



Meeting of the BBC Board

MINUTES

19 September 2024
Central Square, Cardiff

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. Director-General and Executive Report
7. Investigations and Projects
8. iPlayer Partners
9. Audio Public Interest Tests
10. Papers for Approval
11. 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
- Charlotte Moore Chief Content Officer
- 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: None

With

- Phil Harrold Company Secretary
- Jo Clarke Secretary to the Board
- Gautam Rangarajan Director, Strategy and Performance (items 5 and 7-8)
- Alan Dickson CFO (item 5)
- Sarah Jones General Counsel (item 6)
- John Shield Director of Communications (item 6)
- Alice Macandrew Group Director, Corporate Affairs (items 6 and 8)
- Uzair Qadeer Chief People Officer (item 6)
- Tom Fussell CEO, BBC Studios (item 7)
- Sophie Garnham CRBA Director (item 7)
- Jo Sherlock Group Rights and Commercial Business Director (item 7)
- David Moody Director, Strategy, BBC Studios (item 7)
- Dan McGolpin Director, iPlayer and Channels (item 7)
- Storm Fagan Chief Product Director (item 7)
- Peter O’Kane Chief Technology Officer (item 7)
- Gunjan Bhow Non-executive, Commercial Board (item 7)

Chris Rowsell
Jonathan Wall

Controller, Regulation (item 8)
Commissioning Director, BBC Sounds (item 8)

BOARD MINUTES 19 SEPTEMBER 2024

1. Chair's Introduction

- 1.1 The Chair opened the meeting by reflecting on the BBC's output and activity over the summer.
- 1.2 The Board noted the most significant upcoming business to be discussed across the Autumn Board meeting schedule.

2. Apologies and Conflicts of Interest

- 2.1 There were no apologies.
- 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 17 July 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.

Sub-committee Reports

- 4.2 The Board noted and discussed written reports from the Northern Ireland Committee; the Audit and Risk Committee and the Nominations and Governance Committee.

Annual Board Effectiveness Review

- 4.3 The Nominations Committee had discussed this year's Board and Sub-committee Effectiveness Review at its meeting on 3 September and submitted a recommendation to the Board, which proposed building on previous reviews and recommendations by using the same reviewer. Additional areas of focus would include a skills audit of the Board and non-executive appraisals.

- 4.4 The Board approved the proposal for the 2024 Board and Sub-committee Effectiveness Review.

Role of the External Editorial Advisers

- 4.5 The Nominations Committee had discussed the role and function of the external editorial advisers to the Editorial Guidelines and Standards Committee, following its request for more fully defined role description. A recommendation had been submitted to the Board for approval.
- 4.6 The Board approved the proposed new role descriptions.

5. Director-General and Executive Report

- 5.1 The Board discussed the BBC's output over the summer and the wide range of events which had been shown, including the Euros, Wimbledon and Glastonbury. Coverage of the Olympics had reached 36.7m people on BBC TV/iPlayer and a varied Proms season had delivered the highest ever number of events across the UK with excellent ticket sales across venues. Board members recognised the high level of operational resilience required to deliver that degree of outside broadcasting across all platforms and services.
- 5.2 The Board noted the strong audience performance over the summer period. July had been the best ever month for BBC Online; a record performance for BBC iPlayer and BBC Sport, as well as overall accounts. It was hoped that the strong Autumn content offer, with the return of *Strictly Come Dancing* would continue to attract audiences.
- 5.3 The Board discussed the Chief Operating Officer's Report. The Board noted that there had been an improvement in forecast licence fee income. The Board discussed progress with Budget planning and cost savings.

6. Investigations and Projects

- 6.1 The Board received status updates on the investigations into Tim Westwood and Russell Brand.
- 6.2 The Board also considered follow-up work related to the management of the Huw Edwards investigation.
- 6.3 The Board agreed that a recommendation on suspension policy should come to the October meeting of the Board.
- 6.4 The Board noted an update on matters related to *Strictly Come Dancing*.

6.5 The Board requested a paper on the governance of reputational risk matters.

Workplace Culture Review: Terms of Reference

6.6 The Board had agreed that a review of workplace culture should be carried out, to identify practical ways in which the BBC's workplace culture could be strengthened, in line with the BBC Values. A draft scope and terms of reference was presented to the Board for approval.

6.7 The Board discussed the terms of reference, and approved them subject to a drafting change.

6.8 The Board agreed the proposed approach to oversight of the project, which would be led by a member of the Executive Committee and sponsored by two non-executive members of the Board, Muriel Gray and Chris Jones.

6.9 The Board agreed that a short expression of interest process should be used to determine an independent reviewer, and that the project should aim to deliver its report early in 2025.

7. iPlayer Strategy

7.1 The Board considered a paper providing an update on the iPlayer strategy and additional detail, as requested at its June meeting.

7.2 The Board discussed the additional detail which had been provided and approved the continuation of the project. Directors considered that the proposed timeline should be extended to allow for more detailed planning. The Board requested further assessment of the value of the audience proposition; suggested performance metrics; and, the proposed governance and operational principles. An update on the project plan would come to the October meeting of the Board.

8 Audio Public Interest Tests

8.1 The Charter requires that the Board must consider proposals for material changes to the UK Public Services, and must assess both the public value and impact on competition of such proposals.

Music Radio Services

8.2 The Board considered a public interest test regarding the launch of four new music radio stations on DAB+ and online: Radio 1 Dance (which is already available as a Sounds-only

stream); a new Radio 1 extension (Radio 1 Anthems); a Radio 2 extension (Radio 2 Retro); and a Radio 3 extension (Radio 3 Unwind).

8.3 The Board approved the public interest test.

Radio 5 Sports Extra

8.4 The Board considered a proposal to extend the broadcasting hours of BBC Radio 5 Sports Extra, to change it from a 'part-time' station only broadcasting live sports coverage to a 'full-time' station broadcasting from 7am to 10.30pm each day.

8.5 The Board approved the public interest test.

9. Papers for Approval

9.1 The Board considered a paper providing the proposed settlement terms and next steps following the investigation by the Competition and Markets Authority into the production and broadcasting of sports events. The Board noted the briefing provided by the Audit and Risk Committee and approved its recommendations.

10 AOB

10.1 There was no additional business.