



S4C Authority Meeting Minute

13 December, 2017, S4C, Llanishen, Cardiff

Meeting No. 413

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| Present: | Huw Jones John Davies Hugh Hesketh Evans Elan Closs Stephens | (Chairman) (Member of the Authority) (Member of the Authority) (Member of the Authority) |
| S4C Staff: | Owen Evans Amanda Rees Gwyn Williams Elin Morris Llion Iwan Catrin Hughes Roberts Phil Williams Bethan C. Williams | (Chief Executive) (Creative Content Director) (Director of Communications) (Director of Corporate and Commercial Policy) (Head of Content Distribution) (Director of Partnerships) - item 4 (Secretary to the Authority) (Assistant to the Secretary to the Authority) |
| Apologies: | Guto Harri Siân Lewis | (Member of the Authority) (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.

ECS declared an interest in relation to the discussions with the BBC. No other declarations were received.

See the Register of Interests section of the S4C Authority website for general declarations.

2. Minutes of meeting 412 (held on 22.11.17)

2.1 The minutes of meeting number 412 were presented.

The Authority approved the minutes of the meeting held on 22 November.

2.2 Action Points/Matters Arising

Appointments to the Authority

It was noted that there had been a number of discussions with DCMS officers over the last few weeks, and that they were very aware of the risks of not appointing soon. It was understood that they will advertise for 3 new members before the end of the year.

There was a real risk to the organisation considering that the whole board could include new inexperienced members when the current members' periods expire next year.

It was necessary to ensure that the DCMS now realises the seriousness of the Authority's membership situation, and the need to advertise for new members and to consider the terms of the existing members.

2.3 **Internal Audit Work Programme**

Suggestions for the proposed work programme of the internal auditors were discussed. It was suggested that the auditors should consider the issues relating to a unitary board structure given that the review could suggest establishing a unitary board for S4C's governance. It was suggested that Rhian Owen's advice could be sought before reaching an opinion on our systems.

To date, the internal auditors have not completed the expected work, and it was noted that the Audit Committee are keen for them to deliver their work programme promptly.

It was suggested that PW and ShW should seek guidance and advice from Rhian Owen regarding their requirements with respect to the auditors' work programme.

2.4 2.1.8 - The need to invite Matt Hancock and his ministers at the DCMS to relevant events organised by S4C was underlined.

2.5 **Balances to be carried forward at the end of the year**

[Summary: The policies of the DCMS and S4C regarding such balances were discussed. The DCMS's attitude has changed over time and the discussions between them will continue.]

HJ noted that he was keen to see OE's strategy developing and to ask the question internally thereafter.

3. **Chairman's Report**

3.1 The Chairman presented his report and referred specifically to the following matters.

The Independent Review

OE said that the Review timetable had slipped somewhat, and that the report was no longer expected to be published before the New Year. It was likely that the report would include a reference to a change in remit, to the use of digital (including voice recognition) and to broadcasting across the UK, etc. In addition, they had looked at the regulatory situation with Ofcom, it is now suggested that we should not have an Ofcom licence but rather continue with the current arrangement.

[Summary: There was a discussion about the options for the DCMS to allow S4C an element of inflation. S4C did not have information about any specific plans, but the talks were continuing in the light of the proposed cuts.]

The importance of protecting the constructive relationship that exists between S4C and the BBC was noted.

It was suggested that OE, HJ and PW should arrange a meeting with Tony Hall, Anne Bulford and BBC senior officials to facilitate any further discussions.

OE will be holding a meeting with Clare Pillman soon to seek an update, as well as with Sue Owen early in the new year.

3.2 **Culture Committee**

OE, PW and HJ had been invited to go before the Culture Committee tomorrow to discuss S4C's Annual Report. This is the first report to be formally presented to the Assembly.

3.3 **Viewers' Evenings**

Options for S4C's Viewers' Evenings had been presented by the Chairman to the officers at a special meeting.

The main conclusions were that there was a significant PR value but that the purpose of the evenings should not be misinterpreted, and that they are not part of the qualitative research programme.

[Summary: The Members discussed the feedback from the evenings compared with the research from the Insight unit. There was concern that there could be a negative perception that we do not listen to our viewers when making decisions. Appropriate attention must be given to the views of the core audience who attend the evenings, and connect with the Viewers' Hotline, and if the decision is not in their favour the rationale should be explained better and timelier. The evening held in Mold was an example where the evening's suggestions were implemented and Members agreed on the value of the evenings to highlight long-term trends within the core audience.]

When deciding to bring a series to end, or not to re-commission, a communications plan should be drawn up to deal with any queries or discussions.

There was a strong feeling that more use should be made of focus groups in order to find out the views of the widest possible range of the audience, including Welsh speakers who do not watch S4C regularly.

4. **Meeting with Representatives of the TAC Council**

The Chairman explained that the session with the representatives of the TAC Council was an annual arrangement to allow the Authority Board to hear the views of the sector on the relationship with S4C.

[Summary: S4C had identified training as a specific topic to discuss. The fact that TAC had taken the lead in organising training for the industry was welcomed and it was confirmed that a year of training courses across the sector were planned and budgeted. Discussions have already taken place between TAC and colleges such as the Cardiff Met, and the University of South Wales works closely with Rondo. OE had met with the Government and had had a positive response on funding and collaboration.

It was suggested that companies were experiencing recruitment difficulties in North Wales and there was some concern among TAC members that talent is migrating across the border. The importance of securing training through the medium of Welsh was noted.

It was felt that the new scheme of pre-purchasing agreements for series rather than the stabilisation agreements has helped the situation.

It is believed that there is a shortfall in the freelance market for senior producers and as a result it was decided to employ freelance senior producers and to place them on specific productions. On the whole, the companies have welcomed the policy.

It was agreed that OE would report back to the Authority in April and he suggested that support from the BBC Academy could be sought in specific training areas.]

It was agreed that an update should be received from TAC regarding agreeing and implementing the sector's training strategy.

5. Chief Executive's Report

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

5.1 Commercial Board

[Summary: OE presented an update on the activities of the Commercial Board. It was explained that options for the Commercial Board's investment strategy would be submitted to the Authority in February.]

5.2 Co-location and Relocation

An update on the Co-location and Relocation scheme was given by OE and EM. It was explained that Nia Bennett had been engaged to deal with the human resources work.

OE and EM had attended a meeting of the Egin Board last week, and it was reported that it was likely that the building would be ready by July.

Nia Bennett has already started discussions with individuals, and team charters are being prepared, which state exactly how the teams will work within the Egin. It is hoped that the work can be completed in January.

[Summary: S4C officers have been meeting with UWTSD about the external companies that had expressed an interest in moving to the Egin in the original plan, such as the BBC and the Mentrau Iaiti.]

It was noted that there was a need to ensure that the UWTSD reaches agreement with tenants for the Egin, and fulfils the contractual condition to ensure that 60% of the space at the centre is full by the time S4C moves in.

It was agreed that a monthly update on the developments with the Egin should be submitted to the Authority.

QUARTERLY ISSUES:

6. Quarter 2 Communications Report 2017/18

GW presented the Communication report for Quarter 2, explaining that this report bridges the old format and the proposed format of the report.

[Summary: The work undertaken to promote one specific series was outlined. Officers were asked if lessons had been learned from the promotional scheme and how does one track the success of a promotional plan. The series was also part of a scheme where all the series was available at the end of the broadcast.]

7. **Reports from the meetings of the Authority's Committees**

Content Committee Meeting

HJ presented a report from the meeting of the Content Committee held on the 30th of November.

The featured genre was drama. There was support for the consensus that drama was an essential element of the service, and that the strategy was successful in reaching new audiences.

The meeting learned that Bang had been nominated for one of the Writers Guild awards, on the list alongside Line of Duty and Taboo.

8. **Last Month's Programmes**

There was discussion about the past month's programs, and specific reference was made to the following programs and series.

[Summary: The meeting discussed the past month's programmes. Amongst the topics raised during the discussion – there was a welcome for a programme that portrayed characters from West Wales; reference was made to a series that has benefited from the help of a senior producer; and a concern was raised about a portrayal of diversity and the need to be more careful and sensitive when considering diversity in the future.]

9. **Viewers' Hotline Report**

The Viewers' Hotline Report was submitted for information.

10. **Complaints Report**

[Summary: The complaints report was submitted for information.]

11. **Authority Work Programme**

The Authority's Work Programme was presented for information. It was noted that there will be an Away Day in January 2018.

12. **Any other business**

OE explained that a new diversity policy for S4C, for the Production sector and for the on-screen service will be produced shortly, and that he will submit a draft to the Authority in January.

No other matters were discussed.