

S4C Authority Meeting Minute

14 April, 2016, S4C, Llanishen, Cardiff

Meeting No. 397

Present:	Huw Jones Carol Bell John Davies Hugh Hesketh Evans Marian Wyn Jones Siân Lewis Elan Closs Stephens	(Chairman) (Member of the Authority) (Member of the Authority) (Member of the Authority) (Member of the Authority) (Member of the Authority) (Member of the Authority)
S4C Staff:	Ian Jones Dafydd Rhys Elin Morris Gwyn Williams Carys Evans Huw Jones (Ymchwil) Hannah Evans Huw Marshall Phil Williams Bethan C. Williams	(Chief Executive) (Director of Content) (Director of Corporate and Commercial Policy) (Director of Communications and Engagement) (Head of Insight) - (item 6) (Senior statistical Officer)- (item 6) (Insight Officer) - (item 6) (Head of Digital Development) (Secretary to the Authority) (Assistant to the Secretary to the Authority)
Also Attending:	Catrin Davies Owen Knight Fiona McAllister	Beaufort – (item 6) Beaufort – (item 6) Beaufort – (item 6)
Apologies:	Guto Harri	(Member of the Authority)

STANDING ISSUES:

1. **Welcome and Declaration of interest**

The Chairman welcomed all present to the meeting and asked for any member with an interest in the business of the meeting to declare their interest.

See the Register of Interests section of the S4C Authority website for general declarations.
2. **Report of the meeting of the Relocation and Co-location Scrutiny Committee**
held on 13 April.
 - 2.1 The Chairman noted that he wanted to receive a report from the Relocation and Co-location Scrutiny Committee held last night because BBC Wales intends to issue a statement to its staff regarding the technical plans for the proposed broadcasting centre at lunchtime.

JD and EM presented a verbal report of the meeting including the Committee's recommendation to the Authority.

[Summary: The background of the plan to co-locate S4C's technical services with BBC Wales within their existing Llandaf building from 2018 until the new building is ready was presented. BBC and S4C officers had carried out feasibility work on the project in terms of financial savings, technical costs and the risks of moving, whilst at the same time undertaking an assessment of staying in Llanishen.

It was explained that the BBC and S4C officers had concluded that it would not be appropriate for S4C to move to Llandaf for the interim period due to the costs and risks involved. Therefore, S4C officers had submitted a recommendation to the Committee not to co-locate with the BBC in Llandaf. Following consideration, the Committee decided to present the recommendation to the Authority.]

The recommendation not to adopt the interim plan of co-locating S4C's technical services with the BBC in Llandaf, and therefore to wait until the new centre is ready in the city centre, was approved.

It was resolved that officers would convey the message to S4C's staff today to coincide with a similar statement by the BBC at lunchtime.

2.2 **[Summary:** JD explained that the Committee had also considered the implications of the relocation and co-location plans in the wider context of the relocation plan to Carmarthen. It was decided to present an update of the Relocation Business Plan to the Scrutiny Committee and Authority.]

[Summary: The feasibility work regarding the proposed planning permission application for the S4C estate in Llanishen was discussed and the need for officers to ensure that the application is discussed in advance with the Council.

Following a discussion about the current situation with European capital grants, it was decided that HJ and IHJ should discuss the position of capital grant applications with senior officers at UWTSD.]

The plans for conducting public cultural activities at the Egin Centre were discussed and it was noted that officers are discussing plans and the costs of activities within the Egin with UWTSD. It was noted that UWTSD will be responsible for organising and financing events within the Egin and that S4C does not have a responsibility within the contractual arrangement to fund any activities.

3. **Minutes**

The minutes of meeting number 396 (held on 10.03.16) were presented.

The minutes were approved.

4. **Register of Action Points and Decisions**

The latest Register of Action Points and Decisions was submitted and the following details were noted.

Young People and Learners' Portals

It was noted that further information regarding the proposed Youth Portal scheme will be presented in June, with further information on the Learners Portal to be presented in October.

Maes B

Recent discussions regarding broadcasting an element of this year's Maes B performances were raised and DRh reported that he had held discussions with officials of the Eisteddfod, BBC Wales and Antena. He noted that it was unlikely that BBC Wales would be able to offer the Maes B provision this year, but discussions are continuing with Antena who have already been contracted to provide an element of Maes B activities.

Content Committee

IHJ confirmed that it will be possible to report back on the methods and costs of producing data on diversity within individual programmes in October and then the options for diversity monitoring can be considered further.

Pre-purchase Contracts

It was noted that the correct date for reporting back on the Pre-purchase plan is the end of 2016 rather than 2017 as indicated in the register.

Film Policy

It was confirmed that DRh will report back on Film Policy issues to the Content Committee meeting either in May or June.

It was decided that the Register of Action Points and Decisions should be further refined.

5. **Matters Arising from the Minutes**

English Open Subtitles Campaign

[Summary: It was explained that the main purpose of the campaign was to raise the awareness of the availability of English subtitles, especially in core viewer communities. Coverage was given in newspapers that do not normally include S4C material, giving the opportunity to emphasise that S4C's services are inclusive and open to all. The Welsh Language Commissioner had raised a question regarding the number of programmes. Officers are still considering the matter further but it may have been beneficial to prepare the ground before the campaign. Members were keen to try to understand what is the legacy of the campaign.]

It was decided that the officers would give further consideration to the current subtitling policy (both Welsh and English) and also look at the means of marketing the campaigns, and to see what type of campaign could have a long-term impact on the use of the service.

It was decided that a report would be submitted to the Authority at its September meeting.

[Summary: The concern about the use of English in programmes in general was discussed. IHJ did not consider that there was an excess of English but the situation should be monitored continually. Care was also needed when placing the programmes within the schedule.]

6. **Image Tracking Presentation by Beaufort Research**

The Beaufort Research company representatives were welcomed to the meeting and they gave an introduction to their report.

6.1 It was explained that this is Beaufort's first time in undertaking the S4C Image Tracking research: it is a long-term survey that has been held annually for over twenty years.

The fieldwork took place between November 2015 and February 2016. It was noted that this was different from recent years' surveys when the fieldwork had been carried out entirely in November.

[Summary: Reference was made to the main headings of the research, including the following:

1. S4C is the most likely to be recommended of all the channels among Welsh speaking viewers, with seven in ten of them placing it in their top five channels. Around half of the other audiences put S4C in their top 10;
2. A significant improvement in the perception of S4C's programmes since last year - positive movements across most genres from viewers who speak Welsh and the occasional / non-viewers;
3. Viewers feel increasingly involved with S4C, but no increase in the relevance of the service to the everyday lives of those surveyed;
4. The reduction in the perception of modernity continues for S4C's content and its brand image;
5. A recovery in the opinion among Welsh viewers in North Wales - significant improvements in the perception of programmes as well as brand image features, this follows a decline in the region over recent years.]

The Chairman asked for any comments or questions from the Members.

[Summary: There was a discussion on the points arising from the presentation, including the importance of tracking responses over a number of years to get a complete picture of the audience's response, the consideration of the regional changes in response to the service, and the comparison of the presentation's findings with other research sources such as the viewing figures.]

It was noted that the Strategic Board will give further consideration to the findings of the Image Tracking Report.

7. **Report of the Content Committee (held on 14.03.16), including Approval of the BBC Programme Plan for 2016-17**

MWJ submitted the draft minutes of the Content Committee meeting, and outlined what was discussed during the meeting.

[Summary: An update was presented to the Committee on the drama provision by the Drama Commissioner, Gwawr Martha Lloyd. It was noted that there was a deliberate attempt to increase the number of dramas shown during the year and there was a discussion about the policy, and the committee considered whether it had been successful or not. There was a discussion about the performance of the provision and the challenges faced by S4C in terms of its ability to offer quality

drama throughout the year.]

8. **BBC Programme Plan for 2016-17**

MWJ presented the BBC Programme Plan for 2016-17 and noted that the Committee had considered the plan and were recommending that the Authority approve it.

The Authority approved the BBC Programme Plan for 2016-17 and it was decided that the Authority's approval should be conveyed to the BBC Trust in a letter containing an assessment of the performance of the BBC's programmes during 2015-16 which is to be discussed by the Content Committee at its next meeting.

9. **Programmes from the Past Month**

[Summary: There was a discussion about the programmes broadcast during the past month and several series and programmes were discussed including comedy and entertainment and the factual provision.]

10. **Content and Insight Report Quarter 4 2015-16**

The Content and Insight report for Quarter 4 2015-16 was presented. It was explained that the report was based on 52 weeks of data, and that it would be necessary to add week 53 and the effect of composite performance over the period.

[Summary: The reports headings were highlighted, including the growth in online viewing sessions and the increase in reach across the UK. It was also noted that the reach among Welsh speakers in Wales has fallen - this is similar to the performance of other PSB channels in Wales and the officers are monitoring the pattern on a regular basis.]

There was a discussion about the importance of ensuring the appropriate balance between maintaining hours, maintaining standards and the cost per hour of drama productions, and the question was raised whether there is a danger that any further attempt to find cost per hour savings with some types of drama could affect the quality and appeal of the output. DRh explained that he was very aware of the need to monitor this and to ensure that it continues to be of a high standard, and that it appeals to the audience. He noted that he could foresee arguments for increasing the cost per hour for some productions if he saw that further savings could affect the standard of series.

[Summary: There was further discussion about elements of the output, including praise for that from the Six Nations this year.]

[Summary: The performance of the schedule was discussed and whether there was a need to consider how to increase the reach and appeal of the output.]

DRh stated that he was planning to present an assessment of the service's performance over the last year in July when he will be assessing the performance of the Content Strategy.

[Summary: There was a discussion about how elements of the provision contribute to the performance of the service, and the options for assessing this.]

It was suggested that some consideration could be given to the means of developing the work of the Content Committee in order to assess the performance of the whole

output in greater detail by using data such as programme performance targets. In assessing the current work programme of the Content Committee in the context of the Authority's efficiency assessment, it was noted that it would be necessary to ensure that the Committee and Authority did not duplicate each other's work.

It was decided to look again at the possibility of asking the Content Committee to assess the overall performance of the output.

It was decided to note the names of the production companies in the Content Report.

11. **Annual Report 2015-16 - discussion paper**

PW presented a draft discussion paper for the preparation of a narrative on the performance of the service in the Annual Report, and indicated that this would be the last report before the 2017 review. As a result, the intention is to introduce a comprehensive and positive narrative seeking to assess the performance of the year but which also offers an element of the wider context.

He noted that there was an intention to try to present an assessment of the composite viewing patterns this year in order to try to explain the changes that are occurring that affect TV viewing figures yet are not measured by BARB. Changing viewing patterns may have a greater impact on a service such as S4C than on the main PSB channels, and if so, the aim should be to try and explain that.

[Summary: The priorities for the narrative of the Annual Report were discussed.]

A progress report on the Annual Report will be presented to the Authority at its May meeting.

12. **Chairman's Report**

[Summary: The Chairman presented his report and referred to a number of meetings he had held during the month, including a meeting with the Secretary of State, John Whittingdale MP.

[Summary: IHJ noted that he had held talks with a number of politicians during the month.]

13. **Authority Efficiency Assessment**

The Chair introduced a paper arising from the discussions that he had had with members of the Authority and senior officers in order to review the efficiency of the Authority and its committees. The report identified a number of areas that would be useful to discuss and a number of improvements that could be adopted.

[Summary: He also referred to the report by PWC, the auditors, on S4C's Governance and Strategic Planning which had been submitted to the Audit Committee that morning.]

[Summary: HHE presented a summary of the recommendations made by the committee, including issues relating to securing opportunities for the Authority to discuss strategic issues and to ensure a clear understanding of the relevant responsibilities; holding another away day to start this process before the summer; the need to consider all of these issues in the context of the 2017 Review. The need to consider the content and format of reports was also noted and to consider how to

assess the success of the service.]

The Chairman asked members to keep these comments and recommendations in mind when proceeding to discuss the paper.

Committees and Strategy

[Summary: There was agreement that there was a need for a clear understanding of the relationship between the work of the committees and the work of the Authority. In particular the work of the Content Committee was discussed. In general, it was felt that it would be beneficial for the Content Committee to look in more detail at the various data related to the performance of the service and to present its conclusions to the Authority. There was a discussion about how to ensure that work is not duplicated as the Authority receives committee reports, and examples were described where the procedure appeared effective.]

In principle, the Committees do not make decisions. Instead they look at specific issues in more detail than the Authority's timetable allows, and make recommendations for approval by the full Authority. It was therefore necessary to allow at least the possibility of further discussion at the Authority's meeting, and as a consequence it was not possible to completely avoid duplication of discussion.

It was noted that all members receive a copy of each committee's papers and the Authority's papers in advance and the Chairman noted that it could be beneficial if members were to raise any specific or controversial issue with him in advance, so that he has the opportunity to assess how much discussion would need to be provided for. It was agreed that this was a normal procedure in many organisations.

There was a discussion on how the strategic direction that could be set, or approved, by the Authority could be clearer. There was agreement that the operational objectives and the Content Strategy should be derived from the general strategic direction and that there should be a clear means for the Authority and the relevant committees to be able to review progress using performance measures where relevant. Securing a clear vision, shared by all, was necessary before the Review takes place. It was agreed that time should be sought in June for an "away day" strategic discussion.

[Summary: The provisions of the Standing Orders and the explanation of the strategic and operational responsibilities were discussed. It was agreed that the document should be revisited as part of the process of considering the role of Members, to see if it achieves what is needed, or needs updating again. It was decided to re-submit the Standing Orders to the attention of the Audit Committee with recommendations.]

A discussion was held about members' expertise and how it could be exploited to the full. It was suggested that the important element was to ensure appropriate membership of the various committees. There was no desire to increase the number of committees but there was a general feeling that nine normal meetings of the Authority during a year should be sufficient, together with two away days, one of which should focus on reviewing the performance and achievement of the strategy and the other reviewing the strategic priorities for the following year.

[Summary: It was decided to arrange an away day in June to give an opportunity to discuss S4C's strategy and narrative for the preparation period for the 2017 Review, and to consider the implications of implementing the other suggestions on the Authority's work pattern.]

Opportunities to meet informally

There was a discussion regarding the possibility of organising informal meetings so that members and senior managers can get to know each other better and also discussed were the arguments for and against creating time for sessions for Members only, or with the Chief Executive present.

It was decided that the members would meet without the presence of officers for half an hour before the Authority's formal meetings to discuss the agenda and the main topics that members would like to focus on in the discussion.

It was further decided that there would be two informal meetings for supper each year on the evening before the Authority's meeting. The Chief Executive and Officers would be invited to these meetings, unless members considered that there was a need for an occasional meeting for members only.

Size and format of reports

[Summary: It was felt that the reports received by the Authority could be very bulky and that it would be beneficial if more emphasis could be placed on a brief analysis of progress against the strategic priorities and operational objectives. It was suggested that the aim should be a standard format for papers that are submitted. However, it was noted that much of the data provided was not just in the form of reports for the purpose of the Authority only, but rather some were central to the work of the officers.]

It was decided that a template should be prepared with the intention that it should be used for each report. It would set out the topic in question, what the Authority needed to do with the paper, what recommendation is being submitted (if any) and an assessment of the impact of implementing the paper's recommendations.

It was decided to look again at the Authority's work pattern, and that of its committees, to see if it is possible to simplify or rationalise the paperwork, the committees and the Authority itself.

14. Authority administration capacity

The current workload when the Authority's meeting coincides with a number of committees and the extent to which this was causing serious pressure on the Authority's secretariat was noted. The considerable pressure of work the officers faced in the light of FOI requests was also noted, many of them relating to commercial issues. It was suggested that it might be useful to consider looking for additional help for some committees.

15. A paperless system

It was noted that the Huddle system does not meet the requirements of the Authority but several members asked what was wrong with using PDF documents alone – in order to reduce the additional workload placed on the administration when required to create paper versions of reports.

It was decided to further investigate the implementation of a paperless approach within the Microsoft system, by creating PDF documents where notes or modifications can be easily added. It was decided to trial the system for three months, with the intention of becoming completely paperless thereafter.

Register of decisions

It was agreed that the register of decisions made works well.

16. The Nature of Minutes

The report by PWC suggested that there was not enough evidence in the minutes of the challenging of officers. Rather than going down the direction of recording each individual members' comments in order to achieve this, it was suggested that it might be possible to convey more clearly that two different opinions had been expressed and that such a discussion had taken place.

There was agreement that there was a need to be clear about when and what is being decided at the Authority's meetings but it was also necessary to recognise that the Authority has the role of making comments that should be taken into account that are not necessarily the decisions of the whole Authority.

17. The Appointment of one member as the lead non-executive member

The Chairman noted the guidance received from the DCMS for public bodies to appoint a lead non-executive member.

He suggested the name of JD to carry out this function within the Authority. JD was happy to accept the work but asked for a full job description.

It was resolved to appoint JD as the lead non-executive member. It was decided that PW would prepare a document setting out the full job description.

18. Chief Executive's Appraisal

HJ noted that HHE would assist him with IHJ's appraisal in the current round.

19. Discussion on S4C's procedures and processes

[Summary: In general, there was a feeling that the Authority had a function to ensure the proper supervision of S4C's policies and processes, without that leading to administrative interference. There was a discussion about how to ensure that the Authority was aware of the opinions of S4C staff, and it was noted that this subject is already part of the remit of the Personnel Committee.]

20. Response to PWC's Corporate Governance Report

It was noted that no 'management comments' had yet been submitted to PWC in order to give the Committee and Authority the opportunity to form an opinion before submitting comments.

It was decided that HHE and PW would present comments to PWC in accordance with the Committee's and the Authority's discussions along with this Minute.

Next steps

The Chair thanked all for their comments. A fair number of decisions had been taken that would improve the operational efficiency of the Authority and the other points raised would be further considered when the feedback takes place.

21. Chief Executive's Report

The Chief Executive presented his report and referred to the following.

2016-2020 Diversity Action Plan and S4C's Commitment to Diversity

IHJ noted that the Diversity Action Plan for 2016-2020 and the update to S4C's Commitment to Diversity had been presented to the meeting of the Audit, Risk Management, Personnel and Remuneration Committee held on the morning of the 14th April. It was explained that S4C has a statutory duty to approve a Diversity Action Plan for S4C's activities and its Commitment to Diversity. He noted that the Committee had resolved to recommend that the Authority should approve the Commitment and the Action Plan.

The Authority approved the Commitment to Diversity and the Diversity Action Plan 2016-2020.

22. Review of the Digital Strategy

HM presented a review of the Digital Strategy and an assessment of the performance of the provision.

- The viewing figures for S4C's content online have declined over the past year, but recent figures have shown stability and it is hoped that it will be possible to increase the use of S4C online again in the future.
- The new Cyw website has proved popular with the 0-6 age group and their parents.
- Cyw's content is watched through ap S4C and many also watch it on the iPlayer.
- The CywTiwb channel has earned its place, with a significant increase seen year on year in terms of service usage.
- Commercial investments in computer games enable S4C to provide Welsh computer games on the S4C website. Brwydr y Bwystfil will appear on the website shortly.
- The 'Pump' channel was recently launched on YouTube with a view to targeting 16-35 year old viewers with contemporary, short form content without the S4C brand being prominent on the content. The response has been positive within the target audience.
- Ap Chwaraeon will be launching before the 2016 Euro Championships.

HM was thanked for his presentation and there was a discussion on the performance of digital provision.

Whilst praising the initiative, it was suggested that the short films on Pump were rather too long to be called short form. HM explained that there was an element of experimentation and seeking feedback when launching the service and he acknowledged that the items were a bit long. The intention is to repackage the content into shorter items. The response to date was very favourable with most of

the use coming from Facebook, with 62% of the audience under 35.

It was noted that the Pump provision was part of the research for the Young People's Portal.

As the site develops, it is hoped that users will be able to create Welsh language videos to be included on the site.

HM was thanked for his report, and IHJ noted that this would be the last presentation by HM as he had decided to leave S4C at the end of the summer. The Authority thanked him for his contribution to the development of S4C's digital work.

OTHER ISSUES:

23. **Viewers' Hotline Report**

The viewers' Hotline report was presented for information.

24. **Complaints and Compliance Report**

The Complaints and Compliance Report was presented for information.

[Summary: It was noted that a Complaint had been submitted to S4C relating to the teaching techniques used within one programme and officers had answered the relevant issues.]

25. **2016/17 Work Programme – Update**

The updated Work Programme covering the work of the Authority for 2016/17 was presented for information.

26. **Any other business**

The Generation Beth? Scheme - a scheme that is being developed by the European Broadcasting Union which aims to try to understand more about the viewing and opinion of young people across Europe about public broadcasting services. The scheme has already proved very popular in some countries such as France, and it is hoped that there will be a great interest in the project in Wales, where S4C is leading the project.

Date of next meeting:

Thursday, 12 May, 2016