celebrate the Welsh countryside are regularly charged hundreds of £s in filming fees by Welsh Government connected organisations. This means that we feature those locations less often when there could be a much greater benefit to Wales if those locations were highlighted for viewers.

I hope that these thoughts are of assistance to the committee. I look forward to liaising again in the near future as the committee starts its consideration of the future of public service broadcasting and the possible devolution of the sector.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Henfrey', with a large circular flourish at the end.

Phil Henfrey, Head of News and Programmes
ITV Cymru Wales