

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

14/2/14 – 10.00 am

Yn bresennol / In attendance:

S4C:

X
XX

Llywodraeth Cymru / Welsh Government:

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

Ymddiheuriadau / Apologies

XXX
YYY, Arts and Media

1. XX updated the meeting on activities since the previous meeting on 20 January. He reminded the meeting that proposals from two consortia had been shortlisted, one for Caernarfon in conjunction with Gwynedd County Council and one for Carmarthen in conjunction with Trinity St David University. XX reported that S4C officials had met with both parties in order to challenge the detail, and the financial details in particular.
2. Three models will be considered by the S4C Authority at their meeting on 13 March. These are:
 - a) North Wales model – moving the HQ to Caernarfon but keeping a strong presence in Cardiff. This model involves modification of an existing building.
 - 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). This model involves a totally new build.
 - c) Cardiff model – retaining a HQ in Cardiff together with the small office in Caernarfon (there are sub-models within this option).
3. Both parties will need to provide XX with all final documentation by midday on 7 March at the latest – information will then be provided to S4C Authority Members' in readiness for the site visits. They will travel to Gwynedd for a three hour presentation on 10 March and on the following day they will receive a three hour presentation by the Carmarthen consortium (5 Members will visit each location). On the evening of 12 March there will be an opportunity for Authority members to question any of the documents with the Relocation Team. The Authority will decide on the successful model at their meeting on 13 March. XX hopes to inform the Welsh Government of the Authority's decision during the week commencing 17 March.
4. XX noted that this project is being run in parallel with the BBC and their relocation, especially from the technical point of view. Any announcement by S4C could have an effect on the BBC and their plans.

5. ZZ referred to an announcement which is likely to be made around the 24 March regarding the Welsh language. It was not felt that that announcement would affect the announcement by S4C about the possible relocation.
6. X referred to the financial implications of a possible relocation. On the revenue side, jobs would be moving which would probably incur relocation costs. Not all current personnel would wish to relocate which could lead to redundancy costs; there would also be retraining costs for new staff as the skills of those who choose not to relocate will be lost. X reported that their Llanishen building could realise £3million but that the capital would be required prior to the start of any building work, especially if the new build model was the successful option. She mooted the idea of a bridging loan.
7. Whichever model is successful, XX reported that S4C is likely to have a cash flow issue leading up to 2017 when the assets from their building can be released. He enquired what avenues S4C could follow in order to maximise the possibility of financial assistance from the Welsh Government (WG).
8. Z responded that the Welsh Government could make no promises of financial assistance especially as we have not yet been provided with any business plans or even any indication of the exact requirements of S4C. The EST Minister requires a detailed level of information, particularly when large sums of money are involved.
9. The S4C relocation team will be scrutinising both applications and number-crunching during the w/c 17 February. Z stated that the short timescale meant that it would not be possible for the WG to make any decisions by 13 March. He suggested that in the first instance WG would require an assessment of the relative values and challenges for both models. WG would then be in a position to make a response. XX agreed to provide that information when in a position to do so.

Action Point: S4C

10. X asked about the possibilities of accessing capital from WG for a finite period. Z responded that potential support would be dependent on a robust business case being provided. X also asked whether there is WG assistance towards the cost of retraining. Y said he believed this to be the case and would forward any information he could obtain from Education colleagues.

Action Point: Welsh Government

11. X enquired whether WG had anyone she could speak with regarding good practice when relocating staff (as WG had moved staff to its Aberystwyth and Llandudno Junction offices). Y stated that he would make enquiries and pass on contact details, if appropriate.

Action Point: Welsh Government

12. At the conclusion of the meeting and in response to a request from Z, XX said that he would hope to get a concise paper to the WG during the last week of February. He would forward it to Z who could then distribute it to all relevant officials (Non Disclosure Agreements and implications of FOI would then need to be kept in mind.)
13. Y closed the meeting by saying that WG would bring all relevant portfolios (e.g. Welsh Language, Culture, Housing, Economy etc) together in a meeting in due course.