

# **BBC** Trust

## **MINUTES OF THE BBC TRUST MEETING**

Held on Thursday 25 September 2014  
at the BBC Trust Offices, Great Portland Street, London

### **Present:**

	Diane Coyle	Acting Chairman
	Alison Hastings	Trust member for England
	David Liddiment	Trust member
Items 113 and 118-127	Bill Matthews	Trust member for Scotland
	Aideen McGinley	Trust member for Northern Ireland
	Elan Closs Stephens	Trust member for Wales
	Suzanna Taverne	Trust member
	Lord Williams	Trust member

### **Apologies:**

	Sonita Alleyne	Trust member
	Richard Ayre	Trust member
	Nick Prettejohn	Trust member

### **From the Trust Unit:**

	Jon Zeff	Director, BBC Trust
	Alex Towers	Deputy Director
	Mark Devane	Head of Communications
	Philip Lillico	Chief Adviser, England
	Fran O'Brien	Head of Editorial Standards
	Gareth Tuck	Chief Financial Adviser
Items 112-113 and 118-127	Alison Gold	Head of Public Services Strategy
Items 112-115 and 118-127	Jon Cowdock	Head of Commercial Strategy
Items 118-127	Georgina Hodges	Chief Research and Audiences Adviser

**From the BBC Executive:**

Items 112-117	Tony Hall	Director-General
Items 112-117	Anne Bulford	Managing Director, Finance and Operations
Items 112-115	James Purnell	Director, Strategy & Digital
Items 112-116	Clare Sumner	Director-General's Chief of Staff
Items 112-117	Phil Harrold	Company Secretary
Items 112 and 113	Gautam Rangarajan	Director, Strategy
Items 112 and 113	Ken McQuarrie	Director, BBC Scotland
Item 114	Tim Davie	CEO, BBC Worldwide
Item 115	Nikki Clarke	Head of Journalism, World Service Group
Item 116	Mike Ford	Director of Risk and Assurance
Item 117	Simon Marr	Head of High Risk

## **AGENDA**

- I 12            QUARTERLY REPORT TO THE BBC TRUST**
- I 13            SCOTLAND POST-REFERENDUM**
- I 14            BBC AMERICA PARTNERSHIP (DEAL SUMMARY AND  
CORPORATE REVIEW)**
- I 15            EXTENSION OF WORLD SERVICE GROUP THAI EMERGENCY  
NEWS OPERATION**
- I 16            INDEPENDENT AUDIT OF THE BBC'S CHILD PROTECTION  
AND WHISTLEBLOWING POLICIES**
- I 17            HANDLING HIGH RISK**
- I 18            MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**
- I 19            ACTING CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE**
- I 20            TRUST COMMITTEES REPORTS**
- I 21            DIRECTOR'S REPORT**
- I 22            REMOVAL OF CHILDREN'S RADIO CONTENT FROM RADIO  
4EXTRA**
- I 23            AUDIENCE COUNCIL NORTHERN IRELAND MEMBERSHIP**
- I 24            CHANGES TO COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**
- I 25            ITEMS FOR NOTING**
- I 26            BUSINESS HANDLING & COMMUNICATIONS**
- I 27            ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

## **I 12 QUARTERLY REPORT TO THE BBC TRUST**

- I 12.1 The Director-General gave his monthly update to the Trust.
- I 12.2 The BBC's Director of Strategy presented some of the key pan-BBC performance information for the period April to June 2014.
- I 12.3 The Trust considered the change in media consumption habits, and the likely impact this would have on time spent and the overall reach of the BBC's services, in particular amongst younger audiences.
- I 12.4 Members discussed the editorial and technological challenges this posed for the BBC and the potential impact which personalisation of BBC services would have on audiences.
- I 12.5 Members discussed progress towards their priorities for 2014/15 including the quality, range and distinctiveness of drama on BBC Television and the measurement of progress in diversity.
- I 12.6 The Director-General highlighted some of the editorial complaints which had been upheld by Ofcom, the Trust's Editorial Standards Committee or the BBC's Editorial Complaints Unit.
- I 12.7 The Managing Director, Finance and Operations provided a status report on some of the BBC's current projects and risks. Trust members discussed project performance focussing in particular on those projects where there had been a significant change since last quarter.

## **I 13 SCOTLAND POST-REFERENDUM**

- I 13.1 The Trust and Executive discussed the BBC's coverage of the recent Scottish Referendum.
- I 13.2 The Director-General said he considered that the BBC's journalism had been of the highest order, providing excellent reporting for audiences in Scotland and elsewhere in the UK. The Acting Chairman thanked the BBC staff who had been involved in the coverage both on the day of the vote, and in the months and years preceding.
- I 13.3 The Trust noted that the referendum had been the most significant event in Scotland for many decades, and that there had rarely been such a high level of public engagement. As such, this had been a particularly challenging time for BBC journalists and other staff.
- I 13.4 The Trust member for Scotland said that it was important that the BBC continues to consider how it could best serve audiences in Scotland.

## **I 14 BBC AMERICA PARTNERSHIP (DEAL SUMMARY AND**

## **CORPORATE REVIEW)**

- I 14.1 The CEO, BBC Worldwide updated the Trust on the latest developments in the negotiations between BBC Worldwide and AMC Networks about a potential partnership between AMC Networks and BBC America. The Trust's Services Committee had received an update on the proposal at its September meeting.
- I 14.2 It was noted that as the finalised deal proposals and appropriate supporting documentation, including the assessment against the four commercial criteria, had not yet been received, the Trust could not endorse or approve the deal.
- I 14.3 It was agreed that the Executive would provide the Trust with the full submission with supporting material as soon as possible, once final deal terms were known.
- I 14.4 The Trust delegated authority for any necessary offline approval to members of the Services Committee, though it noted that, dependent on the final submission, the Committee could request that approval by the full Trust would be required.

## **I 15 EXTENSION OF WORLD SERVICE GROUP THAI EMERGENCY NEWS OPERATION**

- I 15.1 The Head of Journalism, World Service Group outlined the proposal to extend the emergency Thai language service, delivered via mobile and social media which had been operating since 10 July 2014.
- I 15.2 The Trust's Services Committee had considered the proposal at its meeting on 10 September and had recommended it to the Trust for approval.
- I 15.3 The Trust approved the extension to the service, with a further review scheduled in October 2015.
- I 15.4 The Acting Chairman noted that the proposal was subject to the dual approval of the BBC Trust and the Foreign Secretary and that she would write to the Foreign Secretary to seek approval for the continuation of the service.

## **I 16 INDEPENDENT AUDIT OF THE BBC'S CHILD PROTECTION AND WHISTLEBLOWING POLICIES**

- I 16.1 The Managing Director, Finance and Operations updated the Trust on the independent audit of the BBC's child protection and whistleblowing policies which the Executive had commissioned from the Good Corporation.

116.2 She reported that the audit had been completed, and a draft report and recommendations shared with the Executive Board. It would be important to ensure that the report aligned with the work which had been carried out as part of the Dame Janet Smith Review.

116.3 The final report was due to be completed in the autumn, and it would be shared with the Trust, along with the proposals of how the BBC would implement the recommendations, in advance of publication.

## **117 HANDLING HIGH RISK**

117.1 The Head of High Risk gave a presentation about how the BBC managed staff working in high-risk situations, particularly those operating in hostile environments.

## **118 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

118.1 The Trust approved the minutes of the meeting held on 17 July as an accurate record of proceedings. The Trust approved the publication of the minutes with some proposed redactions.

118.2 The Trust noted the matters arising from previous meetings.

## **119 ACTING CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE**

119.1 The Acting Chairman updated the Trust on recent events and activities.

## **120 TRUST COMMITTEES REPORTS**

120.1 The Head of Editorial Standards reported on the appeals which had been considered by the Trust's Complaints and Appeals Board on 1 July.

120.2 The Acting Chairman reported that the Trust's Value for Money Committee had met on 10 September and had discussed the BBC's property strategy, and in particular the W12 proposals; had been updated on the audit of the BBC's funding of the local television multiplex; and had received a briefing on the progress of Project Smart, the BBC's HR and finance IT upgrade. The committee had also discussed the Trust reviews of talent pay and risk management.

120.3 Suzanna Taverne, Chair of the Services Committee, reported that at its meeting on 10 September the committee had approved a proposal from the BBC Executive to amend the Online service licence to enable download of 'Ten Pieces' of classical music for use in primary schools. The committee had also approved changes to the service licence for BBC One to include a minimum hours condition for current affairs in peak-time. The committee had received a briefing from the BBC Executive on new approaches to syndication and distribution; discussed the responses to the Trust's

consultation on the commercial framework; and had received a report from the Director, Future Media on progress against the recommendations from the Online and Red Button service review.

- I20.4 Alison Hastings, Chair of the Editorial Standards Committee, reported that the committee had partially upheld one appeal, the findings of which would be published in October. The committee had also discussed the BBC Executive's response to the Trust's Impartiality Review on Breadth of Opinion.

## **I21 DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- I21.1 The Director, BBC Trust presented his report, which provided an overview of activity undertaken by the Trust including the publication of the Trust's review of TV services and the launch of the service review of music radio networks.

- I21.2 He reported that, subject to Privy Council confirmation, the incoming Chairman would take up her post on 9 October.

- I21.3 He reported that the Trust had been asked to give oral evidence to the House of Commons' Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee as part of its inquiry into the future of the BBC. This had been provisionally scheduled for 21 October 2014.

## **I22 REMOVAL OF CHILDREN'S RADIO CONTENT FROM RADIO 4EXTRA**

- I22.1 The Head of Public Service Strategy outlined the proposals which had been received from the BBC Executive to remove commitments to broadcast children's content from the Radio 4 Extra service licence.

- I22.2 She reported that the Trust's Services Committee had considered the proposal and accepted the Executive's assessment that it did not represent a significant change, and therefore a public value test was not required.

- I22.3 The Trust agreed that the proposed changes did not require a public value test to be conducted.

- I22.4 The Trust would publish a statement on its website to announce the approval of the change.

## **I23 AUDIENCE COUNCIL NORTHERN IRELAND MEMBERSHIP**

- I23.1 The Trust member for Northern Ireland invited the Trust to approve extensions to the terms of membership of four members of the Audience Council Northern Ireland.

I23.2 The Trust approved the extensions to the membership.

## **I24 CHANGES TO COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

I24.1 The Director, BBC Trust, outlined some proposed minor changes to the terms of reference for the Editorial Standards Committee, the Services Committee and the Value for Money Committee.

I24.2 The Trust approved the changes.

## **I25 ITEMS FOR NOTING**

- I25.1
- a) Report of offline approvals
  - b) Freedom of Information Act section 36 decision

## **I26 BUSINESS HANDLING AND COMMUNICATIONS**

I26.1 The Trust discussed the handling and communications of items considered at the meeting.

## **I27 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

I27.1 Members thanked the Acting Chairman for her leadership during the last five months.