

Rhodri Talfan Davies

Cyfarwyddwr

BBC Cymru Wales

10 Rhagfyr 2018

Annwyl Rhodri,

### **Cyfleoedd i awduron ac actorion Cymru**

Cefais gyfarfod â changen Ecwiti De Cymru yn ddiweddar, a dywedodd yr aelodau eu bod yn pryderu am drefniadau castio a chynyrchiadau'r BBC yng Nghymru. Roeddent yn poeni'n benodol nad oedd actorion o Gymru yn cael cyfle teg i ymddangos yng nghynyrchiadau'r BBC. Er mwyn cael darlun cliriach o'r sefyllfa, byddwn yn ddiolchgar iawn pe gallech roi'r wybodaeth a ganlyn imi:

- Faint o actorion o Gymru (y rhai sy'n byw ac yn gweithio yma) sy'n ymddangos yng nghynyrchiadau BBC Cymru a rhwydwaith y BBC? A allwch chi enwi'r cynyrchiadau y maent wedi ymddangos ynddynt?
- Wrth recriwtio actorion, a fyddwch chi'n defnyddio cwmnïau castio o Gymru?
- A oes gennych chi unrhyw gwtâu ar gyfer cyflogi actorion Cymreig ac actorion o Gymru?

Ar wahân i hyn, cefais gyfarfod ag Urdd yr Awduron a ddywedodd eu bod yn poeni nad yw'r BBC yn rhoi digon o gyfleoedd i awduron profiadol nac awduron newydd o Gymru. Er enghraifft, er bod 'Casualty' yn cael ei ffilmio yng Nghymru, ni chymerwyd camau digonol i ddefnyddio awduron o Gymru fel rhan o'u timau ysgrifennu.



A allwch chi ddweud wrthyf beth yw eich barn? Beth yn fwy y mae modd ei wneud i recriwtio a datblygu awduron o Gymru ar gyfer cynyrchiadau BBC Cymru a rhwydwaith y BBC?

Dywedodd llawer o'r awduron y siaradais â nhw nad ydynt yn cael cyfle i ysgrifennu sgriptiau i'r BBC, ac y byddent yn hoffi gwneud hynny er mwyn hybu eu gyrfa. Prin yw'r cyfleoedd sy'n codi, meddent, a phan fydd awdur mewn swydd am rai blynyddoedd, mae hynny'n aml yn lleihau cyfleoedd i awduron iau ac awduron newydd. Sut y mae modd datrys y broblem hon? A allwch chi ddweud wrthyf sut y mae'r BBC yn buddsoddi mewn talent newydd?

Edrychaf ymlaen at eich ymateb. Mae'n bwysig nodi ei bod yn bleser gweld y cynnydd yn y cynyrchiadau drama sy'n cael eu gwneud yng Nghymru, ond dylem adeiladu ar hyn a rhoi sylw i'r meysydd hynny y mae angen eu datblygu o hyd.

Yn gywir,

*Bethan Sayed.*

**Bethan Sayed**

**Cadeirydd**



# Agenda Item 5

Bethan Sayed

Chair

Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee

National Assembly for Wales

Cardiff Bay

CF99 1NA

9 January 2019

Dear Bethan

Thank you for your recent correspondence outlining concerns expressed by Equity South Wales and the Writers Guild.

While I note the points that have been raised with you, my view is that the BBC in Wales provides a number of platforms and opportunities for both Welsh-based writers and actors.

With regard to Welsh and Wales-based actors, the success of the co-productions *Hinterland/YGwyll*, *Un Bore Mercher/Keeping Faith* and *Craith/Hidden* are well documented. Produced by Welsh independent production companies, these companies search for actors through a number of channels including casting agents. The vast majority of the actors in these productions are either Welsh or based in Wales, and further series of *Hidden* and *Keeping Faith* are currently in production/pre-production.

*Casualty*, *Doctor Who* and *Pobol y Cwm* are produced by BBC Studios – the BBC's commercial arm - at Roath Lock Studios and use a mix of local (Cardiff-based) casting agencies as well as others further afield. They operate case by case with the aim of ensuring the person most suitable for the role gets the part. Having said this, programmes such as *Casualty* have made an active effort to recruit Welsh actors with names such as Owain Arthur and Catrin Mara appearing on the long-running series recently, among others.

In addition, our radio drama team in Wales uses a very large number of actors who live and work in Wales each year, primarily for BBC Radio 4.

A few notable examples from 2018 include *19 Weeks* which starred Eve Myles; four series of *Curious Under the Stars* starring Elis James, Ifan Huw Dafydd, Siw Hughes, Aimee Ffion Edwards and Eiry Hughes; *Das Kapital* which starred Kimberley Nixon; *Tracks: Chimera* which had guest roles for Eiry Thomas, Richard Elfyn, Rhodri Meilir and Carys Eleri. And we're about to embark on a new adaptation of the *Mabinogi* for Radio 3, which will have an almost entirely Welsh cast.

Given this scale of commitment, I hope you will understand that there are no quotas for employing Wales and Wales-based actors. We cast on merit.

Turning to writing, I suspect the BBC directly or indirectly supports more drama writing in Wales than any other organisation. In total, over 30 Welsh language writers are actively engaged in the production of *Pobol y Cwm*, while *Keeping Faith*, *Hinterland* and *Hidden* rely or relied predominately on Wales-based writers.

In addition, our network radio production team actively commission a range of Welsh writers. In 2018 established writers included Shon Dale Jones, Philip Palmer, Alan Harris and Gary Owen.

BBC Wales also runs - or supports - a number of initiatives to support new entrants into the industry.

Over the past two years, the BBC Writersroom programme based in Wales has been offering a number of initiatives for established and emerging Welsh writers.

In fact, since April last year Writersroom Wales has enabled 23 writers to get their first BBC credit. And we'll be launching a brand new Writers Residency opportunity in January, working in partnership with National Theatre Wales. The successful writer will spend twelve months working with the BBC and NTW to develop their writing skills for both broadcast and theatre.

We also work in partnership with other organisations in the industry to provide new opportunities across the media.

The *It's My Shout* training programme, for example, provides practical opportunities in television and film production targeting individuals and groups that would not normally have access to such opportunities. BBC Wales is a partner and sponsor of the scheme - along with S4C - providing mentoring and training both in front of and behind the camera for the participants.

Every summer, *It's My Shout* produces short 30 minutes films in Welsh and English, a number of which are broadcast on BBC Two Wales and are subsequently available on BBC iPlayer. Side-by-side there is also a scheme for emerging talent looking for documentary ideas. These are also broadcast on BBC Two Wales under the title, *New Voices from Wales*.

Additionally, the *Beacons* project – a partnership between BBC Wales and Ffilm Cymru - aims to shine a light on outstanding film talent from Wales, drawing attention to writers, directors and producers, helping them establish their credentials for feature production. The scheme supports between six and ten short films of up to 30 minutes in length and in English or Welsh every year.

I hope my response reassures you that the BBC takes its responsibility towards established and emerging Welsh actors and writers very seriously indeed. However, if you would like to discuss further I would be happy to meet with you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rhodri Talfan Davies', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Rhodri Talfan Davies

Director BBC Cymru Wales