

## Cyfarfod gyda S4C - adleoli posib / Meeting with S4C - possible relocation

9/12/13 – 3.00 pm

Yn bresennol / In attendance:

### S4C

X  
XX

### Llywodraeth Cymru / Welsh Government

Y, Arts and Media  
YY, Arts and Media  
YYY, Arts and Media  
Z, Creative Industries team  
ZZ, Welsh Language Unit

1. AA and XX explained the background to this process. S4C had invited expressions of interest regarding the relocation of their Headquarters. Proposals from two consortia were shortlisted, one for Caernarfon in conjunction with Gwynedd County Council and one for Carmarthen in conjunction with Trinity St David University.
2. Relocation will only take place if the project is cost neutral. Ian Jones, S4C's Chief Executive, had emphasised this on a number of occasions. Three models will be considered by the S4C Authority in March. These are:
  - a) North Wales model – moving the HQ to Caernarfon but keeping a strong presence in Cardiff
  - b) South Wales model – moving the HQ to Carmarthen but with a strong presence in Cardiff and a smaller presence in the North (S4C currently have around 10 staff working from an office in Caernarfon)
  - c) Cardiff model – retaining a HQ in Cardiff together with the small office in Caernarfon (there are sub-models within this option).
3. If the proposal to relocate from Cardiff goes ahead it is expected that around 50 posts will move from Cardiff which will probably lead to a further 150 jobs in the locality in whichever area they decide to relocate. Whichever option is taken forward, S4C's broadcasting activity (equating to 50 – 60 jobs) will remain in Cardiff - either at the existing Media Centre at Llanishen or elsewhere.
4. There was a discussion about possible co-location of S4C's ongoing Cardiff presence with the BBC. The benefit of this would be cost savings, due to shared technical facilities etc. The BBC will need to be informed of whether S4C wants to co-locate by March as it has to plan accordingly. However, X emphasised that relocating S4C functions out of Cardiff was not necessarily dependent on sharing broadcast premises with the BBC, as S4C has an existing base in Cardiff with could be retained if needed, as long as the move of other functions could still be achieved on a cost-neutral basis. X noted that the number of individuals involved was very different – about 1800 in the case of BBC Cymru Wales, compared to only 50 – 60 who would be retained in Cardiff by S4C.

5. With regard to the funding of the relocation project, X noted that S4C could release funds by selling its current headquarters in Llanishen. X also referred to the actual building to which S4C may relocate; this could be a new-build, or an existing building could be refurbished to the standard required. YY noted that politically it would be important, especially in view of the economic climate, that S4C was not seen to be spending considerable amounts of funding on a new building at the expense of creating programmes. X responded by saying that S4C would wish the new HQ to be seen as a community hub. It is also envisaged that it would be at the centre of a creative industries hub. Z noted that this could potentially align with Welsh Government priorities.
6. X expanded on the options for funding a new HQ, saying that S4C would be keen to explore whether the Welsh Government might be able to offer support. Y noted budget constraints within the culture and sport portfolio, suggesting that EST would need to consider any requests for financial assistance. Z noted that there are many ways in which the Welsh Government could potentially assist S4C which do not necessarily involve grant aid, but stressed that the EST Minister would expect any business case seeking support from the Welsh Government to deliver economic benefits. X asked for advice on how to progress a request for assistance. Z stated that no commitment is possible at the present time, but suggested that once S4C has received full proposals from both consortia it could consider the extent of any funding gaps and, if appropriate, submit a fully worked up business proposal for the Welsh Government to consider further. X responded that he would try to draw up such a proposal in January.
7. ZZ noted that relocation would impact on the Welsh language and referred to the recent Welsh Government report of the Welsh Communities task and finish group which specified 3 areas (Aberystwyth, Carmarthen and Bangor) which had the potential to develop economically and linguistically. X said that he would be interested to see the report and ZZ responded that she would forward a copy to him.

#### **Action Point: Welsh Government**

8. ZZ reported that policy officials in the Welsh Language Unit have been liaising closely with Dafydd Hughes, EST and that it may be worth S4C meeting with him in due course. X noted that S4C would be happy to share the impact studies that they have undertaken with Dafydd Hughes in due course, if this would be useful. ZZ informed the meeting that she was due to meet with Dafydd Hughes on 12 December and that she would inform him of this meeting at that time.
9. ZZ also reported that the Welsh Government was naturally very concerned about the Census results in Carmarthenshire and is liaising with Carmarthenshire County Council on developing a strategy on the future of the Welsh language in the county. YY noted that whichever model is chosen, WG will naturally need to remain neutral.
10. There was further discussion regarding financial support from the WG in general e.g. Wales Economic Growth Fund, Repayable Business Finance. Z stated that although there are a number of possible funding routes within EST, not all would be appropriate for S4C. He advised that the important thing to do now is to consider the business case for any move; possible mechanisms for any Welsh Government support could be identified later, if required. He also added that it would be worth S4C considering whether there are any transport, infrastructure or environmental issues associated with either plan and to address these in any proposal prepared for the Welsh Government.

YY suggested that there would be obvious links with the Department for Education and Skills.

11. YY reported that he had informed the First Minister's office that officials are in touch with S4C and liaising closely on the relocation.

12. It was agreed that it would be useful to hold a further meeting in the New Year when S4C will have received more detailed plans from both consortia.

**Action: Welsh Government**