



Meeting of the BBC Board

MINUTES

22 April 2021

Held Via Video Conference

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. Apologies and Conflicts of Interest
2. Minutes and Matters Arising
3. Committee Reports
4. Executive Reports
5. Licence Fee Settlement Update
6. Performance Management 2021/22
7. Stratford East Bank Plan
8. Appointment of an Independent Trustee to the Pension Board
9. Intellectual Property Overview: Workshop
10. AOB

ATTENDANCE

Present

- Richard Sharp Chairman
- Tim Davie Director-General
- Shirley Garrood Non-executive director
- Tanni Grey-Thompson Non-executive director
- Ian Hargreaves Non-executive director
- Tom Ilube Non-executive director
- Charlotte Moore Chief Content Officer
- Steve Morrison Non-executive director
- Nicholas Serota Non-executive director
- Elan Closs Stephens Non-executive director
- Leigh Tavaziva Group Chief Operating Officer
- Fran Unsworth Director, News and Current Affairs

Apologies: There were no apologies

With

- Phil Harrold Company Secretary
- Jo Clarke Secretary to the Board
- Gautam Rangarajan Group Director, Strategy and Performance (items 4-9)
- Ken MacQuarrie Director, Projects (item 4(b) and 4(c))
- Clare Sumner Director, Policy (item 5)
- Bob Shennan Managing Director (item 7)
- Alan Davey Controller, Radio 3 and the Proms (item 7)
- Jon Taylor Programme Director, East Bank Development (item 7)
- Peter Ranyard Head of Corporate Legal and Assistant General Counsel (item 7)
- Sophie Garnham Director, Commercial Rights and Business Affairs (item 7)
- Jo Korn Director, Commercial Rights and Business Affairs (item 7)
- Libbie McQuillan Controller, Group Video Strategy (item 9)

DRAFT BOARD MINUTES 22 APRIL 2021

1. Apologies and Conflicts of Interest

- 1.1 There were no apologies for this meeting.
- 1.2 Tanni Grey-Thompson left the discussion for item 7 as she is a Board member of the London Legacy Development Corporation.

2. Minutes and Matters Arising

- 2.1 The minutes from the 25 March were approved, subject to an amendment.
- 2.2 The Board noted the Matters Arising paper and updates on the actions from the last meeting. The Executive confirmed that a paper on the Arts Strategy would be brought to an upcoming meeting.

3. Committee Reports

- 3.1 The Chair of the Fair Trading Committee reported on its most recent meeting. Deloitte had joined the meeting to provide an update their work on the annual Fair Trading assurance process. It was the last year of their current work, so the Committee also considered a wide range of future Fair Trading assurance options. The Committee approved the draft Annual Report Fair Trading report and the draft statement of operational separation, as required by Ofcom. The Committee also approved the proposed changes to transfer pricing as part of work to finalise the new structure whereby Global News Ltd would sit within BBC Studios. The Committee also discussed the Fair Trading risk report noting the progress that had been made on training completion rates. As this had been the last meeting of the Committee for its current Chair he thanked Committee members and Executive staff for all their work on Fair Trading matters.

4. Executive Reporting

- 4.1 The Director-General opened the Executive reporting section of the meeting. The last week had seen the BBC undertake a critical national role with coverage of the death of HRH Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh.

- 4.2 Content had performed strongly during the month, with large audiences enjoying Sunday evening drama from *Line of Duty* and *Call the Midwife*. Factual programmes which had been moved from BBC Two to BBC One continued to see their audience grow; *The Great British Sewing Bee* had been achieving consolidated audiences of around 5 million viewers. The mental health season had hit a million views online.
- 4.3 The Election Guidelines had been published in line with the beginning of the election period for the May elections. Ofcom had set up its Election Committee to consider due impartiality complaints in respect of election-related programmes.
- 4.4 The Board noted a number of updates on the senior leadership team and progress with the Across the UK plans. The Executive was looking in detail at workplace culture, which would come to the Board next month.
- 4.5 The Director, Content provided an update on performance. The seven day consolidated figures for *Line of Duty* season 6 showed that it had launched with 13.8m viewers. On iPlayer, the premier episode was the most watched programme overall including with 16-34s. This quarter had seen an exceptional performance from iPlayer, driving up overall consumption of BBC content among the young. On BBC Two, *Interior Design Masters* had doubled its audience from the first series and a new jewellery competition programme *All That Glitters* had launched. In audio, Radio 1 had launched its *Relax* wellbeing stream and BBC 6 Music had launched its Music Festival 2021 on air, on BBC Sounds and BBC iPlayer.
- 4.6 The Director, News and Current Affairs provided an update on performance. The vaccine roll-out was being closely followed by news audiences, although it was likely that as the lockdown eased the large audiences for news during the pandemic would start to reduce. Teams were preparing for coverage of the May elections across the UK.
- 4.7 The Board discussed the audience performance data. The targets for 2021-22 were due for discussion later in the meeting.
- 4.8 The Board noted the Finance and Operations update.

Dyson Investigation Update

- 4.9 The Director-General provided an update on progress with Lord Dyson's investigation into the interview of Diana, Princess of Wales by *Panorama* in 1995.

HRH The Duke of Edinburgh Coverage

- 4.10 The Director-General reported that the coverage of the death of HRH Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh had reflected the role of the BBC as the national broadcaster and the response of production teams had been accomplished, both in the implementation

of the technical plans and editorial. The audience for the funeral coverage was very strong delivering a peak of over 13 million viewers, while viewing on the night of the announcement was lower than expected at 2.6m across BBC One and BBC Two. The decision to simulcast coverage across BBC One and BBC Two had resulted in a record number of complaints. The Executive were looking at lessons to be learned. The Board thanked the Executive for the high quality of the coverage.

5. Licence Fee 2022

5.1 The Board noted an update on the licence fee settlement process.

6 Performance Management 2021-22

6.1 The Board considered the proposed audience and organisational metrics and associated targets for the coming year and beyond. These were designed to measure performance against the BBC's strategic objectives and would return to the Board on a regular basis in the Executive Report.

6.2 The Board discussed the new performance measurement framework and approved it, subject to further work on one of the audience metrics.

7 Stratford East Bank Plan

[Tanni Grey-Thompson left the meeting for this discussion]

[paragraph 7.1 redacted for commercial confidentiality]

7.1 The Board considered an update on the project plan for Stratford East Bank, the development approved by the Board in 2018 to replace the BBC's studio facilities at Maida Vale, which were no longer fit for purpose. The project timeline had been extended largely due to the impact of the pandemic, and

the delay had impacted the cost of the internal fit-out of the building. As a result, the team had been asked to return to the Board with a revised and fully assured business plan to absorb any additional costs within the existing budget.

7.2 The Board discussed the review of the programme and noted the assurance that the required level of savings had been achieved though changes to the look, feel and finish of the building, without impacting its operational effectiveness and any acoustic or aesthetic compromise.

7.3 Board members discussed the independent assurance which had been undertaken on the programme review by the pan-BBC Project Management Office and the enhanced

approach to risk management. The assurance review would go forward to the next meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee. Directors noted the reduction to the market value of Maida Vale due to its listing by Historic England. An note on the impact of the listing decision would be circulated to the Board.

- 7.4 The Board noted the revised plan for the Stratford East Bank development and endorsed the next steps.

8 Appointment of an Independent Trustee to the Pension Board

- 8.1 The Board considered a recommendation from the BBC Pension Trust Ltd Board for the re-appointment of an independent trustee. Under the BBC Pension Scheme Trust Deed and Rules and the Matters Reserved for the Board (Corporate Governance), independent trustees are appointed by the BBC Pension Trust Ltd Board, with the approval of the BBC Board.
- 8.2 The Board discussed the recommendation to re-appoint Catherine Claydon who is also Chair, as an independent trustee, for a term of three years from 1 June 2021. The Board noted that if reappointed, Catherine will continue to hold the role of Chair.
- 8.3 The Board approved the re-appointment of Catherine Claydon as an independent trustee to the Pension Board for a term of a further three years.

9 Intellectual Property Overview

- 9.1 The Board engaged in a session on video intellectual property including the history of IP regulation, the current situation, and wider supply context. It also covered the core structures and tensions in the market, the current regulatory framework, and the key opportunities and challenges the BBC faced going forward.
- 9.2 Directors discussed the issues arising from the session and how they interacted with the BBC's overall strategy.

10 AOB

- 11.1 The Chairman asked Board members to send him any suggestions for future committee membership.
- 11.2 The Board noted that the World Service had received an additional £8 million from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office to go towards the BBC World2020 Programme promoting accurate, impartial news around the world.