



**Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru
The National Assembly for Wales**

**Y Pwyllgor Cymunedau, Cydraddoldeb a Llywodraeth Leol
The Communities, Equality and Local Government
Committee**

**Dydd Iau, 3 Gorffennaf 2014
Thursday, 3 July 2014**

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Cynnig o dan Reol Sefydlog 17.42 (ix) i Benderfynu Gwahardd y Cyhoedd o Weddill y
Cyfarfod ac o'r Cyfarfod ar 9 Gorffennaf 2014
Motion under Standing Order 17.42 (ix) to Resolve to Exclude the Public from the Remainder
of the Meeting and from the Meeting on 9 July 2014

Cofnodir y trafodion yn yr iaith y llefarwyd hwy ynddi yn y pwyllgor. Yn ogystal, cynhwysir
trawsgripiad o'r cyfieithu ar y pryd.

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.

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

Leighton Andrews

Llafur
Labour

Peter Black

Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru
Welsh Liberal Democrats

Christine Chapman	Llafur (Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor) Labour (Committee Chair)
Janet Finch-Saunders	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Mike Hedges	Llafur Labour
Mark Isherwood	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Gwyn R. Price	Llafur Labour
Jenny Rathbone	Llafur Labour
Rhodri Glyn Thomas	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales

**Eraill yn bresennol
Others in attendance**

Huw Brodie	Cyfarwyddwr Diwylliant a Chwaraeon, Llywodraeth Cymru Director of Culture and Sport, Welsh Government
John Griffiths	Aelod Cynulliad, Llafur (y Gweinidog Diwylliant a Chwaraeon) Assembly Member, Labour (the Minister for Culture and Sport)
Jon Westlake	Pennaeth Yr Is-Adran Chwaraeon, Hamdden Awyr Agored a Thirweddau, Llywodraeth Cymru Head of Sport, Outdoor Recreation and Landscapes Division, Welsh Government

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

Sarah Beasley	Clerc Clerk
Chloe Davies	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk
Robin Wilkinson	Y Gwasanaeth Ymchwil Research Service

*Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 09:16.
The meeting began at 09:16.*

**Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon
Introductions, Apologies and Substitutions**

[1] **Christine Chapman:** Bore da, and welcome to the National Assembly's Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee. I remind Members that if they have any mobile phones, they must be switched off, as they affect the transmission. We have received apologies this morning from Jocelyn Davies.

09:16

Sesiwn Graffu Gyffredinol: Y Gweinidog Diwylliant a Chwaraeon
General Scrutiny Session: Minister for Culture and Sport

[2] **Christine Chapman:** I welcome the Minister for Culture and Sport, John Griffiths and his officials, Huw Brodie, director of culture and sport and Jon Westlake, head of sport, outdoor recreation and landscapes division. Welcome to you all. Minister, we have read the evidence that you provided, so if you are happy, we will go straight into questions.

[3] **The Minister for Culture and Sport (John Griffiths):** Okay, Chair.

[4] **Christine Chapman:** Your portfolio, I suppose, is split into five parts and the paper reflects the five parts, so we will discuss these in turn. We will start by asking some questions on the historic environment and landscapes. I will start off on that particular portfolio. Could I ask, Minister, what problems in the heritage sector you think that the heritage Bill intends to address and how will it do so?

[5] **John Griffiths:** I think, essentially, Chair, it is about striking a better balance between the protection of our very precious historic environment and making sure that that protection is in place in a timely and effective way, but at the same time, understanding that a lot of it is about the practicalities of finding alternative uses. We have to work with the owners of buildings and potential developers in a more effective way, so that we get those alternative uses and we have that sort of flexibility in the system. So, it is a balance that needs to be struck and that is what we will seek to do through that legislation.

[6] **Christine Chapman:** Could you say a bit more about the proposal to establish the independent panel to advise on historic environment policy and strategy, which we know is in the heritage Bill? How do you think this will work with existing bodies, such as Cadw and the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales? How will this work with those bodies?

[7] **John Griffiths:** That independent panel will provide the Welsh Government with expert advice, Chair. So, it will draw together the necessary expertise, knowledge and experience to help inform historic environment strategy and policy. Obviously, particular bodies, such as Cadw and the royal commission are within the sector and they have their own roles and responsibilities, so, they will be a very important part of strategy and policy, but it will be the panel that will independently advise me as to what Welsh Government might best do, which, of course, will include how Cadw and the royal commission operate. So, it will advise me, in part, I guess, about how those bodies should take their work forward.

[8] **Christine Chapman:** Rhodri, did you have a question?

[9] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Diolch, **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Thank you, Chair. Is Gadeirydd. A yw'n wir i ddweud bod it true to say that there has been a reduction gostyngiad wedi bod yn nifer yr ymwelwyr i in the number of visitors to monuments that henebion sydd dan ofal Cadw? are under the care of Cadw?

[10] **John Griffiths:** There has been a slight reduction in visitors to Cadw staffed sites, but we should treat figures with some caution. The reduction is less than 1%, and the weather, as ever, is an important factor, as is the Easter bank holiday period. As it is a financial year, some years contain two Easters, and some years contain no Easter with regard to the visitor numbers, and this is relevant to these figures.

[11] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** A derbyn— **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Given that—

[12] **Christine Chapman:** Sorry; can I just stop you? Huw, did you want to come in?

[13] **Mr Brodie:** I just want to add two things. With regard to the first quarter of this year, Cadw's visitor figures are in fact up by 4% so far and it has been finding that, where it invests in improving the visitor offer, it sees substantial increases in visitor numbers. We can provide the committee with figures on that.

[14] **Christine Chapman:** That would be useful. Rhodri, do you want to continue?

[15] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Yn dilyn hynny, ai'r strategaeth, felly, yw buddsoddi mwy yn y math hwnnw o atyniad lle gellir denu mwy o ymwelwyr er mwyn sicrhau bod y ffigurau hyn yn dangos cynnydd?

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: Following on from that, is it the strategy, therefore, to invest more in that kind of attraction where you could attract more visitors to ensure that the figures show an increase?

[16] **John Griffiths:** It is, indeed, the strategy to continue with the investment programme, because, as Huw said, we can show that where investment is taking place and the quality of the product has improved, visitor numbers and visitor spend have increased. So, we would like to get to a virtuous circle where the boost in numbers and the increase in visitor spend provide resource for further investment, which, in turn, lead to greater visitor numbers and visitor spend again. We have the evidence that we are able to create that virtuous circle, and that will certainly drive future policy.

[17] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** O ran y Bil treftadaeth, i ba raddau y mae argymhellion adroddiad y pwyllgor hwn a gyhoeddwyd y llynedd ar yr amgylchedd hanesyddol yn llunio'r ffordd rydych yn datblygu'r Bil?

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: With regard to the heritage Bill, to what extent have the recommendations in the committee's report published last year on the historic environment informed the way that you are developing the Bill?

[18] **John Griffiths:** The committee's report is certainly very significant and, alongside wide-ranging stakeholder engagement, research that we have done and, of course, formal consultation, the committee's recommendations have informed the heritage Bill. The Bill proposes to place historic environment records on a statutory footing, for example, and also to introduce a statutory register for historic parks and gardens. We take the committee's recommendations seriously, and they have been placed alongside the other work that I have mentioned.

[19] **Christine Chapman:** I have some supplementary questions now from Mike and then Jenny.

[20] **Mike Hedges:** I have two brief supplementary questions. One question that I did not get a chance to ask you when you were taking questions was about the Hafod site in Landore and Copperopolis. Do you believe that we can develop that area in such a way that it becomes an UNESCO world heritage site?

[21] **John Griffiths:** We are always fairly cautious about proposals for new world heritage sites, because it is a difficult process. With regard to the UK's proposals and register, there are time slots involved that mean that there is not an opportunity for a number of years from now. However, world heritage sites are very important in terms of marketing and promotion and the ability to attract visitors and, of course, the recognition that they provide. So, the more that we have in Wales, the better, and we are ambitious, but we need to be realistic as well. We have examples of our industrial heritage being recognised in terms of world heritage status. Wales, as we all know, was at the forefront of the industrial revolution, so we have quite an amazing history in our country. We would be willing to work with all those involved,

such as Hafod, which I was very impressed with I visited. I think that what has already been achieved there is quite remarkable. It is a wonderful location, alongside the river, in many ways, and I think that the mix of private development that is proposed and public investment is very exciting. I very much understand those plans in terms of how one can feed off the other, as it were. So, I think that there is a lot of potential there and, in Welsh Government, we would be very willing to work with all the partners.

[22] **Mike Hedges:** May I take you now on to something much less pleasant, namely the chapel closure programme that is gathering pace, certainly in my constituency? Some of the smaller, older ones are closing, which I have no problem with at all—actually my father-in-law's chapel in Ynystawe is closing. However, some of the very large ones, like New Siloh in Landore, are within 12 months of closure. It is a huge building. I just wonder whether you have any plans to try to do something with some of the historic chapels of south Wales. I have two in my constituency; certainly, Tabernacle and New Siloh would fall into that category. There is a serious danger that, in the next 30 years, we will just have big empty buildings until they fall down.

[23] **John Griffiths:** We fund various organisations that are concerned with and take forward work to protect our religious heritage, including very much, of course, the chapels and the churches, such as the Welsh Religious Buildings Trust and the Friends of Friendless Churches, which I think is quite charmingly titled. Of course, there are the usual protections and the grading system. What I said in terms of the heritage Bill very much applies here as well, I think, Mike, which is that the challenges are as I described them in general—how you find alternative uses, how you find resource and, of course, how you provide the necessary protection. There are no easy answers to these issues, and I know that we have discussed them on a number of occasions. However, we very much understand the value we have in our religious buildings and the heritage that they represent, and I think that they are a very important part of that general picture that the heritage Bill will help to address.

[24] **Christine Chapman:** Thank you. Jenny is next.

[25] **Jenny Rathbone:** The National Trust has done a lot of work on reducing its carbon footprint, as well as its utility bills as a result. I just wonder what consideration has been given to this by Cadw and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales.

[26] **John Griffiths:** These are matters that are very much on their radar screens, and I have discussed it with them on a number of occasions. We do mention the National Trust as a very good example of work that has been carried out. Of course, there are particular circumstances involved in particular sites that the National Trust has as opposed to sites that Cadw and the royal commission have, but nonetheless there is further work that can be carried out to good effect and finding resource, although it is a challenge, is possible in terms of various pots of money that allow this work to take place. So, we will continue to drive forward progress on that front, Jenny, because I think that it is very important.

[27] **Christine Chapman:** Huw, do you want to come in on this point?

[28] **Mr Brodie:** I think that Cadw has taken a number of steps already, and we could certainly provide the committee with details of those. In addition, Cadw is also considering the scope, when it is investing in new visitor centres and facilities at its monuments, to build in unobtrusive things like ground source heat pumps and so on at those centres. Obviously, things that would be obtrusive would be rather difficult.

[29] **Jenny Rathbone:** Of course, but things that are under the ground are not obtrusive. Thank you.

[30] **Christine Chapman:** We will move on now to a series of questions on the arts sector. Mike, I think you have the first question.

[31] **Mike Hedges:** This is something that I am very sad about. The under-represented groups attending arts events in Wales tend to be much more likely to come from social classes C2, D and E. They tend to be very much under-represented. People who are not in employment tend to be very much under-represented at arts events. What can be done to try to make it more representative of the social mix of Wales?

[32] **John Griffiths:** This is work that we tasked the Arts Council of Wales to take forward and it, in turn, tasked its revenue-funded organisations to ensure that this was done. So, there is a great deal of work taking place. There are particular schemes, like Night Out, which takes performances into communities and non-traditional settings like leisure centres in Communities First areas, and I think that they are very important. However, beyond that, there is the generality of work. The Arts Council of Wales, in funding the revenue-funded organisations, will require them to demonstrate the steps that they are taking to widen participation and to make sure that we get a much better spread of socioeconomic groups attending performances, developing an interest and enjoying the arts as well as performing themselves.

09:30

[33] One other thing I would mention, because I think it is very important, is that, if we take forward the work of Dai Smith in terms of arts in education effectively, I think that we are going to develop the abilities and the interests of all of our schoolchildren consistently in the arts. That will stay with them throughout their lives. If we can get it right in schools, where virtually all our children are no matter what their socioeconomic background, that will stand us in extremely good stead as we move forward.

[34] **Mike Hedges:** I thank the Minister for that response. Returning to my Copperopolis, they had a series of plays et cetera taking place there involving children and adults from what would be described as under-represented groups. The next question I have is on local government funding. Local government funding is due to be cut, by how much we are not quite sure yet. Does that not inevitably mean that local authorities, because of the other pressures, will be forced, whether they want to or not, to cut their arts support, which will have a detrimental effect on the arts?

[35] **John Griffiths:** It is a time of great concern because the budget strains are felt at all levels of government and that very much includes local government. We all know about the statutory responsibilities they have, which do not include the arts. So, we do have great concerns, and that is why I have had a series of meetings with cabinet members and lead officers to discuss these issues. Inevitably, it is a variable picture across Wales, but we work very closely with the Welsh Local Government Association and the individual local authorities, and the Arts Council of Wales has some important structures in place in terms of partnership agreements and memoranda of understanding and so on that help to shape the provision that is made.

[36] Notwithstanding that, it is a very concerning time and I think that, as Minister, I want to continue to have these meetings and have this involvement, and make sure that the Arts Council of Wales is at the table with the knowledge and experience it can bring. Together, hopefully, we can find a way through. At some stage, better times will return, and we have to make sure that, in the interim period, we have not lost the real value and importance of the arts and the crucial infrastructure that will allow delivery when the better times return.

[37] **Christine Chapman:** Janet is next.

[38] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** Good morning. What are your views on Baroness Andrews's tackling poverty through culture report? How are you going to respond?

[39] **John Griffiths:** It is a very important piece of work. Tackling poverty is crucial to Welsh Government, as is taking forward policy on culture more generally. So, I am very grateful to Kay Andrews. I think that she has produced a good report. It is on important ground that really matters. The idea of linking our major cultural institutions with the schools and with the community groups, I think, makes perfect sense. We launched the report in Swansea, where I could see that this sort of approach has been developed over a number of years and is working well. So, I think that we have good examples, together with all the case studies that Kay mentions in the report and other examples besides that. We want to work up an action plan and look at pilot schemes initially so that we can test this approach with a reasonable degree of intensity in areas of Wales, and then spread out the good practice beyond that.

[40] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** Thank you. What did you learn from the hosting of WOMEX 2013 in Cardiff, and how has this fed into the organisation of other cultural events in Wales, such as Dylan Thomas 100 and Cymru'n Cofio?

[41] **John Griffiths:** I think that WOMEX was an outstanding success. Obviously, it is the responsibility of the major events unit, which sits within the Minister for the Economy, Science and Transport's portfolio rather than mine. However, it is very important for culture and music. It very much raised our international profile, which is extremely important in so many ways. It was very good for the music sector here in Wales as it was able to perform to an international audience and make many new contacts, which will be very valuable in future. The trade aspect of the music industry was present and made considerable sales. Also, of course, it brought a lot of visitors to Wales and benefits to the economy in that way. We will seek to make sure that there is a lasting legacy from WOMEX as we move forward, and the Arts Council of Wales is working on this. There is a Horizons 12 project that seeks to do that, to make sure that we continue to make progress with music in Wales. I know also that the Arts Council of Wales has created a launch pad fund to seek to ensure a lasting legacy through which there will be actual cash awards for selected artists in Wales and opportunities to reach a wider audience through broadcasting on radio in Wales, for example. So, as well as the immediate benefit, hopefully there will be a strong, lasting legacy.

[42] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** I would like to endorse the latter part of what you said there because we were approached directly at our constituency office when they were coming to Oriel Mostyn and I know that these grants are available for budding artists. I thought that that was really good, you know, to actually reach out to Assembly Members, and I just thought that I would like to put that on record.

[43] **John Griffiths:** Well, thank you.

[44] **Christine Chapman:** Janet, do you have any other questions?

[45] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** No.

[46] **Christine Chapman:** Right. Peter, you wanted to come in.

[47] **Peter Black:** Thank you. Minister, you were talking about a lasting legacy as a result of WOMEX. Clearly, the Welsh Music Foundation was very much involved in the organisation of that event. That organisation has now had its grant ceased, and it turned down the six-month period to wind down. However, it seems to me that, without the Welsh Music

Foundation, which is, effectively, wound up, you are going to have great difficulty securing that legacy.

[48] **John Griffiths:** Well, I know that the Minister for the economy has stated that she will be making a statement on the way forward, and the funding did sit within the creative industries, which, of course, is a matter for the Minister for the economy. I will work with that Minister, of course, in terms of the cultural and music aspects as far as my portfolio is concerned. However, I did have meetings following WOMEX with a number of organisations, including Trac for example, and they are very, very encouraged by the opportunities that WOMEX brought and the opportunities to ensure a lasting legacy. So, I am sure that we will work with a number of organisations in Wales in taking that legacy forward.

[49] **Peter Black:** Given your responsibility for the arts, are you not concerned about the Welsh Music Foundation winding up?

[50] **John Griffiths:** Well, I am concerned about the organisation of music and culture around music in Wales in general—of course I am. I am encouraged by the fact that the Minister for the economy will be making a statement in short order.

[51] **Peter Black:** So, why is that in her portfolio when you are responsible for music and the arts?

[52] **John Griffiths:** Well, there is a division between the creative industries and major events, for example, which have very considerable economic benefits and sit within the Minister for the economy's portfolio and, obviously, culture more generally, which sits within mine. However, I think that we would probably all be familiar with the fact that, within Government, it is possible to carve things up, as it were, in terms of responsibilities, in all sorts of ways. Indeed, we see change and shift from one Government to another. Members may have views but that is the current configuration.

[53] **Peter Black:** Okay. So, in terms of the lasting legacy, you do not have the Welsh Music Foundation. What organisation is going to be filling that gap and actually making sure that that legacy is carried forward?

[54] **John Griffiths:** Well, that is a matter for the statement that the Minister for the economy will be making in due course.

[55] **Christine Chapman:** When is the statement, Minister? Do you have any idea?

[56] **John Griffiths:** I do not think that we have an actual date, but it will be in short order, Chair.

[57] **Christine Chapman:** Will it be before recess?

[58] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** It is next week.

[59] **Christine Chapman:** Oh, it is next week. Right then.

[60] **Peter Black:** Okay. If I may move on, Chair, you will be aware of Julian Ruck's comments on the Arts Council of Wales and the arts in general, Minister. He has been very critical of the way that the money is being spent by the arts council and by a number of other organisations. I will just take a couple of those things. I think that it would be remiss of me not put them to you. One of his comments is about the Creative Wales awards, which he considers to be held at huge cost, with:

[61] 'No exhibitions, no sales and an audience equivalent to the footfall at a garden centre flogging Japanese knotweed.'

[62] I just wonder what your reaction is to that. Do you think that the Creative Wales Awards are providing value for money? Are we getting outputs from that?

[63] **John Griffiths:** Yes, I think that we are. In general terms, I meet the Arts Council of Wales regularly. Our officials monitor its spend very closely, and, obviously, we set requirements in our remit letter. So, there are procedures in place. I think that, inevitably, various people and organisations will have views as to what constitutes the most effective spend of money or not. That is a healthy debate. There is no reason why that debate should not take place. However, there will be a variety of views, I am sure. Ultimately, the Arts Council of Wales has to account to me, as Minister, and more widely to the Assembly in general, and, indeed, to the people of Wales. Procedures are in place to ensure that that happens.

[64] **Peter Black:** Would you expect public subsidy for literature, in particular, to result in more publications and actual sales?

[65] **John Griffiths:** We have the Welsh Books Council, of course, which takes forward policy to support the publishing industry and the books industry in Wales, and various other aspects of cultural policy that support literature and the books industry. So, we provide that support, I would say, in a variety of ways.

[66] **Peter Black:** So, you would expect that public subsidy to actually result in publications and sales.

[67] **John Griffiths:** Well, I think that we have to judge different programmes in terms of their core aims. The Welsh Books Council, for example, has, obviously, as its core, work to support the publishing industry in Wales to support the publication of books and the sales of books. Any particular aspect of spend will set out what it aims to produce and should be judged in that way.

[68] **Peter Black:** Okay. I have just one more example. Julian Ruck cites Literature Wales's bilingual literary festival at Dinefwr Castle in 2012, which, he claims, made a £50,000 loss. He calculated that there were around 300 visitors. I think that Literature Wales claimed 2,500 visitors; obviously, there is a discrepancy there. Do you think that that sort of loss is acceptable in that sort of festival, given that the vast majority of its funding is public funding?

[69] **John Griffiths:** Well, with festivals and events in general, sometimes it takes a period of time to build them. Indeed, I know that this is an approach taken by the major events unit, for example: you do not necessarily expect the sort of performance that you will get further down the track when events are fairly new and not yet established to that extent. I met with the Welsh Books Council yesterday, actually, and it mentioned that particular festival as a very valuable event for it in terms of promotion, and, indeed, the sale of books. So, they certainly do have benefits. However, as I said, I do not think that we should be reluctant to have a debate about the value of expenditure and the returns that arise. I am quite willing to engage in that. I think that that is quite healthy.

[70] **Peter Black:** Do you expect organisations such as that to actually set targets, in terms of those festivals, which they should be meeting?

[71] **John Griffiths:** Well, we are moving much more towards results-based accountability in general, as a Welsh Government, and that applies to the bodies that we fund,

and, by extension, to events and bodies funded by them. I think that we are very much on a journey, as it were, to be more firmly based on results-based accountability. However, of course, for particular events and schemes there will be particular factors and they have to be borne in mind.

[72] **Christine Chapman:** Huw, you wanted to come in.

[73] **Mr Brodie:** Yes, just to add that I think the Arts Council of Wales does actually have a very effective way of judging the performance of its revenue-funded organisations. It does look at visitor numbers and quality and so on, and it scrutinises them very carefully indeed and takes that all into account in how much money they actually get. Of course, it is an arm's-length organisation and the principle of artistic independence was underlined a number of years ago. That is why we do not get involved in second-guessing which particular organisations should receive particular amounts of funding.

09:45

[74] **Christine Chapman:** Rhodri, you have a question.

[75] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Sylw yw hwn, yn fwy na chwestiwn. Cynhaliwyd Gŵyl Lenyddiaeth Dinefwr bythefnos yn ôl. Yr ail ŵyl oedd hon, ac mae'n bwysig nodi, o ran y cyntaf, bod y tywydd yn ofnadwy; roedd hi'n tywallt y glaw drwy'r penwythnos. Mae'n ŵyl sy'n cael ei chynnal ar gaeau Newton House, ac felly, oherwydd hynny, roedd y niferoedd a fynychodd yr un cyntaf yn fach iawn. Roedd yr ŵyl bythefnos yn ôl yn hynod lwyddiannus. Roedd ystod eang iawn o artistiaid llenyddol a cherddorol yn cymryd rhan, ac roedd nifer dda iawn wedi mynychu'r ŵyl. Roedd y gwersi a ddysgwyd o'r fenter gyntaf yn eithriadol o bwysig er mwyn sicrhau llwyddiant yr ŵyl eleni. Pe bai unrhyw dargedau wedi cael eu gosod ar gyfer yr ŵyl eleni, byddai'r ŵyl wedi mynd ymhell y tu hwnt i'r targedau hynny. Mae perygl mewn nodi un digwyddiad heb ei osod o fewn y cyd-destun. Mae unrhyw ŵyl awyr agored yn dibynnu, i raddau helaeth iawn, ar y tywydd, ac roedd ystod da iawn o ran llenyddiaeth a cherddoriaeth yr ŵyl gyntaf. Yn anffodus, roedd y tywydd yn golygu mai nifer fach wnaeth fynychu, ond mae'r fenter yn tyfu ac yn datblygu, ac rwy'n credu ei bod yn mynd i sefydlu'i hun fel gŵyl eithriadol o bwysig yn y dyfodol ac yn bwysig iawn, wrth gwrs, i sir Gaerfyrddin—nid bod gennyf ddi-ddordeb arbennig yn hynny.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: It is a comment more than a question. The Dinefwr Literature Festival was held a fortnight ago. It was the second such festival to be held, and it is important to note that, in terms of the first, the weather was awful; it was pouring with rain throughout the weekend. It is a festival that is held on the fields of Newton House, and therefore, because of that, the numbers that attended the first festival were very small. The festival a fortnight ago was very successful. There were a wide range of literary and musical artists taking part, and a very good number attended the festival. The lessons learned from the first initiative were extremely important in ensuring the success of the festival this year. If any targets had been set for the festival this year, the festival would have far surpassed those targets. There is a danger in noting one event without putting it in context. Any open air festival depends, to a great extent, on the elements, and there was a very good range in terms of literature and music in the first festival. Unfortunately, the weather meant that only a small number attended, but the initiative is growing and developing, and I think that it will establish itself as an extremely important festival in future and very important, of course, for Carmarthenshire—not that I have a particular interest in that.

[76] **Christine Chapman:** Thank you, Rhodri. Before we move on to the next series of questions, Minister, I just want to clarify something. Going back to the remit letter that you sent to the arts council, it said that it would provide you with a written update on the cuts to

local authorities' arts budgets. I wondered whether you had had that written update because it was going to do this by 1 July.

[77] **John Griffiths:** Yes, I have had that paper, Chair. In fact, I am meeting with the Arts Council of Wales next week so that we can discuss the current picture in each local authority.

[78] **Christine Chapman:** We may come back to you on that. Would you be able to make that paper available to the committee?

[79] **John Griffiths:** I do not see why not, Chair.

[80] **Christine Chapman:** I think that would be useful. If you were able to do that, that would help. We will move on to the next section now on museums, archives and libraries. Peter, you have some questions.

[81] **Peter Black:** What are the main messages regarding public libraries that have become clear to you following the work of the expert panel review?

[82] **John Griffiths:** I have to exercise a note of caution here, Chair, because that review is still taking place and I have not yet discussed the findings in depth. In fact, I will have a meeting later this morning as far as the expert review is concerned. I am sure that Members will be aware that, as well as the longer term aspects in terms of the libraries strategy that succeeds 'Libraries Inspire', which this expert review will inform, it is also about the short-term difficulties that local authorities face, and, of course, the fact that it is a statutory service and a comprehensive and efficient service is required by the Act. So, in terms of the short term, I want to be confident that local authorities are fulfilling their responsibilities, but I have not yet had that review delivered to me.

[83] **Peter Black:** Is it still scheduled to report in July?

[84] **John Griffiths:** Yes.

[85] **Peter Black:** So, by the end of this month, you will have a clearer view of the way forward.

[86] **John Griffiths:** Yes.

[87] **Peter Black:** Okay. Can you give us an update on the 'Every Child a Member' scheme and whether there are plans to make it more widely available across Wales?

[88] **John Griffiths:** Again, this is fairly new off the block, as it were, because it was only in March that I launched it. It is taking place in six pilot areas and the idea is to link the local libraries with the local schools more effectively for year 4 pupils. It is really important that they are library members; making it automatic is a good step forward and I think that it sends a very important signal. We have other important schemes like the summer reading challenge, which helps with literacy, which is absolutely crucial in terms of education generally and job opportunities. So, again, it is early to give any indication of how well it is working, but having said that, I do expect to have evaluation completed by the summer. Obviously, I would be very happy to share that with the committee.

[89] **Peter Black:** Is there any indication that, where local authorities have closed libraries, this is having an impact on the scheme?

[90] **John Griffiths:** There is no indication of that as yet, but it is very early.

- [91] **Peter Black:** You will focus on those particular areas to see what the impact is.
- [92] **John Griffiths:** We would make sure that anything that is impacting adversely on the Every Child a Member scheme is considered in terms of how we take the policy forward once the evaluation has taken place this summer.
- [93] **Christine Chapman:** I will now bring Gwyn in, and then Jenny.
- [94] **Gwyn R. Price:** Thank you, Chair. Good morning.
- [95] **John Griffiths:** Good morning.
- [96] **Gwyn R. Price:** What progress has been made in terms of fulfilling the programme for government commitment to strengthen regional collaboration between libraries, museums and archives?
- [97] **John Griffiths:** I think that we have made a great deal of progress. I guess that some of it is driven by the financial difficulties that we are all very aware of. Collaboration is extremely important at the current time, and I think that there is an ever-growing awareness of that. In terms of libraries, museums and archives, I think that it is a very natural area for that collaboration. So, we are seeing change. Some of it is around co-location as well. In Caerphilly, for example, we see the very impressive library there co-located with a one-stop shop council service, but also with museum space incorporated and built in. That is a very good example of what we would like to see across Wales.
- [98] **Gwyn R. Price:** Thank you for that plug. Excellent. How are you working with National Museum Wales to enable it to raise further revenue to ensure financial stability while maintaining the Welsh Government's commitment to free entry?
- [99] **John Griffiths:** Free entry is absolutely crucial for us. It is a flagship policy in terms of widening participation and it has very much delivered in terms of increased visits. I think that all of us would understand the importance of that. However, there are other ways that the national museum can raise revenue. It is very much aware of the obvious need to increase its income from non-Government sources. It does actually have a separate trading arm, which I think is a very good approach, because it does provide it with certain advantages and, more importantly, perhaps, a strong focus. I know that, even in the difficult times that we currently face, it has managed to increase the turnover from that trading company. It was £2.6 million in 2012-13, and it went up by £300,000 in 2013-14. It also has research income, which is very useful. One thing that we should say is that St Fagans is going to be a huge step forward because it is a major redevelopment. It will have much better visitor facilities, catering facilities and retail offer, and, of course, it will generate many more visitors. I think that that will be very important for the future.
- [100] **Gwyn R. Price:** Yes, I am very proud of it. Thank you.
- [101] **Christine Chapman:** We need to move on to the next section, but I have a number of Members who want to come in on this section—museums, archives and libraries. I ask those four Members to ask just one quick question each, because we need to move on. I will call Jenny first.
- [102] **Jenny Rathbone:** Just going back to Every Child a Member, I appreciate that you can only roll out a pilot in a limited number of places, but what conversations have you had with the Minister for education to ensure that all schools are taking their children, or walking their children, to the library, or if that is not physically possible in a rural area, that the library is going to the school?

[103] **John Griffiths:** I have regular meetings with the Minister for education because there is considerable overlap, not least in terms of Dai Smith's report and Tanni Grey-Thompson's report, which we are taking forward jointly. We do discuss these matters. Of course, the education department provides some funding for the Welsh Books Council, which is very important. The education department is a key part in terms of Every Child a Member. So, we will have the pilot schemes, which we will then want to roll out across Wales, and that will be very much, of course, about the children getting into the libraries, as well as making sure that, to some extent, the libraries, as it were, are getting to the schools.

[104] **Jenny Rathbone:** My point is that I am frustrated that schools are not doing this as a matter of course. I absolutely applaud your scheme, but I am just asking why all of these other authorities—the 16 authorities or so—are not taking their children to the library.

[105] **John Griffiths:** They may well be doing so, Jenny, it is just that in terms of this particular scheme and the pilots, we are doing it on a limited basis to begin with to test it, as it were, and then we will roll it out. So, that will very much strengthen the relationships between schools and their libraries, but it may well be that in the other authorities, as well as those six, that sort of activity is taking place. I am sure that it would be variable, but I am quite willing to raise the generality of the picture with the Minister for education, following this committee meeting today.

[106] **Jenny Rathbone:** Thank you.

[107] **Christine Chapman:** If you will do that, Minister, and then report back to us, that would be good. Mark, you are next.

[108] **Mark Isherwood:** On a similar theme, you refer to regional collaboration, libraries, museums and archives and, again, the Every Child a Member scheme. I note that in Brymbo, near Wrexham, they have been told by the council that they will lose their library, and having failed to secure Welsh Government funds for an alternative model, they are now developing a third option with the local school. To what extent do you think that that model could be used, not only to tick the boxes that you have just referred to, but as a community solution when all else is unavailable?

[109] **John Griffiths:** I think that it is very encouraging that when faced with financial difficulties, there is sufficient energy and there are sufficient ideas to generate alternatives and new solutions. I think that one thing that my library review will do is look at this picture right across Wales to draw on the good practice and then be able to encourage the rolling out of that good practice across the country. So, we are always looking for those examples and I think that they will come through quite clearly in the expert review.

[110] **Christine Chapman:** Rhodri, you are next.

[111] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Wrth reswm, Weinidog, mae safleoedd Amgueddfa Cymru yn ffordd o gyflwyno treftadaeth Cymru i bobl o Gymru ac i ymwelwyr o'r tu allan i Gymru. Beth ydych yn ei wneud i sicrhau bod ethos o Gymreictod yn bodoli ar y safleoedd hynny a bod pobl yn sylweddoli bod treftadaeth arbennig a thraddodiad o ran diwylliant ac iaith ac yn y blaen yng Nghymru? O ran arlwyo, beth ydych yn ei wneud i sicrhau bod cwmnïau o Gymru yn

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: Naturally, Minister, the sites of the National Museum Wales are a way to present Welsh heritage to the people of Wales and to visitors from outside Wales. What are you doing to ensure that there is an ethos of Welshness on those sites and that people realise that there is a special heritage and traditions in terms of culture and language and so forth in Wales? In terms of catering, what are you doing to ensure that Welsh companies are contracted to deliver

cael eu contractio i gyflwyno'r arlwyo ac i the catering and to introduce Welsh foods to
 gyflwyno bwydydd o Gymru i bobl sy'n dod people who come to visit these sites?
 i ymweld â'r safleoedd hyn?

[112] **John Griffiths:** These are very important matters. I think that, in general, it is the very essence of our national museum and, indeed, our local museums to tell the story of Wales, and the local history of Wales, to local people as well as to visitors as effectively as possible. Of course, that is about the history of Wales and what constitutes Wales, as it were. That is the basic product and I know that that is appreciated very much by all involved in the museum sector in Wales and very much by the director general of the national museum. I think that some of the developments at St Fagans will effectively demonstrate that.

[113] In terms of contracts, we have a general procurement policy as a Welsh Government, and in terms of the organisations and bodies that we fund, they are tasked with implementing it. I know that the national museum, for example, is doing quite a lot of work now in terms of Welsh suppliers and catering to make sure that local suppliers and the local economy benefit from the spend that it makes.

[114] **Peter Black:** On St Fagans, Minister, that is a £25 million project, which is a very substantial investment. What investment is taking place in museum sites elsewhere, outside of Cardiff?

[115] **John Griffiths:** I can get back to committee with figures on that, Peter, but one aspect of it is the considerable number of local museums right across Wales that are so important. That is why we have accreditation standards that seek to improve that product and make sure that there is a minimum level of expertise, knowledge and display in those museums. We do have an investment programme that helps museums to reach those standards. The CyMAL grants, for example, are very important. However, of course, I cannot shy away from the fact that, because of the budgetary difficulties that we face, it will be very difficult for the next few years, at least, I think, in terms of finding resource for that.

10:00

[116] **Peter Black:** Can we have details in a note on that?

[117] **John Griffiths:** Yes, certainly.

[118] **Christine Chapman:** If you can send us those details, that would be useful.

[119] **John Griffiths:** Yes.

[120] **Christine Chapman:** We are going to move on now to the next series of questions on sport, physical activity and outdoor education. I know that Leighton wants to come in first.

[121] **Leighton Andrews:** You talk about a significant reorientation in policy in respect of physical recreation and that you have a new physical activity action plan. Would you like to expand on that?

[122] **John Griffiths:** Yes. What I mean by that, in part, is that the physical activity executive group consists of me, Mark Drakeford, as the Minister for Health and Social Services, Sport Wales and Public Health Wales. We have come to the view that the biggest health challenges in terms of physical inactivity are among those who are most sedentary, which is very much related to the more deprived areas of Wales. The focus for our policy now in terms of getting greater physical activity for health benefit is going to be on those who are most sedentary, and on those Communities First, more deprived areas. So, we will be taking

forward an action plan that seeks to change culture and practice by the key delivery agents. It will very much be on the basis of results-based accountability, so that we can be clear as to the effect of this reorientation of policy.

[123] However, there are also other aspects. Free swimming, for example, is a very important scheme for us. We are very pleased that more 11-year-olds can swim 25m in Wales than in England, but we think that it needs to be looked at afresh, so that it is more about ensuring that more children can swim those 25m rather than just getting them into the pool to splash around and enjoy themselves, important though that is. Similarly, Dragon Sport and 5x60 are regularly reviewed, and we are at that stage now, but particularly because of the tightening of resources, we think that it is timely to look at how we can take those forward. Of course, underlining all of that, as Leighton Andrews will be very aware, is Tanni Grey's report and how we take that work forward is extremely important to all of it.

[124] **Christine Chapman:** Leighton, before you come back in, Huw wants to come in.

[125] **Mr Brodie:** It might be helpful if we share with the committee some of the research information that is relevant to this. When you actually look at the breakdown of the adults who are taking 5x30 sessions of exercise a week, you see that the actual difference across the socioeconomic groups is relatively limited. It is when you actually look at those who are actually classed as being sedentary that you find that there is a significant socioeconomic gradient. That, coupled with the fact that the health risks of being sedentary, are particularly acute. The Government's focus, obviously, on tackling poverty is really—. Those are the key facts that are informing this. We can provide the committee with the graphs and the statistics.

[126] **Christine Chapman:** If you would, that would be good. Leighton, do you have any more questions?

[127] **Leighton Andrews:** You mentioned the declining budgets and, clearly, Sport Wales has been subject to a declining budget. Is it realistic, therefore, to expect it to maintain its focus on increasing participation rates in the light of a falling budget?

[128] **John Griffiths:** I think that, 'It must be' is the answer in short. It is difficult, of course, but in discussions with Sport Wales I have been very clear, I think, in terms of Welsh Government priorities, and how we do have to reprioritise to some extent. We have such important drivers in terms of tackling poverty, widening participation and physical activity for health gain that it can shape and drive the use of resource, even though it is very pressured at the current time. It will be difficult, but I think that Sport Wales is clear that we just need strengthened and greater prioritisation around the Welsh Government strategy.

[129] **Leighton Andrews:** Okay. Your remit letter for 2014-15 says that that year should be a transitional period in respect of free swimming, 5x60 and Dragon Sport. Would you elaborate on what that means?

[130] **John Griffiths:** That, really, is the reorientation that I mentioned earlier. It is moving free swimming, particularly, into a position where it links more closely with the local authorities' learn to swim schemes and the governing body's scheme and Aqua Passport, which is a good scheme; it is very structured and not for everyone, but it moves children on and it is very much about progression. However, it is about linking all of them together more effectively, making sure that it is more firmly rooted, in terms of enabling children to swim and making sure, as far as possible, that they are able to swim. Similarly, with Dragon Sport and 5x60, it is about looking at how we can make them more effective, particularly looking at the new work around Tanni Grey's report.

[131] **Christine Chapman:** Mark, do you have any questions?

[132] **Mark Isherwood:** If you do things differently, different things can happen. Given that local authorities, in the current budgetary environment, are looking generally to commission services through other providers for sport and physical activity, and given that so much sport and physical activity is provided by third sector bodies across Wales, what attention have you given to the role of commissioning, co-production and co-design of sport provision in Wales?

[133] **John Griffiths:** We fund Sport Wales, and Sport Wales then funds the governing bodies and a range of initiatives, and there is other funding that is relevant to your question from across Government. Co-production is a progressive and positive way of addressing a range of issues, including these. We have some good examples of enabling communities to do for themselves, as it were. Street Games is an impressive organisation, for example, which provides doorstep sport opportunities in our more deprived communities, and they work closely now with Communities First and Sport Wales. It is about enabling communities to produce for themselves in conjunction with these other players. So, the development of sport coaches, volunteers and leaders in these communities around these schemes is very much on co-production lines. As we move forward, having that resource within the community makes it self-sustaining. So, we have some good examples in sport and physical activity of that co-production model.

[134] **Mark Isherwood:** What about commissioning?

[135] **John Griffiths:** As I say, through Sport Wales and other Government funding, that sort of co-production model is supported, and I hope that that continues even in these difficult times.

[136] **Mark Isherwood:** Local authorities often commission from leisure facilities et cetera. Finally, given that play is open and free, in accordance with the Welsh Government's definitions, and that organised sport and physical activity are different things and fall under two different Ministers, how do you safeguard that difference?

[137] **John Griffiths:** We work across Welsh Government, as Ministers, on a variety of topics, because it is difficult, often, to have clear demarcation lines. Particularly within my department, I work with a number of Ministers, including the Minister for education and the Minister for communities, very strongly. Aspects of play and physical activity, generally, are extremely important for sport and physical activity. Our Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 is a good example of that because we recognise clearly the importance of getting children more active, whether it is organised sport, riding a bike, walking to school or playing in our green spaces. So, one opportunity the responsibilities that I have brings is to make those links, because I have responsibility for outdoor recreation and access, and that includes what is described as the inner areas and what are described as the peri-urban areas. So, there are important levers within my portfolio, but I work closely with other Ministers as well.

[138] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** O ran ymarfer corff a gweithgaredd yn yr awyr agored, mae'n debyg mai garddio yw'r gweithgaredd sy'n denu'r mwyafrif o bobl. Mae diddordeb mawr mewn gerddi. Roeddech chi yn y Siambr brynhawn ddoe pan oedd Gweinidog yr Economi, Gwyddoniaeth a Thrafnidiaeth yn sôn am bwysigrwydd strategaeth y gerddi yn sir Gaerfyrddin o ran twristiaeth a pha mor ganolog yw hynny i'w phortffolio hi.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: In terms of exercise and outdoor activity, it seems that gardening is the activity that attracts the most people. There is a great deal of interest in gardens. You were in the Chamber yesterday afternoon when the Minister for Economy, Science and Transport was talking about the importance of the gardens strategy in Carmarthenshire in terms of tourism and how central that is to her portfolio.

[139] Wrth gwrs, mae'r gerddi yn sir Gaerfyrddin wedi bod yn ffodus iawn o ran buddsoddiad preifat. Mae Aberglasney wedi cael buddsoddwr helaeth iawn o America yn cefnogi'r fenter honno. Mae datblygiadau yng Ngelli Aur yn ddibynnol ar unigolyn, sef perchennog y plasty, sydd yn barod i fuddsoddi swm sylweddol iawn o arian i'r fenter honno, ac mae Newton House wedi manteisio ar yr Ymddiriedolaeth Genedlaethol, sydd wedi cefnogi'r datblygiadau yn y fan honno. Pan mae cyfle i gael buddsoddiad helaeth gan unigolyn o'r sector breifat, lle mae cronfeydd fel Cronfa Dreftadaeth y Loteri yn barod i gefnogi menter, onid yw'n synnwyr cyffredin i Weinidog gefnogi menter fel honno gyda swm cymharol fychan o arian er mwyn sicrhau bod menter gwerth miliynau lawer o bunnau yn mynd yn ei blaen?

Of course, the gardens in Carmarthenshire have been very fortunate in terms of private investment. Aberglasney has had a significant investor from America to support that initiative. Developments at Gelli Aur are dependent on an individual, namely the owner of the manor house, who is willing to invest a very significant amount of money into that initiative, and Newton House has benefited from the National Trust, which has supported developments there. When there is an opportunity to have significant investment from an individual from the private sector, where funds such as the Heritage Lottery Fund are willing to support an initiative, is it not common sense for a Minister to support an initiative like that with a comparatively small amount of money in order to ensure that an initiative worth several million pounds goes ahead?

[140] **John Griffiths:** I think that it is obviously very important that resource is brought to the table to match public expenditure, and where that other resource greatly outweighs public or Government expenditure, that is very important and significant. However, in any proposal, there is whole range of matters that have to be considered, and it is very important to look at the totality of the picture and all the aspects involved before making any decisions.

[141] **Christine Chapman:** Okay, thank you, Minister. We are going to go on to the final section, which is on the media and publishing. Rhodri Glyn has a question for you again.

[142] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** A gaf i ddechrau gyda chwestiwn cwbl benodol, Weinidog? Yng Nghymru, mae menter sydd yn unigryw, ar lawer ystyr, sef Llyfrau Llafar Cymru, sydd yn cynnig gwasanaeth pwysig iawn i bobl sydd yn ddall neu â nam ar eu golwg. A wnewch chi ymrwymo i gael trafodaethau gyda'r Prif Weinidog, yn ei rôl fel y Gweinidog â chyfrifoldeb am y Gymraeg, a'r Gweinidog iechyd, i weld beth ellir ei wneud i sefydlogi'r fenter honno ac i sicrhau ei bod hi'n hyfyw i'r dyfodol, oherwydd ei bod yn cynnig gwasanaeth mor bwysig i bobl, yn eu hiaith eu hunain, sydd â nam ar eu golwg neu sydd yn ddall?

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: May I start with a specific question, Minister? In Wales, there is an initiative that is unique, in many ways, namely Talking Books Wales, which offers a very important service for people who are either blind or partially sighted. Will you commit to having discussions with the First Minister, in his role as the Minister with responsibility for the Welsh language, and with the Minister for health, to see what can be done to stabilise that initiative and to ensure that it is viable going into the future, because it offers such an important service in their own language to people who are partially sighted and blind?

[143] **John Griffiths:** I do not think that these matters are mainly matters for me in terms of ministerial responsibility, but I am certainly willing to explore the position regarding the Welsh Government as a whole and return to the committee, perhaps with a note, Cadeirydd.

[144] **Christine Chapman:** Okay, that would be good.

[145] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Byddwn i'n dadlau ei fod yn ymwneud â'ch cyfrifoldeb

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: I would argue that it is to do with your responsibility for the media

chi am y cyfryngau ac am gyhoeddiadau, oherwydd y mae'n gyfrwng pwysig iawn i'r bobl hynny sydd yn ddibynol arno, a dyna'r unig fath o gyhoeddiad y maen nhw'n gallu ei dderbyn. Felly, byddwn i'n falch iawn petaech chi'n cynnal y trafodaethau hynny gyda Gweinidogion eraill sydd â diddordeb yn y maes hwn.

and publications, because it is a very important medium for those people who are reliant upon it, and that is the only kind of publication that they can receive. So, I would be very pleased if you did have those discussions with other Ministers who have an interest in this field.

[146] A gaf i droi at adroddiad y pwyllgor yn 2012 ynglŷn â chapasiti Llywodraeth Cymru i ymdrin â materion yn ymwneud â'r cyfryngau? I ba raddau yr ydych chi wedi symud ymlaen ar y materion hynny a godwyd yn yr adroddiad, yn enwedig y pryderon a amlygwyd yn yr adroddiad hwnnw?

May I turn to the committee report in 2012 about the capacity of the Welsh Government to deal with media issues? To what extent have you moved forward on those issues that were raised in the report, particularly the concerns that were highlighted in that report?

[147] **John Griffiths:** In terms of capacity, Cadeirydd, I think that we have to bear in mind that broadcasting is not devolved. Obviously, I have responsibility for broadcasting, but it is not devolved, so we have to bear that in mind, because that is the context in terms of questions around whether capacity within the Welsh Government is adequate or not. I would say that we have been actively involved in media policy issues, of course, during the past few years. We have responded to all the main broadcasting consultations, and these are on our website. Ministers, including myself, regularly engage with the broadcasters and the UK Government. In fact, I am meeting with S4C, I think, next week. I met with Ed Vaizey, as the UK Government Minister with relevant responsibilities, several months ago, and we discussed a range of issues, including appointments to bodies that are very relevant in terms of the BBC and S4C, the role of the Welsh Government in those appointments, as well as funding issues.

10:15

[148] There is also the broadcasting advisory panel, which reports directly to the First Minister, and, of course, the creative industries are very involved in some of these matters through the department for economy as well. So, there is cross-governmental working, but I believe that we do have sufficient capacity and we are sufficiently active.

[149] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Ar y mater hwnnw, felly, gan eich bod yn dweud bod y capasiti gennych a'ch bod wedi bod yn weithgar yn y maes hwn, wrth gwrs, mae trafodaethau eithriadol o bwysig yn mynd yn eu blaen ar hyn o bryd o ran adnewyddu siarter y BBC a dyfodol S4C ar ôl 2017. Rydych yn dweud bod gennych gyfarfod gydag S4C yn fuan; pa mor weithgar ydych chi wedi bod yn y trafodaethau hyn a sut ydych yn credu y gallwch chi ddylanwadu ar y trafodaethau hyn ar ran Llywodraeth Cymru?

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: On that issue, therefore, given that you say that you have the capacity and that you have been active in this field, of course, there are very important discussions going on about renewing the BBC charter and the future of S4C after 2017. You say that you have a meeting with S4C very soon; what involvement have you had in those discussions and how do you believe you can influence those discussions on behalf of the Welsh Government?

[150] **John Griffiths:** As I said, I have regular meetings with the broadcasters. When I met Ed Vaizey, I raised the issues in terms of charter renewal and made it clear that the Welsh Government wants to be involved in deliberations at an early stage. I also emphasised that the new charter should fully reflect the interests of the people of Wales and the current and

developing devolution settlement. I mentioned that one of our priorities is sufficient funding for S4C as well as BBC Cymru Wales, and the importance to the language. These are matters that I am sure I will discuss with Ian Jones next week and with the BBC when I next meet it.

[151] **Members** will be aware of the response to the Silk commission report. We are very clear, I think, that, in terms of any future devolution, there must be a strong set of safeguards in terms of funding for S4C, including, of course, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport element. So, there are very important issues involved with regard to these matters and, of course, the First Minister takes a very strong lead in terms of the devolution aspects.

[152] **Jenny Rathbone:** You said that you told Ed Vaizey that you want to be involved in the deliberations on charter renewal, but what was his response? Is he prepared to allow other nations to be involved in these important discussions?

[153] **John Griffiths:** His response was generally quite encouraging, understanding the importance to Wales of these issues and the significance of S4C and BBC Wales with regard to a range of issues. However, of course, we will be keenly interested in the decisions that are actually taken in the process that is followed.

[154] **Jenny Rathbone:** Obviously, the media continue to be frustratingly London-focused, and it is not surprising, therefore, that many people in Wales really do not have a clue who is responsible for delivering their services. They constantly talk about the English Minister for education and Minister for health as if they were covering the whole patch throughout the UK. So, what levers are you able to use to ensure that there is a less London-centric approach to our broadcasting?

[155] **John Griffiths:** Well, at the meetings that we have with the BBC and UK Government Ministers, these are points that are continually made, and we will continue to make them. Sometimes, we see some progress, I think, but often it is very frustrating. The picture that you have described is one that committee members will be very familiar with. It is very difficult to get the sort of engagement with the people of Wales around devolution that we would like to see, when they are largely getting their news and current affairs from London-centric media. We would all recognise and understand the issues and the problems involved with that. So, it is very much work in progress at the moment for us. However, our levers are quite limited in terms of broadcasting not being devolved, and we just have to keep working at it and making these important points time and again.

[156] **Jenny Rathbone:** There are two ways in which you can approach this: one is the top-down approach and the other is the bottom-up approach. In the light of the fact that you have had to discontinue the community radio fund, what other indications are there of any movement in growing community-based radio and television?

[157] **John Griffiths:** I guess that there is a whole revolution in terms of social media, which is going on apace. Digital policy within Welsh Government is very important in terms of understanding the widespread significance of those developments and how they can be used, not just by Welsh Government, but by a variety of organisations, to engage better with the people of Wales and communities in Wales. I think that that is very exciting and promising. An awful lot of people now get their news from very new sources, and that offers new opportunities. That is promising. I think that local newspapers are much better in terms of informing people what is going on in their local areas and, to some extent, across Wales. It is possible to get a much better understanding from people of the fact that we have devolution, the responsibilities of Welsh Government Ministers, the policies and strategies and what is happening in those respects in their areas. That is significant and it needs to be supported and encouraged. Again, in terms of the higher-level picture, it is probably rather more frustrating.

[158] **Jenny Rathbone:** What was the impact, if any, of the cut in the community radio fund?

[159] **John Griffiths:** I would have to provide a note to the committee on that. The fund was always time limited and it was, in fact, extended for a further year to give the operators the opportunity to find new sources of money. So, I think that it was quite clear all along that the funding would not be sustained in perpetuity.

[160] **Jenny Rathbone:** It would be useful to know what the outcome is.

[161] **Christine Chapman:** I know that Rhodri wanted to come in with a supplementary question.

[162] **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Mae gennyf gwestiwn byr ynglŷn â'r gostyngiad yn y cyllid i Gyngor Llyfrau Cymru. A yw'r Gweinidog wedi cael cyfle eto i wneud asesiad o sut mae hynny'n effeithio ar y gwasanaeth y mae Cyngor Llyfrau Cymru yn ei gynnig? **Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** I have a brief question about the reduction in the funding for the Welsh Books Council. Has the Minister had an opportunity yet to make an assessment of how that affects the service that the Welsh Books Council offers?

[163] **John Griffiths:** Again, I could provide the committee with a note on this. We have gone through an exhaustive exercise with the Welsh Books Council and, indeed, all Welsh Government sponsored bodies, in terms of the funding restrictions, impacts and effects. I could provide the committee with a note on that. I met with it yesterday and, although times are difficult, I think it is clear that an awful lot of good work is still going on.

[164] **Christine Chapman:** We have come to the end of the media section, but I know that Peter had a general question.

[165] **Peter Black:** I note, Minister, that you have responsibility for national parks and heritage-led regeneration. However, there is no reference to that in the programme for government. Does that mean that you have nothing to say on those issues?

[166] **John Griffiths:** No. We have a lot to say on those issues and we could easily take up another hour on those topics. They are extremely important to us. With national parks, for example, Members will be aware that we are taking forward some very important work in terms of the governance review and a statement of the value, future strategy and policy.

[167] **Peter Black:** So why is that not in the programme for government?

[168] **John Griffiths:** I shall have to think about inclusions in the next programme for government to remedy that.

[169] **Christine Chapman:** I thank the Minister, and Huw and Jon, for attending this morning. We will send you a transcript of the meeting so that you can check it for factual accuracy. Thank you for attending and for answering the Members' questions.

10:33

**Cynnig o dan Reol Sefydlog 17.42 (ix) i Benderfynu Gwahardd y Cyhoedd o'r
Cyfarfod**
**Motion under Standing Order 17.42 (ix) to Resolve to Exclude the Public from
the Meeting**

[170] **Christine Chapman:** I move that

the committee resolves to exclude the public from the remainder of the meeting and from the meeting on 9 July 2014.

[171] Are you all agreed? I see that you are. I close the public meeting.

*Derbyniwyd y cynnig.
Motion agreed.*

*Daeth rhan gyhoeddus y cyfarfod i ben am 10:34.
The public part of the meeting ended at 10:34.*