

# BBC | Trust

## MINUTES OF THE BBC TRUST MEETING

Held on Thursday 19 May 2011  
in the BBC Trust boardroom, Great Portland Street, London

<b>Present:</b>	Lord Patten	Chairman
	Diane Coyle	Vice Chairman
	Richard Ayre	Trust member
	Anthony Fry	Trust member
	Alison Hastings	Trust member for England
	Patricia Hodgson	Trust member
	Rotha Johnston	Trust member for Northern Ireland
	David Liddiment	Trust member
	Bill Matthews	Trust member for Scotland
	Mehmuda Mian	Trust member
	Elan Closs Stephens	Trust member for Wales
 <b>In attendance from the Trust Unit:</b>	 Nicholas Kroll	 Director, BBC Trust
	Alex Towers	Deputy Director, BBC Trust
	Phil Harrold	Head of Governance
	Kate Atkins	Senior Adviser, Governance
	Mark Devane	Head of Communications
	Fran O'Brien	Head of Editorial Standards
Items 59 – 63	Alison Bexfield	Head of Finance and Compliance
Items 59 – 63	Jon Cowdock	Head of Business Strategy
Items 59 – 63 and 66 – 68	Alison Gold	Head of Public Services Strategy
Item 62	Peter De Val	Head of Legal
Item 62	Meredith Cook	Project Manager, Governance
Item 63	Rosalind Stevens	Project Manager, Governance

**From the  
Executive:**

Items 64 and 65	Mark Thompson	Director-General
Items 64 and 65	Caroline Thomson	Chief Operating Officer
Items 64 and 65	Zarin Patel	Chief Financial Officer
Items 64 and 65	Mary Wilkinson	Acting Head of Director-General's Office
Item 64	George Entwistle	Director, Vision
Item 65	Peter Horrocks	Director, Global News

## **AGENDA**

- 59 Minutes and matters arising**
- 60 Committees and Audience Councils**
- 61 Director's report**
- 62 Governance review**
- 63 BBC Annual Report and Accounts**
- 64 Director-General's monthly report**
- 65 BBC World Service**
- 66 Items for approval**
- 67 Items for noting**
- 68 Business handling and communications**

## **59 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

- 59.1 The Trust approved the minutes of its meeting on 20 April 2011 as an accurate record of proceedings. The Trust approved the publication of the minutes with no redactions.
- 59.2 The Trust noted the matters arising from previous meetings.

## **60 COMMITTEES AND AUDIENCE COUNCILS**

- 60.1 The Trust noted the reports from each of the committees and Audience Councils. The chairmen of each committee and council updated members on the major outcomes of their respective meetings.
- 60.2 The Chairman of the Audiences and Performance Committee said the Controller, Radio 1 had updated the committee on the performance of the station in focusing on a younger audience. This followed the Trust's review of the station in 2009. The committee noted the increased reach among the target audience of 15 to 19-year-olds but also the growth outside the target age range. The committee would hold further discussions with the Executive on this matter.
- 60.3 The Chairman of the Strategic Approvals Committee updated the Trust on the Executive's plans regarding BBC Alba. In December 2010, the Trust had approved the Executive's proposals that BBC Alba should be available on Freeview to viewers in Scotland, resulting in 13 BBC radio stations being removed from Freeview in Scotland while BBC Alba was broadcasting. The Trust heard that further technical work would now allow three radio stations – 1Xtra, 6 Music and 5 Live – to remain on air while BBC Alba was broadcasting.
- 60.4 The Trust member for Wales noted the appointment of four new members to the Trust's advisory body, the Audience Council for Wales.
- 60.5 The Trust discussed the reports from its four advisory bodies, the Audience Councils for England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The Audience Councils are required under the BBC Charter to report to the Trust each year with their assessment of the BBC's performance in each nation, and advise on issues arising.
- 60.6 The Trust noted the audience priorities for 2011-12, identified by the councils, which had been incorporated into the Trust workplan. These included ensuring universality of access to BBC services and encouraging the BBC to play a stronger role in facilitating public debate by providing informed coverage of issues across the UK and increased international reporting.
- 60.7 The Audience Councils' reports to the Trust would form the basis of the councils' annual reviews which would be published in July, alongside the BBC Annual Report and Accounts.

## **61 DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- 61.1 The Director, BBC Trust presented his report, which provided an overview of activity undertaken by the Trust and previewed the key issues to be considered by the Trust at the meeting.
- 61.2 He noted that discussions were ongoing between the Trust and the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport on amendments to the BBC Agreement, following the licence fee settlement.
- 61.3 The Trust discussed progress on the implementation of the new BBC strategy, *Putting Quality First*, following its update from the Executive the previous day. The Trust would have further discussions with the Executive in June.

## **62 GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

- 62.1 The Director, BBC Trust provided an update on the Trust's review of BBC governance. The review would assess how the BBC's governance and regulatory arrangements could be simplified and improved, where necessary.
- 62.2 Trust members agreed that the principal aim of the review should be to ensure that the Trust could focus its efforts on setting the strategic direction for the Corporation so that the Executive Board could focus on the delivery of the BBC's services and activities. They agreed the review should also consider what changes were needed in the BBC's governance to reflect the new responsibilities the Corporation would take on as a result of the licence fee settlement.
- 62.3 The Trust endorsed the direction of travel on the governance review and agreed to consider draft conclusions at its meeting in June.

## **63 BBC ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS**

- 63.1 Trust members were updated on the production of the BBC Annual Report and Accounts for 2010-11 and approved some copy for inclusion in the report, subject to drafting changes. The Trust would be asked to approve the full report in June for publication in July.

## **64 DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S MONTHLY REPORT**

- 64.1 The Director-General outlined recent highlights on BBC services, including coverage of the Royal Wedding, which had attracted a peak TV audience of nearly 20 million viewers. The Eurovision Song Contest and Lady Gaga's appearance at Radio 1's *Big Weekend* in Carlisle had also attracted large audiences. The Director-General noted the latest RAJAR figures which showed that listening to BBC Radio had reached its highest levels since new research methodology was introduced in 1999. The

Director, Vision highlighted *Inside the Human Body* and *Children's Craniofacial Surgery* as examples of fresh and new programmes on TV.

- 64.2 The Director-General noted key stories covered recently in BBC journalism output, including the death of Osama bin Laden, the alternative vote referendum and the national and local elections.
- 64.3 The Director-General said the Government had started a review of the regulatory regime for the UK communications sector in advance of a new Communications Bill.

## **65 BBC WORLD SERVICE**

- 65.1 The Director-General introduced Executive proposals to mitigate some of the impact of the cuts to the BBC World Service that were required due a reduction in the World Service's grant-in-aid. He noted that a debate on World Service funding would take place in the House of Commons later that day.
- 65.2 Trust members discussed the Executive's proposals, including those around the Hindi Service. They noted that some underspends in the World Service, due in part to lower than expected pension restructuring costs, could be used to support World Service editorial activity but that these benefits would be small compared to the overall funding challenges the World Service faced.
- 65.3 The Trust was broadly supportive of the proposals in principle but decided to delay formal consideration pending the Commons debate and further discussions with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Department for International Development.

## **66 ITEMS FOR APPROVAL**

### **66.1 BBC News Channel and BBC Parliament service review**

The Trust approved the terms of reference for its service review of the BBC News Channel and BBC Parliament on the recommendation of its Audiences and Performance Committee. The Trust would launch the service reviews on 24 May 2011.

## **67 ITEMS FOR NOTING**

- 67.1 (a) Minutes from committees and Audience Councils  
(b) Documents for sealing  
(c) Report of offline approvals  
(d) Freedom of Information section 36 decisions

**68 BUSINESS HANDLING AND COMMUNICATIONS**

68.I The Trust discussed the handling and communication of items considered at the meeting.