

Ken MacQuarrie

Cyfarwyddwr y Gwledydd a'r Rhanbarthau, y BBC

cc. Rhodri Talfan Davies

Cyfarwyddwr BBC Cymru Wales

31 Mawrth 2020

Annwyl Ken,

Sioe frecwast y BBC a bwletinau newyddion o Gymru

Yng Nghynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru, mae Pwyllgor Diwylliant, y Gymraeg a Chyfathrebu yn gyfrifol am oruchwylio cyflawniad y BBC o'i chylch gwaith yng Nghymru.

Mae wedi dod i sylw'r Pwyllgor na fydd bwletinau newyddion o Gymru o ddydd Llun 30 Mawrth yn ystod y sioe frecwast ar BBC One.

Rwy'n poeni am effaith y penderfyniad hwn ar bobl Cymru. Ar hyn o bryd, mae'r bwletinau newyddion rhanbarthol yn ystod y sioe frecwast yn fodd pwysig o hysbysu pobl am faterion sy'n effeithio arnynt. Efallai na fydd y demograffig sy'n gwyllo'r sioe frecwast o reidrydd yr un demograffig â'r un sy'n gwyllo rhaglenni newyddion gyda'r hwyr. Felly, heb fwletin newyddion o Gymru yn ystod y sioe frecwast, mae risg na fydd pobl yn cael digon o wybodaeth am y Coronafeirws yng Nghymru.

Rwy'n deall bod y BBC dan bwysau sylweddol ar hyn o bryd. Fodd bynnag, mae'n hollbwysig yn ystod y cyfnod digynsail hwn bod pobl yng Nghymru yn parhau i gael newyddion a gwybodaeth sy'n benodol i Gymru. Felly, gofynnaf i chi ailystyried penderfyniad y BBC i beidio â dangos bwletinau o Gymru yn ystod y sioe frecwast.

Os bydd pobl o Gymru yn cael eu newyddion o fwletin rhwydwaith y DU yn lle hynny, mae'n hanfodol bod y bwletinau hyn yn adlewyrchu natur ddatganoledig llawer o ymatebion y llywodraeth i'r pandemig. Er enghraifft, gan fod iechyd wedi'i ddatganoli, mae'r alwad a ohebir yn eang i wirfoddolwyr y GIG wneud cais drwy'r ap GoodSAM yn gymwys i Loegr yn unig. Yn yr un modd, mae cynlluniau rhyddhad ardrethi busnes, sy'n hanfodol er mwyn i lawer o fusnesau bach oroesi, wedi'u

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru

Y Pwyllgor Diwylliant, y Gymraeg a Chyfathrebu

National Assembly for Wales

Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee

datganoli i Gymru. Ni fu erioed yn bwysicach i bobl yng Nghymru gael gwybodaeth glir a chywir am realiti llywodraethu datganoledig.

Yn gywir,

Helen Mary Jones.

Helen Mary Jones AC

Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor



Email to: Helen Mary Jones AM, National Assembly for Wales,
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16 April 2020

Dear Helen

Thank you for your correspondence from the 31 March 2020 regarding the local BBC Breakfast bulletins during the current pandemic.

May I reassure you that decisions like this – while only a temporary measure - aren't taken lightly, but the current situation means we have to adapt and respond like never before. And while it's a privilege to play our part in responding to this national and global emergency, the operational challenges we currently face are immense and we have to focus resources carefully and where they will have maximum impact.

For that reason, it may be useful if I explain the background to this decision and why it was taken.

As you rightly acknowledge these are unprecedented times and as a result, audiences are tuning into our news, radio and online services in their numbers for the most up to date information. In fact, around 750,000 viewers are tuning into *BBC Wales Today* every day across the three main bulletins – lunchtime, early and late evening. But at this difficult time BBC Wales – along with the rest of the BBC - is balancing two priorities, that of a duty of care towards staff and delivering its responsibilities as the national broadcaster.

It's worth noting that, despite the current lockdown and higher levels of staff absence due to self-isolation and illness, BBC Wales's teams continue to deliver over 14 hours of weekday news for *BBC Wales Today*, *Newyddion* for S4C, BBC Wales News Online, BBC Cymru Fyw, BBC Radio Wales and BBC Radio Cymru. That level of programming is testament to the commitment shown, not just by the editorial staff but those working in production, technology and operations who continue to work from our broadcast bases, while the majority of colleagues are now working from home.



Therefore, the decision to pause our local service to television audiences at breakfast in the nations and regions of the UK was taken in order to safeguard staffing for our peak-time TV services, that attract much bigger audiences and to reduce the unprecedented strain on our teams and facilities.

I would also add that, overall, BBC Wales has extended its news coverage during this period - not reduced it. For example, both *Post Cyntaf* on Radio Cymru and Gareth Lewis in Drivetime on Radio Wales have been extended by half an hour and an hour respectively each day. BBC One Wales is also broadcasting the Welsh Government's daily press conference at 12.30pm every day.

I hope this goes some way to address the points and concerns you raise.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken MacQuarrie".

Ken MacQuarrie

Director, BBC Nations & Regions