Meeting of the BBC Wales Committee

MINUTES

Tuesday 26 March, 2019
Board Room, BH Cardiff

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. Ofcom Wales
2. Minutes of 4 October Wales Committee
3. Update from the Director, BBC Wales
4. Audiences Report
5. Regulatory and Finance Report
6. Annual Plan
7. Committee Evaluation
8. AOB
ATTENDANCE

Members:
- Elan Closs Stephens  Non-executive director (Chair)
- Ian Hargreaves  Non-executive director
- Ken MacQuarrie  Director, Nations and Regions
- Rhodri Talfan Davies  Director, BBC Wales
- Rhys Evans  Head of Strategy and Education, BBC Wales

With:
- Tanni Grey-Thompson  Non-executive Director
- Ian Haythornthwaite  Chief Operating Officer, Nations and Regions
- Richard Thomas  Portfolio Head of Marketing, BBC Wales
- Christina Roski  Business Partner, DG’s Office (Secretary)
- Eleanor Marks  Director, Ofcom Wales (for item 1)
- Hywel Wiliam  Chair, Ofcom Wales Advisory Committee (for item 1)
1. Ofcom Wales

1.1 The Committee welcomed Eleanor Marks from Ofcom Wales and Hywel Wiliam from the Ofcom Wales Advisory Committee who joined the meeting to give Ofcom’s view of the media landscape and to talk about the input the Wales office will have to the overall report on the BBC in the Nations.

1.2 The Committee discussed the speed of media changes which was out of proportion with the rate of regulatory change and the extent to which Ofcom would get involved in mobile reception in cars. The Committee was particularly interested in Ofcom’s consultation on listed events and was keen to be kept informed on any developments.

1.3 The Director, BBC Wales shared the plans for the new BBC Wales HQ in Central Square and the new innovative IP system pioneered in Europe by BBC Wales.

2. Minutes of 4 October 2018 Wales Committee

2.1 The minutes were approved, subject to a small change in paragraph 6.2.

3. Update from the Director, BBC Wales

3.1 Rhodri Talfan Davies noted the viewing figures for the Six Nations with 50% of adults in Wales watching the final round. The BBC and ITV had Six Nations TV rights until 2021 which were hugely valuable in terms of the audience and two or three Six Nations matches were usually among the top ten programmes in Wales each year.

3.2 In drama, there had been a mixed response to the drama series, Pitching In with some criticism around casting.

3.3 The Committee was informed that Rhys Evans had brokered an agreement with the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth to house BBC Wales’ entire broadcast archive.

3.4 Looking ahead, there were a range of recommissions with two of the comedy pilots going to a second series and Keeping Faith Series 2 was returning to S4C in April and the BBC in July. Wales: Land of the Wild was due to be broadcast in a few weeks’ time, capturing Wales’s wildlife and landscapes and The 1900 Island looking at maritime and fishing history by challenging four families to travel back to 1900 and try and make a living in a fishing community was scheduled to broadcast in May.
3.5 Ken MacQuarrie updated the Committee on the conversation around the over 75’s Licence Fee Concession, Out of London plans and a proposed summit on fake news. It was also noted that the Nations and Regions Board was looking at succession planning.

4. **Audiences Report**

4.1 The Committee discussed the presentation on audience performance, noting in particular Radio 1 where listening remained significantly higher in Wales than in any other part of the UK and the strong performance of Six Nations Rugby.

5. **Regulatory and Finance Report**

5.1 This paper provided updates for the Out of London targets and the Committee noted that the BBC expected to meet its quota in Wales. The Wales Annual Report and Accounts forecast for 2018/19 was noted.

6. **Annual Plan**

6.1 The Committee noted the Wales section of the Annual Plan.

7. **Committee Evaluation**

7.1 Internal Audit had undertaken Board member surveys and supporting assurance work to assess the effectiveness of the sub-committees of the Board. A discussion of the results had already taken place at the Board meeting on 21 March 2019. The Chair of the Wales Committee acknowledged that the meeting structure was still relatively new and explained that today’s meeting agenda had taken into account recent feedback. Any further comments or feedback would be welcomed.

7.2 It was noted that the Board was due to have its November meeting in Cardiff. Committee members were asked to consider whether they would like to hold the Wales Committee meeting and audience engagement session the day before the Board meeting or preferred to have a separate meeting in September/October.

8. **AOB**

8.1 No other business was raised.