



Meeting of the BBC Board

MINUTES

17 April 2019
Broadcasting House, London, W1A 1AA

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. Apologies and Conflicts of Interest
2. Minutes from the 21 March Board Meeting
3. Executive Reports
4. Over 75's Licence Fee Consultation
5. BBC Sounds Update
6. Regulatory Issues
7. International Broadcasting Strategy
8. Operational Risk Review
9. Committee Reports
10. AOB

ATTENDANCE

Present

- David Clementi Chairman
- Tony Hall Director-General
- Simon Burke Non-executive director
- Tim Davie Chief Executive Officer, BBC Studios
- Tanni Grey-Thompson Non-executive Director
- Ken MacQuarrie Director, Nations and Regions
- Ian Hargreaves Non-executive director
- Tom Ilube Non-executive director
- Steve Morrison Non-executive director
- Nicholas Serota Non-executive director
- Elan Closs Stephens Non-executive director
- Ashley Steel Non-executive director
- Fran Unsworth Director, News and Current Affairs

Apologies: None

With

- Phil Harrold Company Secretary
- Jo Clarke Secretariat Manager
- Glyn Isherwood Chief Financial Officer
- Bob Shennan Group Managing Director
- David Jordan Director, Editorial Policy and Standards (items 1-3)
- Charlotte Moore Director, Content (items 1-3)
- James Purnell Director, Radio and Education (items 1-5)
- Gus O'Donnell Frontier Economics (item 4)
- Clare Sumner Director, Policy (items 4-6)
- Chris Rowsell Head of Policy (item 6)
- Dan McGolpin Commissioning Controller (item 6)
- Bal Samra Group Commercial Director (item 6)
- Jessica Cecil Project Director (item 8)
- Balram Veliath Director, Quality, Risk and Assurance (item 9)

1. Apologies and Conflicts of Interest

1.1 There were no apologies for this meeting.

2. Minutes from the 21 March Board

2.1 The minutes from the 21 March Board meeting were approved, subject to a minor amendment.

2.2 The Board noted the Matters Arising.

3 Executive Reports

3.1 The Director-General summarised some of the creative highlights of the past month. *Line of Duty* had returned to BBC One with the biggest season launch of the year and *Fleabag* was attracting an impressive audience for its post-News slot, and on iPlayer. *Race Across the World* had performed well with younger audiences in particular. Audience interest in news about Brexit has been consistently high. Last month, interest peaked at 66%, meaning two-thirds of UK adults claimed to be closely following news about Brexit. This was the highest it has been since the referendum in 2016, and the effect was consistent across all demographic groups.

3.2 The Board noted that the election period for the European Parliament elections had started. Draft editorial guidelines had been produced for the election period and the final version would be approved by the Board's Editorial Guidelines and Standards Committee.

3.3 The Board noted the launch of a new Comedy Foundation to be led by Shane Allen, BBC Commissioning Controller, Comedy, intended to encourage new voices and further the impact of British comedy.

3.4 The Board noted an update on the performance of BBC Content. There had been a significant decline in total TV time spent across all broadcasters. The 10.35pm BBC Three Zone was starting to have an impact with audiences and new comedy was doing well with *Don't Forget the Driver* attracting a series average of 1.35 m viewers per episode.

- 3.5 The Director of BBC Radio and Education provided an update. Content highlights this month had included Drake live on Radio One on Saturday night. The BBC had secured live Premier League radio rights for a further three seasons, ensuring listeners could follow the biggest games and best match coverage until May 2022.
- 3.6 The Director, News and Current Affairs, provided an update on the performance of BBC News with audiences. Whilst interest in Brexit was driving a strong performance for News, the Notre Dame fire was the biggest news online story so far this year. The Ofcom Review of News and Current Affairs was underway.
- 3.8 The Director of Nations and Regions provided an update on audiences and activity across the UK. BBC Three would be forming a new collaborative, creative partnership with the Nations and Regions. The Scotland Channel had recorded a weekly reach of 28% across the first three weeks it had been on air.
- 3.9 The Chief Executive Officer of BBC Studios provided an update on performance. BBC Studios Production had been nominated for 27 Awards at the upcoming BAFTA TV and BAFTA TV Craft Awards, including Best Entertainment Programme for *Strictly Come Dancing*, two nominations for Best Factual Series: *Life and Death Row*, and *Louis Theroux's Altered States*, as well as the *Doctor Who Rosa Parks* episode for the Must See TV Moment of the Year.
- 3.10 The Board noted the Editorial Standards Report. The Board noted that the target times for complaints response turnaround times were within target.
- 3.11 The Board discussed the Operational Performance report. Directors particularly noted updates on the NAO's review of BBC pay, progress with pay queries and the critical projects portfolio.

4 Over 75's Licence Fee Consultation

- 4.1 The Board considered a detailed analysis of the public and stakeholder consultation responses. Four reports had been commissioned:
- a report from Traverse – analysing the c80,000 public responses;
 - a report from the BBC team – summarising the 115 stakeholder responses which included a survey from 38 degrees which was completed by nearly 100,000 people;
 - a report from Populus summarising their interviews with 115 stakeholders; and
 - a report from Ipsos/Mori who conducted qualitative research with audiences.
- 4.2 The Board noted that over 190,000 people had engaged with the consultation in total. The analysis demonstrated that no single option was supported by all

respondents, but rather there was a wide range of views, which in many cases were strongly held. The Board also noted the equality impacts raised in the consultation, particularly around women, those who were disabled and those who had long-term illnesses.

- 4.3 The Board discussed the reports and the feedback they contained. Directors commissioned a number of additional pieces of work for the Board meeting in May.

5. BBC Sounds Update

- 5.1 The Board noted an update on the progress of BBC Sounds since its launch in November 2018. Also included were plans to develop the product and content in 2019/20, and the plans to migrate listeners from Radio iPlayer to Sounds.

6. Regulatory Issues

[Paragraphs 6.3 onwards redacted for commercial confidentiality]

iPlayer Public Interest Test

- 6.1 Following Ofcom's direction in November that the BBC's proposals for iPlayer constituted a material change to the UK Public Services, the Board considered the Public Interest Test which had been conducted on the proposals ahead of its submission to Ofcom. The Public Interest Test set out the final proposals for BBC iPlayer, how they would deliver public value and their potential impact on fair and effective competition.
- 6.2 The Board approved the Public Interest Test submission to Ofcom, subject to a number of drafting amendments.

7 International Broadcasting Strategy

- 7.1 The Board noted an update on the BBC's international broadcasting strategy.

8 Operational Risk Review

- 8.1 The Board was asked to review and consider the operational risks of the BBC.
- 8.2 The Board noted that risk management metrics and targets had been developed for key strategic and operational Risks and were reported to the BBC Audit and Risk

Committee on a quarterly basis. In addition, the BBC's Executive Committee had taken part in a session on operational risks in January, which had informed this review.

- 8.3 The Board discussed the risks and their positions on the heat maps, along with possible mitigating actions.

9 Committee Reports

- 9.1 The Chairman of the Remuneration Committee reported on recent offline business conducted by the Committee.
- 9.2 The Chairman of the Audit Committee reported on the Committee's preparation for the Annual Report and Accounts.
- 9.3 The Chairman of the Scotland Committee reported on the most recent meeting of the Committee, which had taken place in Aberdeen. The Committee had discussed the launch and initial performance of the new Scotland Channel.
- 9.4 The Chairman of the Wales Committee reported on its most recent meeting. The Committee had met with the Director, Ofcom Wales and the Chair, Ofcom Wales Advisory Committee in addition to its standard business.

10 AOB

- 10.1 There was no other business.