



CYMRU WALES

Monday 1st February 2021

Helen Mary Jones MS
Acting Chair, Culture, Welsh Language & Communications Committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Dear Helen Mary,

Legacy inquiry by the Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee

My thanks for your kind invitation to offer some thoughts for your Legacy Inquiry on the work of the committee.

Firstly, I would like to thank you and your colleagues on the committee for taking the time to show an ongoing interest in ITV Cymru Wales and the wider Welsh broadcasting sector. The last twelve months have shown the vital importance of a strong and pluralistic Welsh media landscape in which audiences can find a range of trusted, authoritative news and current affairs sources offering clear and detailed information about the pandemic and the response to it at an all-Wales level. We are especially proud to serve a loyal audience that might get little, if any, news of Wales from any other source. As you know we are making huge efforts to serve that audience on air, online and across social media with trusted content which continues to reach substantial proportions of the Welsh population on a daily and weekly basis.

The committee has been especially generous in inviting me to address members on three occasions over the last year or so. I know this has been exceptional in that it covers the devolution of broadcasting and the response to the pandemic, as well as the annual scrutiny of the broadcaster in Wales. I have very much appreciated the opportunity to aid members' understanding of the challenges facing commercial public service broadcasters in creating bespoke content in Wales for the people of Wales in a broadcast landscape which is increasingly dominated by a small group of global players offering little or no Welsh content. Covid has in many ways amplified those pressures - and increased the need for a new public service broadcast/content settlement to maintain the prominence and sustainability. You pose a number of questions in your invitation for submissions to the Inquiry. In terms of 'lessons learned' and preparations for the Sixth Senedd, I would suggest a key element has been the acknowledgement of committee members of the importance of our pluralistic PSB settlement and the importance of maintaining its key elements despite that growth of well funded multi-national platforms who draw in substantial Welsh audiences, advertising and/or subscription revenues, while offering little in return in terms of Welsh content.

I am sure that the committee will wish to revisit this discussion as part of the work of the Sixth Senedd, especially as we look forward to the result of Ofcom's current consultation around its *Small Screen: Big Debate* consultation. I and my colleagues at ITV Cymru Wales look forward to supporting the ongoing work of the committee then.

You pose two other questions around the committee's remit and way of working. I would say that the committee's remit has certainly allowed us to discuss not just our Channel 3 licensed service but also the work we are doing across our growing production businesses, our network output - featuring programming that celebrates the best of Wales before an all-UK audience - and our increasingly important online and social media platforms. On that basis it seems very much fit for purpose. The way the committee works seems to be very efficient and effective. I would like, in particular, to thank committee members and their teams for the time they have taken to understand some of the fine details involved in considering the details of the broadcasting sector.

Lastly, could I take this opportunity to thank your committee's staff for all of their support, insight and professionalism over the course of the Fifth Senedd. Their dedication and hard

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Pwyllgor Diwylliant, y Gymraeg a Chyfathrebu / Culture, Welsh Language and Communications
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Ymateb gan ITV Cymru Wales / Response from ITV Cymru Wales

work may rarely be seen by the wider world. But it has been very much appreciated by myself
and my colleagues.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Henfrey', written in a cursive style.

Phil Henfrey
Head of News and Programmes, ITV Cymru Wales