



## **S4C Board Meeting Minute**

13 February 2020, Canolfan S4C Yr Egin, Carmarthen

**Meeting No. 435**

### **Present:**

#### **Non-executive Board Members:**

|                    |                       |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Hugh Hesketh Evans | (Chairman)            |
| Rhodri Williams    | (Member of the Board) |
| Anita George       | (Member of the Board) |
| Owen Derbyshire    | (Member of the Board) |

#### **Shadow Unitary Board**

##### **Executive Members:**

|             |                           |
|-------------|---------------------------|
| Owen Evans  | (Chief Executive)         |
| Amanda Rees | (Director of Content)     |
| Elin Morris | (Chief Operating Officer) |

##### **S4C Staff:**

|                    |                                    |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| Gwyn Williams      | (Director of Communications)       |
| Eilir Jones        | (Head of Research) – items 9 & 10  |
| Catrin Whitmore    | (Head of HR) – item 7              |
| Owain Lloyd        | (Board Secretary)                  |
| Bethan C. Williams | (Assistant to the Board Secretary) |

##### **Also present:**

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Ruth McElroy | (Professor of Creative Industries,<br>University of South Wales) – item 9 |
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##### **Apologies:**

|            |                       |
|------------|-----------------------|
| Siân Lewis | (Member of the Board) |
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### **STANDING ISSUES:**

#### **1. Welcome and Declaration of interest**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the S4C Unitary Board Meeting.

He asked any member with an interest in the business of the meeting to declare their interest.

No declarations were made

*See the Register of Interests under the Board section on the S4C website for general declarations.*

#### **2. Minutes of Board Meeting 434 held on 16 January 2020**

The minutes of meeting number 434 held on 16 January 2020 were presented.

The minutes were Approved.

3. **Matters arising from Minutes 434** .

GW noted that the meeting with the Urdd had taken place.

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

The Register of Decisions and Action Points was presented for information. OL reported that the register had been updated and a letter had been sent to the DCMS regarding extending the appointments of HHE and SL for one year.

Officers were asked whether discussions had taken place with the National Library about the tapes archive and OE noted that he would be meeting them again for further discussions

5. **Chairman's Report**

The Chairman said that the main issue for discussion was the latest position on co-location.

**[Summary:** He explained that the Audit Committee had discussed written reports on the co-location project the previous afternoon. The Board was given an update on the latest position with the project.

As a result of the discussion, it was decided that the Chairman would write formally to the BBC. The letter would:

- note the further delay to the "play out" and the implications for S4C after March;
- welcome the development of a new scheme;
- point out that the Board has asked officials to prepare a list of things that need to be in place, proven and working before S4C agrees to move;
- suggest that it would be appropriate to commission an "external gateway" of the project;
- invite the BBC to attend a special meeting of the Audit Committee in March to update members and to present the new scheme.]

6. **Chief Executive's Report**

**[Summary:** The Chief Executive presented his report and referred specifically to the following matters.

**Finance**

S4C officers were in the process of discussing end of year finance with DCMS officials.

**Politicians**

The political engagement plan continues to be implemented. Since January OE had met a number of members from the various parties. The meetings had provided an

opportunity to update them on the service, the objectives and some of the challenges in the coming months and also in the years ahead.

### **Welsh Assembly**

It was noted that OE had given evidence to the Assembly's Culture Committee as part of the committee's work to contribute to Ofcom's Small Screen: Big Debate, and the committee's consultation on devolving broadcasting. In addition, both EM and CHR had attended a round table session of the committee on 5 February to discuss some of the considerations around devolution.

### **Consultation on de-criminalisation**

It was noted that the UK government had issued a consultation on the de-criminalisation of TV licence evasion. It was decided that S4C should respond to the consultation by underlining that it is not just the BBC that the licence fee funds and that the Secretary of State has a statutory duty to ensure "adequate funding" for to S4C.]

## **7. Human Resources Report**

CW presented the Human Resources report and the results of the Staff Survey.

**[Summary:** The purpose of the staff survey in September 2019 was to improve the workplace, to ensure that S4C was a thriving organisation and a good place to work. In addition, the Management team were keen to see if there had been an improvement since the 2018 survey. Overall, there was an improvement in the 2019 survey responses compared to those in 2018 with 87% responding in comparison with 51%. CW explained the main highlights of the survey. In response, S4C wanted to create focus groups to discuss the outcomes and how they could improve.

The Board noted the results of the staff survey and the plan for the coming year.

With so much taking place it was agreed that the Audit Committee should monitor progress each quarter.]

## **8. 22 Strategy**

OE presented his paper on the 22 Strategy. There would be an opportunity to discuss it in more detail at the awayday in March.

**[Summary:** There were several major questions that would need to be answered in the coming months. In response to the questions there were several pieces of work to think about and they would need to be co-ordinated as a comprehensive strategy was drawn up.]

## **9. Presentation by Ruth McElroy**

A presentation was given by Ruth McElroy, Professor of Creative Industries at the University of South Wales.

**[Summary:** In the first part of the presentation, RMc spoke about how the context of television has changed since 2014, television spending and production trends. She then went on to discuss the role of Public Service Broadcasting arguing that it was now time to talk about PSM and not PSB and that PSM was an ethos not a platform. The ethos and the values had to be obvious to the audience, and that relationship should be highlighted. The first principles were still important.

RMc suggested the following as the purposes of a public media service: Independence; Pluralism; Universality; Accountability; Accessible to all and for the benefit of all; Quality; Original; Diverse; Innovative and challenging; Reliable – serving the public requires public validation.

In terms of public objectives, RMc noted the following:

- To reflect, represent and serve all communities in Wales accurately and authentically, in Welsh and English, including communities of interest and ethnic minority communities in Wales;
- Providing impartial news and information to help people understand and engage with democratic, industrial and public policy issues relating to Wales;
- Providing high-quality, distinctive content, output and services to all citizens and users;
- Supporting learning for people of all ages living in Wales;
- Supporting Wales' creative economy;
- Reflecting Wales to itself, to the United Kingdom and to the rest of the world.

RMc finished the presentation with several questions for discussion.

The Chairman noted that the presentation was very timely when considering the 22 strategy. RMc said that no-one in the discussion could predict the future and that there was no obvious answer to the challenges in the broadcasting world. OE agreed and noted Clic as an example where no-one had foreseen that 100,000 would register so soon. Another question was how to measure performance as indicators are traditionally linear.

The Board agreed that understanding the audience was vital and an essential part of the 22 Strategy. There was a need to understand the reasons for watching and not watching, rather than just focussing on how many are watching. Politically, RMc also believed that the measurement of cultural value was important although difficult to do. She noted that the EBU had done some work on this.]

The importance of S4C's service being available to all and for everyone's benefit was discussed. Focussing on viewing figures could sometimes be misleading, not always reflecting the audience appreciation. There were examples of programmes where the viewing figures were not high but there was a response making positive comments which showed a clear appreciation by the audience.

RMc noted the importance of remembering those people who value and celebrate the Welsh language without being Welsh speakers themselves. Similarly, people were able to appreciate and support the fact that S4C was available even though they were not using the service. Availability was important for people but what would have to change to persuade them to engage with the service? AR noted that the discussions around the language this summer would be an opportunity to engage with people across Wales, to motivate people who do not speak the language and to create an awareness of S4C.

The Chairman thanked RMc for her interesting presentation.

10. **Content and Insight Report - Quarter 3**

**[Summary:** EJ presented his report outlining the performance of S4C's services on television, on Clic and on social media.]

It was noted that the Content and Insight Report for Quarter 3 was for information and had been discussed in the Content Committee the previous afternoon.

RhW asked if it was possible to compile statistics for the demographic of Welsh speakers for the awayday. It was agreed to arrange a paper/presentation for the awayday-up with a breakdown of Welsh speakers by age, demographics etc.

11. **Financial Report Quarter 3**

**[Summary:** SW presented the Financial Report for Quarter 3]

12. **Report from the Commercial Board**

**[Summary:** EM presented the highlights from the Commercial Board held on the 5 February. They included a presentation given by Sky Media.

On the Llanishen estate things are going well with the Alzheimer's Society having moved in and discussions with other tenants continuing. A decision on what to do with the technical block would be required after S4C moves out.

An update was provided on the commercial projects. It was noted that 2019 had been a good year for the Commercial fund with the portfolio value increasing by 14.1%.]

13. **Report from the Content Committee**

RhW presented the highlights from the Content Committee held on the 12 February, including a new report on Clic, the future of content after 2022, and future success metrics. It was decided to change the peak hour definition (19.00 to 22.00).

14. **Report from the Audit Committee**

It was noted that the internal auditors had attended the Committee to report on some of the historical work. The audit work was ongoing and there would be several reports to consider in April. The risk register and the amendment to the travel and subsistence policy were also discussed.

15. **Complaints and Compliance Report and Viewers' Hotline**

The Viewers' Hotline report was presented for information.

16. **Work Programme 2019/20**

The work programme for 2020 was submitted for the information of the Board. The Board was reminded of the viewers' evenings at Pontypridd and Aberystwyth.

17. **Any other business**

The non-executive members of the Board were reminded that the declaration of interests' form needed updating.

