



## **Meeting of the BBC Board**

### **MINUTES**

24 April 2025  
Wood Norton

#### **ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

1. Chair's Introduction
2. Apologies and Conflicts of Interest
3. Minutes and Matters Arising
4. Board Reports
5. Executive and Director-General Report
6. iPlayer Strategy
7. Workplace Culture Review
8. Consolidated Group Business Services
9. Charter Review Update
10. Quarterly Performance Report
11. Content Investment Case
12. BBC Commercial Ltd: Articles of Association
13. AOB

## **ATTENDANCE**

### Present

- |                    |                               |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Samir Shah       | Chair                         |
| • Tim Davie        | Director-General              |
| • Damon Buffini    | Non-executive director        |
| • Robbie Gibb      | Non-executive director        |
| • Muriel Gray      | Non-executive director        |
| • Chris Jones      | Non-executive director        |
| • Michael Plaut    | Non-executive director        |
| • Michael Smyth    | Non-executive director        |
| • Marinella Soldi  | Non-executive director        |
| • Leigh Tavaziva   | Group Chief Operating Officer |
| • Caroline Thomson | Non-executive Director        |
| • Deborah Turness  | CEO, News and Current Affairs |

Apologies: Shumeet Banerji

### With

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Paul Oldfield        | Chief of Staff to the Chair and Director-General           |
| Chris Sandford       | Company Secretary  |
| Jo Clarke            | Secretary to the Board                                     |
| Peter Ranyard        | Head of Corporate Legal (item 2e)                          |
| Gautam Rangarajan    | Director, Strategy and Performance (items 3,4,6,7,8) Chief |
| John Curbishley      | Strategy and Transformation Officer (items 3,4,6,7,8)      |
| Rhodri Talfan Davies | Director, Nations (items 3,4,5,8)                          |
| Kate Phillips        | Interim Chief Content Officer (items 3,4,5,8,9)            |
| Tom Fussell          | CEO, BBC Studios (item 4)                                  |
| Marcus Arthur        | CEO, UKTV (item 4)   |
| Sophie Garnham       | CRBA Director (item 4)                                     |
| David Moody          | Director, Strategy, BBC Studios (item 4)                   |
| Dan McGolpin         | Director, iPlayer and Channels (item 4)                    |
| Kerris Bright        | Chief Customer Officer (item 5)                            |
| Uzair Qadeer         | Chief People Officer (item 5)                              |
| Sarah Gregory        | Director of People Experience and Deputy CPO (item 5)      |

Deborah Copeland	Director of Internal Communication & Engagement (item 5)
Alice Macandrew	Director, Corporate Affairs (items 5 and 7)
Geraint Crwys-Williams	Director of Operations (items 5 and 6)
Rebecca Wallace	Strategy Director (items 7)
David Jordan	Director, Editorial Policy and Standards (item 8)
Alan Dickson	CFO (item 8)

## **BOARD MINUTES 24 APRIL 2025**

### **1. Chair's Introduction**

- 1.1 The Chair summarised the substantive business of the day, which would focus on the Workplace Culture Review, iPlayer Strategy and the Charter Review process.

### **2. Apologies and Conflicts of Interest**

- 2.1 Shumeet Banerji had provided his apologies for this meeting.
- 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 18 March Board meeting were approved.
- 3.2 The Board noted the Matters Arising.

### **4. Board Business and Reports**

#### *Sub-committee Reports*

- 4.1 The Board noted and discussed a written report from the Northern Ireland Committee.

#### *Commercial Board Report*

- 4.2 The Board noted and discussed a report from the Commercial Board which provided an update on its most recent meeting.
- 4.3 The Board discussed an update on additional financing options in the commercial business. A further briefing would be arranged for non-executives offline.

#### *Board Effectiveness Review: Matters Reserved for the Board*

- 4.4 The Board considered the schedule of Matters Reserved for the Board, which had been updated to include a framework for the escalation of matters of reputational risk arising from the annual Board Effectiveness Review, and changes to the Corporate Code.

4.5 The Board discussed the updated schedule of Matters Reserved for the Board. Directors agreed that the Chair of the Commercial Board should be added to the escalation process for reputational risk, where there were considerations affecting the commercial business.

4.6 The Board approved the revised schedule of Matters Reserved for the Board.

## **5. Executive and Director-General Report**

5.1 The Director-General opened the session by commending the BBC's coverage of the Pope's death, including the special programme on the life and legacy of Pope Francis. The CEO News briefed the Board on the approach that had been taken to covering and distributing the story.

5.2 The Board noted an update on progress with the investigation into *Gaza: Surviving a War Zone*. A Board Call would be held on its completion.

5.3 The Board were briefed on the positive outcome of Ofcom's assessment of three of the BBC's five planned new radio services: Radio 1 Dance, Radio 1 Anthems and Radio 3 Unwind stations. The proposed DAB extension for Radio 2 and changes to Radio 5 Sports Extra had not been permitted.

5.4 The Director-General provided the Board with an overview of the results of the Staff survey.

5.5 The survey of BBC account holders was underway and it was hoped a significant data set of opinion would be generated.

5.6 The Chief Operating Officer provided an update to the Board.

## **6. iPlayer Strategy**

*[paragraph 6.3 redacted for commercial confidentiality]*

6.1 The Board considered an update on progress with the strategy for iPlayer.

6.2 Directors discussed the current status of the regulatory, market and partnership position, as well as alternative options to the planned approach.

6.3 The Board approved the rephrasing of the strategy to focus on a flexible, staged, approach;

## **7. Workplace Culture Review**

- 7.1 The Board considered the independent report, Respect at Work, from Change Associates, resulting from the Board commissioned review of BBC workplace culture.
- 7.2 The Board noted that Change Associates engaged with approximately 2,500 BBC employees and freelancers through one-to-one conversations, facilitated group discussion sessions, a freelancer survey and by inviting written submissions to a confidential inbox.
- 7.3 The Board discussed the Report's findings. The Report found that the vast majority of people at the BBC treated each other with respect and that the BBC did not have a toxic culture. However, the Report also found that there remained pockets in the organisation where this was not the case.
- 7.4 The Board discussed the Report's recommendations in six areas. Directors agreed the actions were clear and practical, and would help achieve meaningful change. Directors thanked Change Associates for its work.
- 7.6 The Board accepted the Respect at Work Report from Change Associations and its recommendations in full.

### *Executive Response*

- 7.7 The Board considered a paper which provided the Executive response to the report from Change Associates, together with an action plan that set out the detailed response to each recommendation and an implementation timeline.
- 7.8 The Board discussed the Executive Response and action plan. Directors agreed that the plan was a comprehensive and practical response to the recommendations contained within Change Associate's report.
- 7.9 The Board approved the Executive Response and requested that reporting on progress with the implementation of the action plan return to the Board on a regular basis.

## **8. Consolidated Group Business Services**

- 8.1 The Board received an update on the Consolidated Group Business Services (CGBS) programme. Directors noted that the programme provided the BBC with a significant opportunity to transform its technology, operating model and cost base, which would better position it to deliver its future strategic goals.

- 8.2 The Board approved in principle the decision to move towards a consolidated Group Business Services model. Directors noted the plan to complete an external procurement step in July 2025. Directors noted that a full business case would return to the Board in the Autumn.

## **9. Charter Review Update**

- 9.1 The Board noted an update on the Charter Review process.
- 9.2 The Board delegated approval of the Charter Review Terms of Reference which were being drawn up by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport should they be received in advance of the next Board meeting.

## **10. Quarterly Performance Report**

- 10.1 The Board considered the quarterly performance report which covered the period from January to March 2025.
- 10.2 Directors discussed the audience performance over the quarter, which had improved since the autumn. It had been a strong year overall, despite challenging market conditions, with 20 of the 25 Audience Scorecard metrics achieving or exceeding their financial year target.
- 10.3 Directors noted the Finance and Operations Report.
- 10.4 Directors noted the Editorial Standards and Complaints Report. Complaints volumes remained low.

## **11. Content Investment**

*[paragraph 11.1 redacted for commercial confidentiality]*

11.1

## **12. BBC Commercial Limited: Articles of Association**

- 12.1 The Board approved a written resolution to change BBC Commercial's Articles of Association to allow the Company to retain meeting minutes in digital form only.

## **13     AOB**

13.1    There was no other business