



Meeting of the BBC Audit and Risk Committee

SUMMARY MINUTES

Thursday 17 July 2025
Broadcasting House, London

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. Committee business
 - a) Minutes of the 18 June Audit and Risk Committee
 - b) Apologies and conflicts of interest
2. Pensions deep dive
 - a) Overview from the Pension Trustees
 - b) Approach to shorter-term and longer-term options for the BBC Pension Scheme
 - c) Follow-up analysis on the BBC Pension Scheme's illiquid investments
3. Controls implementation
 - a) Project Vanguard (FRC Controls Update)
 - b) FRC Controls Update – Initial Design Review
 - c) Year End ICFR implementation Update
4. Audit and Assurance quarterly report
5. Risk and compliance quarterly report
6. Fair Trading
 - a) Fair trading assurance review
 - b) Fair trading assurance - proposal
7. AOB and papers for noting
 - a) Whistleblowing update
 - b) Audit feedback survey

ATTENDANCE

Members:

- Chris Jones Non-executive director (Chair)
- Michael Plaut Non-executive director

Apologies:

- Shumeet Banerji Non-executive director

Board members present:

- Tim Davie Director-General
- Leigh Tavaziva Group Chief Operating Officer

With:

- Alan Dickson Chief Financial Officer
- Balram Veliath Director, Quality, Risk and Assurance
- Claire Rollo National Audit Office (not 7b)
- Anna Wojtal National Audit Office (not 7b)
- Chris Sandford Company Secretary (secretary)
- Catherine Claydon Chair, Pension Trustees (2a)
- Ben Harvey Director, Governance and Ops, Pension Trustees (item 2a)
- Rhona Burns FD, Planning and Insights (2)
- Holly King Group Financial Controller (2,3,7b)
- Alison Fleming PwC (item 2)
- Simon Adair Director, SSR (item 3)
- Huw Jones Head of Finance Delivery (3)
- Bonnie Rees Snr. QRA Business Partner (4,5)
- Gurdip Ryatt Head of Risk (items 5,6)
- Chris Rowsell Controller, Regulation (item 6)
- Katharine James Head of SSR (item 7a)

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE SUMMARY MINUTES – 17 July 2025

1. Minutes and and matters arising from the 18 July Audit and Risk Committee

1.1 The minutes were approved, noting minor suggested changes, and no new conflicts of interest were raised. The Chair noted his declared involvement with Legal & General Investment Management, which was a second order conflict in relation to pension issues and was being managed. Matters arising were noted.

2. Pensions deep dive

a) Overview from the Pension Trustees

2.1 The Committee were briefed on the operation and management of the BBC pension scheme by the BBC Pension Trustees. A constructive working relationship between the Trustees and the sponsoring company was noted and welcomed, with this being evidenced by the bringing forward of the triennial valuation. The strong management of the scheme was welcomed, with high levels of trust on all sides.

b) Approach to shorter-term and longer-term options for the BBC Pension Scheme

2.2 The Committee moved on to discuss a note from the Executive on potential reform options for the BBC pension scheme. The Committee would look again at options later in the year.

c) Follow-up analysis on the BBC Pension Scheme's illiquid investments

2.3 The Committee noted an update and analysis on illiquid investments in the BBC scheme.

3. Annual Report and Accounts Controls implementation

a) FRC Controls Update

3.1 The Committee noted an update on the project to put in place controls in line with new Financial Reporting Council requirements for a Board declaration in 2027. The project was progressing well, but the scale of work to be undertaken remained a risk. Current areas of focus were on the supply chain and product controls.

b) FRC Controls Update – Initial Design Review

3.2 The Committee were briefed on an assessment of the initial design stage of the controls process. The work tested the design of the controls only, not the effectiveness. Work to review most material risks was complete with financial risks to be reviewed by the autumn. The risks would be reviewed again to consider whether the reputational impact of editorial issues should be a risk, including considering how to track and mitigate serious breaches.

c) Year End ICFR implementation Update

3.3 The Committee noted an update on the implementation work for the ICFR project. A further update would come to the next meeting.

4. Audit and Assurance quarterly report

4.1 The quarterly audit and assurance report was discussed. The audit plan was currently on track with ten reviews reported for the quarter, including assurance work on the Annual Report and Accounts. The report was noted.

5. Risk and compliance quarterly report

5.1 The Committee noted the risk report, which was now structured around the material risks that had been agreed. Staff safety and high risk deployment remained an area of focus. The Committee welcomed the draft new format of the reporting.

6. Fair trading

a) Fair trading assurance review

6.1 The Committee noted the latest assurance report with two pieces of work completed in the last period. Work to address and simplify the SLA was noted and an update on this would be provided to the next meeting.

b) Fair trading assurance - proposal

6.2 The Committee reviewed a proposed new approach to assurance of fair trading processes, to be undertaken by the Audit and Assurance team. The Internal Audit team were comfortable they could successfully undertake the work and add value. A proforma of the assurance opinion would be produced. The proposal was agreed subject to confirmation that it was acceptable to Ofcom and a meeting for the Chair with Ofcom would be arranged.

7. AOB and papers for noting

a) Whistleblowing update

7.1 The Committee reviewed the quarterly report. An overview of cases was noted, along with current triage processes. The central team were doing work to actively raise awareness of the channels available.

b) Audit feedback survey

7.2 The Committee noted the process in place to gather views and feedback on the external audit process and feed these back to the NAO after consideration by the Committee.

7.3 There were no other items of business.