



Meeting of the BBC Board

MINUTES

20 July 2017
Broadcasting House, London

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. Apologies and Conflicts of Interest
2. Minutes from the 22 June Board Meeting
3. Executive Reports/Board Pack
4. General Election
5. Revision of the Editorial Guidelines
6. Commercial Update
7. Northern Ireland Materiality Assessments
8. Approach to IT Strategy for TV Licencing
9. AOB

ATTENDANCE

Present

- David Clementi Chairman
- Tony Hall Director-General
- Anne Bulford Deputy Director-General
- Simon Burke Non-executive director
- Tim Davie Chief Executive Officer, BBC Worldwide
- Tanni Grey-Thompson Non-executive director
- Ian Hargreaves Non-executive director
- Tom Ilube Non-executive director
- Steve Morrison Non-executive director
- Nicholas Serota Non-executive director
- Ashley Steel Non-executive director

With

- Phil Harrold Company Secretary
- Jo Clarke Secretariat Manager
- James Harding Director, News and Current Affairs (items 3 and 4)
- James Purnell Director, Radio and Education (item 3)
- David Jordan Director, Editorial Policy and Standards (items 3-5)
- Charlotte Moore Director, Content (item 3)
- Gautam Rangarajan Director, Strategy (item 3)
- Ric Bailey Chief Political Advisor, Editorial Policy (item 4)
- Anna Mallet Chief Operating Officer, BBC Studios (item 7)

Apologies

- Ken MacQuarrie Director, Nations and Regions

BOARD MINUTES – 20 JULY 2017

1. Apologies and Conflicts of Interest

- 1.1 The Chairman noted the apology from Ken MacQuarrie. No conflicts of interest were declared.

2. Minutes from the 22 June Board

- 2.1 The minutes from the 22 June Board meeting were approved.

3. Executive Reports

- 3.1 The Director-General presented a number of regular Executive Reports to the Board. These included reporting on performance, editorial compliance, operations and assurance.
- 3.2 The Director-General opened the session by briefing the Board on the actions the Executive intended to take to tackle fair pay issues. A full report would come to the September Board meeting.
- 3.3 The BBC had launched both its 2017/18 Annual Plan and the 2016/17 Annual Report and Accounts this last month. The publication of the Annual Plan as an agenda-setting document for the year ahead had gone well and was accompanied by good coverage of the plans for increased investment in Children's content. Similarly, publication of the Annual Report had demonstrated the strength of last year's creative and editorial performance. The publication of salaries for on-air and on-screen talent had generated significant comment.
- 3.4 The Board noted the success of this year's Wimbledon Championships coverage which had reached 24.6 million people in the period to 12th July and the new deal with the English Cricket Board, which would bring live cricket back to the BBC from 2020.
- 3.5 The Board discussed the most recent audience performance figures which were taken from May. The time which adult audiences spent with BBC television services had risen by almost 30 minutes per head compared with the previous year. A challenging news agenda had resulted in audiences coming to BBC News Online coverage in large numbers. As with all adults, time spent with BBC television among 16-34s was very strong, rising by 3% year-on-year. Directors discussed the type of programming which

was proving popular among this age group and requested that a session on the associated strategy be scheduled.

- 3.6 The Board discussed the editorial policy, content standards and complaints report. The Board noted that there had been a higher than usual level of complaints, largely driven by reaction to the General Election.
- 3.7 The Deputy Director-General updated the Board on assurance and operations issues.
- 3.8 The Board noted an update on the staff Terms and Conditions Review which aimed to modernise the BBC's working practices for a 24-hour broadcasting environment.
- 3.9 The Board noted an update on the progress of sign-in to MyBBC. Registered users had increased to 10.4 million people, with 7.4 million actively using the service.
- 3.10 The Board were provided with an update on the negotiations with Phonographic Performance Ltd (PPL). The Board approved a negotiating mandate to conclude a licensing deal over the summer. Final approval of any PPL deal would be delegated to a sub-committee consisting of the Director-General and Deputy Director-General.

4. General Election

- 4.1 The Board were provided with a briefing on the BBC's coverage of the General Election. Directors discussed the use of a wider range of presenters and reporting resource from across the nations and regions; the development of *Reality Check* and its new TV slot; the focus on bringing the issues to younger audiences, including the *Newsbeat* debates on BBC One; the format of debate programmes and the impact of social media on traditional broadcasters. The Board noted the high degree of collaboration between News and Television, especially given the short notice with which the Election was called and the pressures on teams given the number of traumatic events which they were called upon to cover during the campaign. The Board thanked the teams in News and Television for their commitment and professionalism.

5. Revision of the Editorial Guidelines

- 5.1 The Board noted that the BBC's Editorial Guidelines were overdue for review. The latest revision had been delayed pending the change in the governance arrangements made in the new Charter, which had given the BBC Board responsibility for approving then Guidelines, rather than the BBC Trust, which was no longer in existence.

5.2 The Board discussed the process for the revision of the BBC's Editorial Guidelines, and agreed that:

- Oversight of the process of revising the Editorial Guidelines should be delegated to the Editorial Guidelines and Standards committee.
- The principle that everyone in an editorial role had access to a hard copy of the Guidelines should be applied again.
- The process followed by the BBC Trust in 2010, whereby a consultation was undertaken on the full text of the Guidelines ahead of publication should be repeated.

5.3 The Board requested that the full text of the Editorial Guidelines should return to the Board for consideration once the revision had been completed.

6. Commercial Update

6.1 The BBC Board was provided with an update on commercial matters.

[Redacted due to commercial confidentiality]

7 Northern Ireland Investments: Materiality Assessments

7.1 Under the 2016 Charter and Framework Agreement the BBC Board has responsibility, in the first instance, for considering the impact of certain changes to the BBC's public service activities. In particular the BBC must consider whether proposed changes are material and any material changes must be subject to a Public Interest Test (PIT). A material change is defined as any change to a UK Public Service which may have a significant adverse impact on fair and effective competition.

7.2 The Board considered a paper which presented a materiality assessment of the Northern Ireland investment package announced earlier this year covering (i) additional spend on additional TV programming for Northern Ireland (ii) additional investment on BBC News NI online journalism (with the aim of ensuring consistency of coverage) and BBC Sport NI online (to extend coverage and enhance audience engagement) and (iii) investment in other digital content.

7.3 The Board discussed the proposals and concluded that the proposals were unlikely to have a significant adverse impact on fair and effective competition and were not material.

8 Approach to IT Strategy for TV Licensing

- 8.1 The Board noted that the Licence Fee Unit (LFU) had completed a review of its internal technology resource.
- 8.2 The Board approved the overall approach to refreshing the TV Licensing technology estate and agreed that detailed plans should be developed. Directors noted that individual investment cases would be prepared for each component refresh as appropriate.
- 8.3 The Board requested that the issue of cyber security should be prioritised as a component of the strategy.

9 AOB

- 9.1 The Chairman informed the Board that the appointment of Elan Closs Stephens as the Welsh non-executive member to the Board had been announced that day by the Department of Culture Media and Sport.

Approved by the Board: _____ (Chairman)

_____ (Date)