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Prif Weithredwr/Chief Executive: *Helgard Krause*

## APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO SERVE ON ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEES

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

#### Background

The Books Council of Wales is a registered charity which supports the publishing industry in Wales. It provides a number of specialist services (in the fields of editing, design, marketing and distribution) with a view to improving standards of book production and publication in both Welsh and English.

Although a number of bodies in the fields of education and the arts are concerned with aspects of publishing, there is no other body in Wales which is concerned with the whole spectrum of publishing, from the author's manuscript to distribution and sales promotion.

The Books Council has 38 staff, most of whom work in specialist departments which provide services to the book trade. The largest department is the Distribution Centre which provides a wholesale distribution service to publishers and booksellers. Unlike the rest of the Council's work, the Centre, which has an annual turnover of £4 million gross (£2.7 million net), is self-supporting and does not receive any subsidy from the public purse. The Books Council receives funding of £4.2m from the Welsh Government, most of which is distributed directly to the publishing industry in Wales – £1.66m to Welsh-language publishers and £683k to English-language publishers. The purpose of these grants is to ensure the range and quality of products available to readers in Wales in the form of books and magazines for adults and children. The Publishing Development Subcommittees play a key role in setting the direction for, and oversight of, this expenditure.

The Books Council's headquarters are at Castell Brychan, Aberystwyth. The Distribution Centre is situated in the Glanyrafon Enterprise Park, on the outskirts of the town.

#### Aims

Much of the Books Council's work is devoted to providing the publishing trade with basic services. The core functions can be summarised as follows:

- ◁ To distribute grants to help publish a variety of quality material in both Welsh and English and to ensure that the output is widely available.
- ◁ To encourage and support Welsh publishers to develop by facilitating partnerships and links with Welsh Government and other arts organisations.
- ◁ To assist and support authors by providing services and by awarding grants/commissions which are channelled through publishers.
- ◁ To promote interest in Welsh-language books and Welsh books in English, together with other related material, by providing information and by a full programme of activity.
- ◁ To promote the publishing industry in Wales in all its aspects by providing a range of services and by coordinating the interests of authors, publishers, booksellers and libraries.

## Requirements and information for candidates

Applications are invited for a limited number of vacancies on one of the Council's advisory subcommittees:

- **Publishing Development Subcommittee (Welsh-language)**

This Subcommittee oversees the work of allocating and monitoring grants for Welsh-language publishing and provides support for books and magazines, sponsors authors and visual artists and offers core funding for publication and marketing grants. Current members represent a range of interests and include academics, critics and book reviewers, librarians, educationalists and experts in children's books. The diversity of the Subcommittee is important in order to provide the right direction for all aspects of the industry. The Books Council is always keen to maintain and develop this diversity, not only in terms of interests and specialisms, gender and geographical representation, but also in terms of religion, sexual orientation, race, disability and social background. Applications are welcome from anyone with a passion for publishing in Welsh. This Subcommittee conducts its meetings through the medium of Welsh.

- **Publishing Development Subcommittee (English-language)**

This Subcommittee oversees the work of allocating and monitoring grants for Welsh writing in English. Current members represent a range of interests and include academics, critics and book reviewers, educationalists, and experts in children's books and the book trade. The diversity of the Subcommittee is important in providing the right direction for all aspects of the publishing industry. The Books Council is always keen to maintain and develop this diversity, not only in terms of interests and specialisms, gender and geographical representation, but also in terms of religion, sexual orientation, race, disability and social background. Applications are welcome from anyone with a passion for Welsh books in English. This Subcommittee conducts its meetings through the medium of English.

The Council is eager to appoint individuals with energy and creative ideas who will contribute to the work of these advisory subcommittees. **Please note, however, that one of the main**

considerations when appointing new members will be the need to fill gaps with regard to skills and experience.

The subcommittees meet regularly during the year through various means, both on Zoom and face to face in Aberystwyth. When there's a face-to-face meeting there is also an option to join via Zoom. The Welsh-language Subcommittee meets about six times a year and the English-language Subcommittee about four times a year. Members are expected to offer opinions on grant applications and are asked between meetings for reports on the publications of some of the publishers and for their views on a few topics. The appointment will be for a three- or four-year period with the possibility of an additional term.

## Payment

Members are reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses, in accordance with good practice, but do not receive other payments for their contribution. However, we recognise that care costs or loss of income might be a barrier to becoming involved with BCW for some people. We are in the process of considering ways of supporting applicants who might otherwise be unable to consider joining us.

## Equal Opportunities

The Books Council is keen that its committees reflect Wales in all its diversity and welcomes applications from any individual from all walks of life, and particularly individuals who have traditionally felt underrepresented in the industry. Principles of fair play and open competition are followed, and the appointment made solely on merit and based on the gaps in the skills and experience of the Subcommittee at the time.

## Members' Interests

In submitting an application, candidates should declare any personal or business interest which may conflict with their responsibility as a member of an advisory subcommittee of the Books Council.

## Data Protection

Members' details will be kept on file for the sole purpose of distributing relevant information to subcommittee members.

## Applications

If you feel that you possess the necessary attributes to be a member of one of the Books Council's subcommittees, please send your application form to:

Chief Executive, Books Council of Wales, Castell Brychan, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 2JB.

The closing date for applications is **22 September 2025**.