



Meeting of the BBC Board

MINUTES

17 July 2024
Broadcasting House, London

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. Chair's Introduction
2. Apologies and Conflicts of Interest
3. Minutes and Matters Arising
4. Committee Reports
5. Charter Review Advisory Group
6. Executive Reporting
7. Group Business Models
8. Cost Savings Plan 2025-26
9. Investigation Update
10. Audio Public Interest Tests
11. Papers for Approval
12. AOB

ATTENDANCE

Present

- Samir Shah Chair
- Tim Davie Director-General
- Damon Buffini Non-executive director
- Shumeet Banerji Non-executive director
- Robbie Gibb Non-executive director
- Muriel Gray Non-executive director
- Chris Jones Non-executive director
- Michael Plaut Non-executive director
- Nicholas Serota Non-executive director
- Michael Smyth Non-executive director
- Marinella Soldi Non-executive director
- Leigh Tavaziva Group Chief Operating Officer
- Deborah Turness CEO, News and Current Affairs

Apologies: Charlotte Moore

With

- Phil Harrold Company Secretary
- Jo Clarke Secretary to the Board
- Rhuanedd Richards Director, Wales (item 5)
- Gautam Rangarajan Director, Strategy and Performance (items 5-6)
- Alan Dickson CFO (items 5-6)
- David Jordan Director, Editorial Policy and Standards (item 5)
- Tom Fussell CEO Studios (item 5-6)
- Rhodri Talfan Davies Director, Nations (item 6)
- Rebecca Wallace Director, Business Strategy (item 6)
- Paul Oldfield Director, Policy (item 6)
- Mike Smith Head of Business Strategy (item 6)
- Alice Macandrew Director, Corporate Affairs (items 6-7)
- David Pembrey COO, Content (item 9)
- Chris Rowsell Controller, Regulation (item 9)
- Alan Bainbridge Director, BBC Workplace (item 10)

BOARD MINUTES 17 JULY 2024

1. Chair's Introduction

- 1.1 The Chair opened the meeting by updating the Board on his meeting with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport following the change of Government.
- 1.2 The Board noted that the draft Editorial Guidelines would come to the Board in the Autumn ahead of public consultation, which had been delayed due to the General Election.

2. Apologies and Conflicts of Interest

- 2.1 Charlotte Moore was an apology for the meeting.
- 2.2 No conflicts of interest were declared in addition to those already recorded.

3. Minutes and Matters Arising

- 3.1 The Minutes from the 27 June Board meeting were approved.
- 3.2 The Board noted the Matters Arising paper.

4 Committee Reports

Commercial Board

- 4.1 The Board noted an update from the Chair of the Commercial Board.
- 4.2 Marinella Soldi had been appointed to the Commercial Board from the 1 September for a period of three years.

Sub-committee Reports

- 4.3 The Board noted and discussed written reports from the Audit and Risk Committee and the Editorial Guidelines and Standards Committee.

Charter Review Advisory Group: Terms of Reference

- 4.4 The Board approved the terms of reference of the Charter Review Advisory Group, which would be constituted as a formal sub-committee of the Board.

5. Executive Reporting

Director-General and Executive Report

- 5.1 The Board noted an update from the Director-General on staff management and reputational issues.
- 5.2 The Board noted an update from the Chief Operating Officer on the court decision not to allow the BBC to appeal the judgement on changes to its pension scheme.
- 5.3 The Board noted that reporting on cost savings and capital raising would be part of the Director-General and Executive Report in future.

Election Coverage Briefing

- 5.4 The CEO, News and Current Affairs and Director, Wales provided a briefing session on how News and Nations had covered the General Election and audience performance over the period.
- 5.5 The Board discussed the changes to content and production which had contributed to the delivery of election coverage over the period; including more reporting from around the UK; more output anchored from outside studios at street level; increased use of transparency blogs; and the introduction of new formats such *BBC Verify*, and *Your Voice, Your Vote*, which had cut through with 18-24 year olds.
- 5.6 The Board noted that more than eight-in-ten people came to the BBC for election coverage. While overall audiences were a little down on 2019 (87%) millions came to the BBC for the 2024 election results across all platforms, well ahead of competition on reach and perceptions. The BBC consistently saw strong scores for impartiality versus other news providers during the campaign, and a large increase in the number of people saying they would turn to the BBC for impartial coverage of the results specifically. In addition, the number of complaints was down significantly from the 2019 election.

Quarterly Performance Report

- 5.7 The Board discussed the quarterly audience performance figures. Most metrics were on track against targets and there had been a strong performance from BBC iPlayer. Directors discussed the growth plan for signed-in accounts on BBC Sounds.

5.8 The Board noted and discussed the quarterly report on editorial standards and complaints. Directors agreed that the editorial performance of the BBC had been strong over the election period and the reduced number of complaints had been handled swiftly and effectively.

5.9 The Board noted an update on finance and operations for the quarter. Directors discussed staff costs and the critical project portfolio.

6. Group Business Models

6.1 The Board took part in a strategic planning session on long-term options for the future shape of the BBC's commercial and public service business models.

7. Costs Saving Plans

7.1 The Board discussed a paper which summarised the approach being taken to the communication of the next phase of pan-BBC savings.

8 Investigation Update

8.1 The Board noted an update into what was known about allegations about Tim Westwood during the time he worked at the BBC. A further update would return to the Board in September.

9. Audio Public Interest Tests: Update

9.1 The Board noted an update on the regulatory processes for the proposals for new BBC music services.

10. Papers for Approval

10.1 The Board approved a mandate to agree the Utilities contracts to the Director-General and Group Chief Operating Officer. The contract would return to the BBC Board if it was unable to be completed within the mandate.

10.2 The Board approved the award of a contract to provide Facilities Management to the BBC.

10.3 The Board noted a briefing paper on the two Competition and Markets Authority investigations.

10.4 The Board approved the commencement of negotiations to extend all local DAB contracts to 2030. The Board also approved a streamlined approach for future contract award of the contracts.

11 AOB

11.1 The Board noted plans for the awayday and Board sessions in Cardiff in September.

11.2 The Chair reported that he was due to make a speech after the summer break on his priorities during his term.