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Rt Hon John Whittingdale MP
Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport
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15 May 2015

Dear Mr Whittingdale,

I would like to offer my congratulations on your appointment as Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. I look forward to developing a working relationship with you in the months ahead.

One of the principal priorities where early dialogue would be welcome is broadcasting. The proposals laid out by the Smith Commission provide a basis for the Scottish Government to play a substantial role in the BBC Charter Renewal and we look forward to playing a full part in the forthcoming review. The Scottish Government sees the need, through this process, to address a number of real issues in the broadcasting sector in Scotland.

A particular priority will be for the BBC in Scotland to receive a fairer share of licence fee, reflecting more accurately the licence fee revenue raised here in Scotland. This would provide important new opportunities for production companies and the creative sector in Scotland. We also want to see new governance and commissioning arrangements for the BBC which better reflect Scotland's interests.

These are some of the most pressing across our portfolios, but they are by no means the only issues where I would seek productive dialogue with you.

I am conscious that your predecessor wrote to my colleague, Fergus Ewing, Minister for Business, Energy and Tourism, to inform him about the launch of the GREAT UK Challenge Fund recently. We were disappointed that this fund is based around three themes which are all devolved to the Scottish Parliament (education, tourism and trade and investment) and has been developed without any policy input from the Scottish Government. I would hope for closer joint working and communication to ensure that UK Government marketing activity is consistent with work by the Scottish Government and its agencies to promote the Scottish brand and narrative to an international audience.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss these matters in more detail and have asked my Private Office to arrange a meeting with you. Given his interest in this area of work, we have also copied this letter to Fergus Ewing, Minister for Business, Energy and Tourism.

Kind regards
Fiona Hyslop

FIONA HYSLOP