

Fy Nghyf / My Ref: NRS/CW/PB/06.11.14

Dyddiad / Date: 11 November 2014

Councillor Phil Bale
Leader, City of Cardiff Council
County Hall
Atlantic Wharf
Cardiff
CF10 4UW



Item 9 Appendix C1

Dear Councillor Bale

ECONOMY AND CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 6 November 2014
Cardiff Film Unit

On behalf of the Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee I would like to thank you and officers for attending the Committee meeting on 6 November 2014. The Committee had a number of comments following the meeting, as set out below.

The Committee is supportive of the recommendation being put to the Cabinet to continue to provide a Cardiff Film Unit, moving towards a model that is aligned with overall levels of income that reflect annual forecasts of expected income. We recognise the need for the Unit and value the work that is undertaken through it.

The Committee would, however, like to have seen evidence that an economic impact assessment had been undertaken, demonstrating the full value that the Cardiff Film Unit brings to the city. While we do not doubt the impact the Cardiff Film Unit has, we feel such an analysis could help put forward a far more compelling business case for the continuation of the service. This was emphasised to the Committee during the item that followed, looking at Chapter Arts Centre. A comprehensive economic impact assessment had been undertaken, demonstrating the range of benefits that Chapter Arts Centre brings to Cardiff, and left us in no doubt that the Council should be supporting its future plans. We would like to see this kind of analysis presented to us in future when we are being asked to comment on the business rationale of a service change such as this.

Members recognise that other cities are moving towards a 'no charge' model for filming and accept that this may be the way forward for Cardiff, despite the additional financial burden this may create. We feel that Cardiff Film Unit is a good example of where the Corporate Initiatives Fund could be effectively used, supporting an initiative that brings wider benefits to the city. The Committee is concerned to hear that this money has been already been fully allocated, particularly given the fact that we have previously written to Councillors Goodway, Patel and Bradbury on separate occasions to warn against cuts to the Fund and to recommend that a contingency

each year is placed into a reserve to support additional projects or events throughout the year. It would seem our warnings have not been heeded by the Cabinet.

The Committee was concerned to hear that certain Council Directorates continue to bypass Cardiff Film Unit and deal directly with companies wishing to film in the city. We feel this is a practice that must be rooted out and recognise the efforts made by Ken Poole and officers to address this issue. We support the view that all filming activities must be coordinated through a single body, with a standardised pricing mechanism, in order to continue to attract location managers and the wider TV and film sector to Cardiff.

I would be grateful if you would consider the above comments and look forward to your response to the points raised.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Craig Williams', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Councillor Craig Williams
Chairperson Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee

cc Neil Hanratty – Director of Economic Development
Ken Poole – Head of Economic Development
Cheryl Cornelius – Cabinet Office
Members of the Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee.