

Cross Party Statement on Broadcasters in Wales

The Welsh Government and the National Assembly for Wales expects the BBC to stand by its own recent public statements that the deal announced this week between itself and the UK Government will be cash neutral for the BBC and will not affect services. We note assurances from the Corporation's management that this 'cash flat' deal will not therefore, impact on budgets at either BBC Wales or at S4C.

We are, however, extremely concerned that neither the Welsh Government nor the National Assembly were consulted before this deal was reached. We find it both alarming and undemocratic that the UK Government and the BBC made decisions behind closed doors and outside of the BBC Charter renewal process.

Furthermore, the BBC announced last week that it will implement a programme of job cuts as a consequence of a £150m funding shortfall next year. BBC Cymru Wales has already received significant cuts during recent years - a cut of 32% in real terms since the Charter renewal in 2007. It is disappointing that aside from news and sport, BBC Wales is only able to offer an hour a week of English language programming, made in Wales, for Welsh audiences. Any funding cuts now will further limit BBC Wales' ability to meet the needs of its viewers and listeners.

S4C is now funded mainly through the BBC and so any cuts will also impact on the Welsh language channel and the continued success of the Welsh language itself. Funding for S4C has already reduced by 36% in real terms since 2010. The future of broadcasting in Wales is now in serious jeopardy, and poses serious risks to both the Welsh language and our economy.

The Welsh Government and the National Assembly expects to be fully involved in deliberations on the new BBC Royal Charter. The new agreement will be important in the context of the future funding of BBC Cymru Wales and S4C.

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