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for Culture,
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15 January 2025

Der Goshie,

Work of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport: follow-up

Thank you for your letter of 16 December following my session with the Committee on 10 December to discuss the work of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

As requested I have provided an update on each of the issues raised in your letter. In all of these areas I am keen to continue discussions with your Committee as we develop this work.

The Creative Industries Independent Standards Authority

As I made clear to the Committee, the success of our world-leading creative industries depends on their ability to employ and retain highly skilled talent. Safety and dignity for those working in the creative industries is therefore both a moral imperative and an economic necessity. Given the informal nature of the industry and the significant power imbalances, this is a priority for our Government. We have seen too many examples of cultures of silence that have lasted for years, and complaints that have been swept under the rug. I am clear that this cannot continue.

I met with the Creative Industries Independent Standards Authority (CIISA) on 11 December for a vital and constructive discussion about the issue of bullying, harassment and discrimination in the sector. As you know, CIISA was established by the industry, and I agree that it is preferable that an independent body addresses these issues but both CIISA and I are clear that it must, and does have, support from Government.

For CIISA to succeed it needs proper buy-in, support and championing from across the sector and I am not yet convinced that this is the case. I am prepared to challenge the sector – and ultimately intervene – if this is not forthcoming.

During our meeting we discussed how CIISA can cement its authority while maintaining independence from government. My officials, working with the Department for Business and Trade, are exploring whether CIISA is a suitable addition to the Public Interest Disclosure (Prescribed Persons) Order 2014. This is the secondary legislation which lists the bodies and individuals that a worker can make a qualifying disclosure to, and receive protection from dismissal or detriment in their employment on whistleblowing grounds.



We are also looking at a range of other measures that could give CIISA real teeth. I would welcome an ongoing discussion with you and Committee members as we continue this work.

Antisemitism in the arts

I indicated at the Select Committee hearing that I was shortly due to meet Jewish community leaders, cultural organisations and artists to discuss antisemitism in the arts. That roundtable was chaired by Board of Deputies President Phil Rosenberg and organised with the last Government's antisemitism adviser, Lord Mann.

I was shocked and concerned by the scale and extent of their experiences and I have given my firm commitment that rooting out this unacceptable prejudice will not be their fight alone. My Department has made a note of a range of suggestions that arose during the roundtable. We are currently working through these and I would be pleased to give the Committee an update in due course.

Depictions of slavery at the British Museum

The cultural and creative sectors, including national museums like the British Museum, have a significant role to play in articulating the history of the country and the world in all of its complexity. That includes a responsibility to support understanding of the more challenging and unpleasant parts of our history.

The British Museum has educational displays related to the history of transatlantic slavery. For example, the Museum's Enlightenment Gallery has a permanent dedicated display on the transatlantic slave trade, and the current exhibition of works by the contemporary artist Hew Locke looks critically at this part of our history.

The Government also supports National Museums Liverpool which is home to the International Slavery Museum – a permanent museum which tells the striking story of the UK's role in the history of the slave trade and the impact this has had worldwide.

The question of whether there should be a permanent gallery for this purpose is an issue for the British Museum, which operates independently of the Government. I firmly believe that the arts exist to explore, challenge and hold a mirror to society – and this includes government. As such I believe it is inappropriate for any government to interfere in curatorial decisions but I am supportive of both the British Museum and National Museums Liverpool as they seek to navigate our history in all of its complexity with honesty and courage.

Travel and tourism qualifications

Addressing workforce shortages and developing a talent pipeline in the Visitor Economy is a key priority for me. In particular, there is enormous untapped growth potential in coastal towns which hold a special place in the hearts of most people in the UK. We are determined to ensure young people in those towns don't have to get out to get on and get the benefit of the skilled, well paid jobs we are creating in those areas.

We are actively working with both industry and the network of Local Visitor Economy Partnerships in England to demonstrate that jobs in this sector are high quality ones in which people can build careers. We have contributed to the Department for Education's (DfE) Review on Post-16 Qualifications and on proposals for Apprenticeship Reform. Our industry stakeholders are also working closely with DfE to develop new occupational and qualification standards for travel and tourism which capture the industry's current needs. This includes

consideration of T Levels and their suitability for the sector. I am grateful to the Committee for raising this point in particular.

The Committee will also be aware that Skills England is bringing together central and local government, businesses, training providers and unions to meet the skills needs across all regions. These measures are part of our commitment to equipping the workforce with the skills needed to drive long-term growth and sustain the sector's global competitiveness.

Skydance's proposed merger with Paramount Global

The Department has engaged, and continues to engage, with both Ofcom and Paramount on the proposed merger of Paramount Global and Skydance Media. This merger is not yet complete, and as I said to the Committee, I expect to raise the proposed merger with Ofcom and Paramount. Due to my quasi-judicial role under the Enterprise Act 2002 I cannot comment or provide further information at this stage. Ofcom will separately be undertaking a 'Change of Control' process for Channel 5 (which will include ensuring that the new owner is a 'Fit and Proper person').

Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and the Football Governance Bill

We believe that equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is an important part of good corporate governance. That is why we made changes to the Bill, following the issues identified in Tracey Crouch's Fan-Led Review. Clubs in scope of the Independent Football Regulator's (IFR) regime will be required to publicly report on what action they are taking on EDI alongside reporting against the Football Club Corporate Governance Code. This will bring all clubs up to the level of the best, improve transparency and allow fans to hold them to account.

However we also believe it is essential that the IFR has a focused remit in order to be effective. As you know, the IFR will have a primary focus on financial regulation and fan engagement. While corporate governance of clubs is a part of this, extending the main objectives of the IFR to include EDI and wider corporate governance within football would represent a substantial increase in scope that was not recommended by the Fan-Led Review, would require increased resources, and may detract from the IFR's main objectives.

We believe that the current proposed approach of the IFR, with principles-based reporting by clubs against the IFR's Corporate Governance Code, will ensure good practice is embedded in clubs without taking a prescriptive approach.

Women's football and the Independent Football Regulator

Like so many people I am inspired by the success of the women's game, which has grown significantly and inspired so many young girls to play football for the first time.

I fully appreciate why there is interest in including the women's game within the scope of the Football Governance Bill and IFR but I agree with the Independent Review of Women's Football recommendation that the women's game should be given the opportunity to grow and self-regulate, rather than moving immediately to independent statutory regulation. The women's game has the opportunity to learn lessons from past failures and from the example of the IFR to avoid the problems that have led to the need for statutory regulation in the men's game. The IFR will also be able to engage and share best practice with the industry to support this, for example by sharing information with organisations such as the Women's Professional Leagues Limited who are responsible for the top two tiers of the women's game. As with all regulation, the scope will be kept under review and, if appropriate, can be extended via secondary legislation to include women's football following a consultation.

On the specific point of why the women's game is not part of the State of the Game report, the purpose of the State of the Game report is to assess the state of English football so far as relevant to the exercise of the IFR's functions. As the women's game currently falls outside the scope of the IFR's regime, we do not believe it would be appropriate or proportionate for it to be included in the assessment as things stand. I know some of your Committee members are keen to ensure it is included and I am happy to keep this under review.

Financial sustainability of rugby and governance issues

Although the RFU is responsible for the regulation of rugby union, and for protecting and promoting the financial sustainability of the sport, rugby union has a vital role to play in our national identity and my Department is supporting the RFU to ensure the ongoing sustainability of the sport at both elite and community level.

Finally can I thank the Committee for such a constructive and comprehensive session. I welcome the challenge and scrutiny you provide as we seek to ensure the UK continues to light up the world through culture, media and sport and ensure every person in the UK is able to live a richer, larger life.

Yours sincerely,



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Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport