



Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref

Phil George, Chair, Arts Council of Wales
Nick Capaldi, Chief Executive, Arts Council of Wales
Professor Damian Walford Davies, Chair, Literature Wales
Lleucu Siencyn, Chief Executive, Literature Wales
Professor M. Wynn Thomas, Chair, Welsh Books Council
Helgard Krause, Chief Executive, Welsh Books Council

14 July 2017

Dear colleagues,

Thank you for the detailed responses to the Independent Review of Support for Publishing and Literature in Wales which I have now received from the Arts Council of Wales, Literature Wales and the Welsh Books Council.

I appreciate the range of views provided for my consideration. I note the points of concern some of you have raised about certain aspects of the report, as well as your statements of agreement and constructive engagement with the report in other areas.

As agreed, these have now been shared with the Chair and other members of the independent review panel. They have agreed to consider your submissions and will respond to me directly in due course. This process will largely focus on matters of accuracy, scope, impartiality and strategic effectiveness, as these are the areas you have primarily focused on in your submissions. This will take some time, especially given the academic commitments of both the Chair and Vice-Chair of the panel over the next few weeks. I expect to receive the panel's written response towards the end of the summer break.

I will consider the panel's views on the matters you have raised and provide you with an update in due course. I am open to the possibility, as some of you have suggested, of a meeting between ourselves and the panel Chair at that point. I will consider this further once I have seen the panel's response.

I am pleased that you have all also committed to participating in a separate strand of work, running in parallel with the first, where we will collectively consider the practicalities of taking forward the report's recommendations. I appreciate that some of you have serious concerns about certain aspects of these recommendations.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

I am absolutely clear that your participation in this work on the practicalities of implementation does not imply support for, or acceptance of, specific recommendations. Neither should you assume that this work implies I have already made any final decisions. I stand by my statement in the Assembly Chamber on 13 June, but I will of course give the outcomes of both pieces of work full consideration before reaching a firm conclusion. In the meantime, your concerns are being looked at and I expect us all to engage fully and constructively in this work over the summer, whilst the programmes of activity you deliver for the people of Wales should continue as normal.

Space must be allowed for these pieces of work to be completed, so they can properly inform the Welsh Government's formal response to the independent review which I will look to publish during the autumn.

Some of you clearly perceive serious issues with the report. You have raised these with me and have agreed with me that the review panel should consider your concerns and respond to them. I have therefore been surprised in recent days to see personal statements appear online which could be seen as seeking to undermine the process we have all committed to, without awaiting the panel's response.

This is not helpful. I hope and expect that we will move forward in a way that allows this work to be completed in good faith and in doing so maintain productive and positive working relationships, both now and in the future.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken', with a long, sweeping flourish above the name.

Ken Skates AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi a'r Seilwaith
Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure