Priorities and summary workplan for 2011/12

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1. Introduction

This workplan summarises BBC Online's strategy, objectives and outline budget for the fiscal year 2011/12 – April 2011 through to March 2012 inclusive. It should be read alongside the BBC's overall 2011/12 workplan[1]. As that makes clear, ".. *this document is not a blueprint for the year ahead. Plans must and no doubt will change in certain areas to accommodate events… Whenever our plans change they must, on balance, remain focussed on delivering against our strategy and within our budget. It is intended the annual workplan will assist this reconciliation of our regular affairs with our long-term strategy and budget.*"[2]

April 2011 sees the start of a two year-long plan, which has been designed to deliver a transformational change in BBC Online. The aim is to allow the service to thrive in an ever more competitive market whilst fulfilling its obligations as a platform.

BBC Online will be viewed as one service comprising ten products. Everything the BBC produces online will map against one of these products. Each product has a clear remit, an expectation in terms of public value generated, clear targets, supporting budget and organisational structure.

In another first for the service, equal emphasis is being placed on a small number of pan-BBC activities which together will ensure the combination of the products is greater than the sum of their parts. Licence fee payers will gradually experience a more consistent and high quality visual experience no matter what device they use to access BBC content delivered over the internet. They will also find more accessible and rewarding linkages between BBC Online and other sites and services on the web.

FY11/12 is a significant year of preparations for our coverage of the London 2012 Olympics. A number of audience-facing and technical releases are key parts of what will be a world class offer.

These and other changes are the direct result of applying the corporation wide principles of the BBC's wider strategic review – putting quality first, doing fewer things better, guaranteeing access, making the licence fee work harder and setting new boundaries for BBC Online. The result impacts all aspects of the business:

- **Mission and strategy:** Guided by the Putting Quality First review, we have clarified the mission of BBC Online and its products, creating a single strategy to deliver a more compelling and coherent service for our users. This is set out in section 2 of this document.

- **Objectives:** Our ambitious three year objectives for the service are set out in section 3 and expressed as annual targets, allowing us to understand our progress in improving quality across the board, attracting more regular users to more parts of the service, and delivering greater value for money.

- **Audience offer:** The 10 products which comprise BBC Online are at different levels of maturity. Some are due for a significant refresh, including Homepage, CBBC, Sport, Weather, TV & iPlayer and Radio & Music. Knowledge & Learning will begin its more profound evolution to a new product during the year. A wider set

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[1] See http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc/reports/pdf/workplan_0611.pdf

[2] BBC Executive work plan for 2011/12, Statement from Senior Independent Director, Marcus Agius

of improvements will be delivered this year, both on screen as well as to the technology platform, the highlights of which are described in sections 4, 7 and 8.

- **Budget:** Putting Quality First proposed a 25% reduction to the BBC Online Service Licence budget by 2013/14. The majority of changes to deliver the savings, including headcount reductions, will be implemented in FY11/12.

- **Organisation:** A number of changes to the BBC Online organisation will take effect in FY11/12 to ensure it is fit to deliver the mission. These include the implementation of consistent and effective product management supporting the 10 products, a simplification of BBC Online governance and an overhaul of its leadership. They also include the reduction in service licence budget; a reduction of approximately 360 posts. The detail behind these changes is set out in section 6.

One final note. The heart of BBC Online is moving North in 2011/12; by year end, six out of the ten products will be based in Salford Quay.

2. BBC Online Mission and Strategy

BBC Online's mission, like that of the BBC as a whole, is to enrich people's lives with products and services that inform, educate and entertain. Unlike the BBC's activities in radio and television, BBC Online must fulfil this mission in a dual role as both a platform and a service in its own right.

The long term vision for BBC Online is to become the universal gateway to the past, present and future of the BBC, embracing audiences within a single, integrated offer that is available in multiple languages, on any device, and in any location. Audiences will increasingly view BBC Online as the BBC, and recognise the distinctive role the BBC plays online in the same way they do today in television and radio.

As set out in the Executive submission to the Trust in December 2010, the Putting Quality First strategy for BBC Online is:

1. **Doing fewer things, better** – with fewer, better products. BBC Online will have an essential role delivering the BBC's Journalism, Children's and Events priorities and pursue an ambition to make a bigger contribution to the Inspiring Knowledge, Music & Culture priority.

2. **Broadening horizons** – BBC Online will go further in addressing this challenge by adopting a more effective approach to 'broadening horizons', surfacing content from both the BBC and other providers that surprises and delights audiences, in addition to that which initially brings them to our site. We will drive horizontal navigation within and between products and double the number of external referrals to content providers in the markets we share with them.

3. To create a **common platform** for the whole of BBC Online: a scalable technical infrastructure that is shared across multiple products, replacing much of the bespoke technology development that has taken place hitherto. This common platform will deliver a richer and more consistent BBC Online to audiences through features including cross-platform availability, personalisation, sharing via social networks, support for multiple languages (both within the UK and globally), and a unique range of accessibility features.

3. Objectives

Ambitious three year objectives for the service have been set out in BBC Trust's approval of the BBC's online strategy in January of this year.

	2010 baseline	*2013/14 objective*
Reach	**55**% (Reach to online adults)	**65**% (Reach to online adults)
Quality	**80.0** (AI) **77%** of sites >70 **32%** of sites >80	**82** (AI) **100%** of sites >70 **50%** of sites >80
Impact	**11m** referrals/ month (External referrals / month)	**25m** referrals/ month An external link on every page
Value	**£137m** budget (Service Licence)	**£103m** budget (Service Licence)

Source: BBC Trust, Approval of BBC Online strategy, January 2011

4. Highlights in FY11/12

4.1 Consolidating the service around fewer products

BBC Online will start to take on a new shape during FY11/12, consolidating around ten audience-facing products:

1. Homepage
2. News
3. Sport
4. TV & iPlayer
5. Search
6. Weather
7. Radio & Music
8. Knowledge & Learning
9. CBBC
10. CBeebies

This will give greater clarity and coherence to the licence fee payer experience and drive up quality. Products will also be the primary unit of BBC Online, providing the structure for leadership, strategy, performance measurement, marketing and budget setting.

The ten products are currently at various stages of maturity and will be developed accordingly throughout FY11/12:
- o significant refresh of existing products: Homepage, Sport, CBBC, Weather, TV & iPlayer, Radio & Music
- o development of a new product: Knowledge & Learning

Migration to the new product set will also allow for more active management of legacy content across the service.

4.2 Building up to London 2012

2012 will be a hugely important year for the UK and for the BBC.   Not only will the UK host the London Olympics for which the BBC is the UK multiplatform rights holder, but there will also be a series of other major events including the Diamond Jubilee and Festival 2012.
Development work for the coverage of London 2012 will be largely completed during FY11/12.

4.3 Broadening horizons (contextual navigation)

The ambition of broadening horizons, as set out in the PQF strategy, will start to become a reality. This draws on development work across the product groups, including developing the Homepage, the planned Sport refresh, and London 2012.

4.4 Delivering Editions (including Nations)

The capability to publish Editions of products, tailored to users' perspectives (e.g. Nations editions), will be delivered. The first instance of this will be the release of Homepage v4.

4.5 Optimising the product set across platforms and devices

Following launch of the Apple iOS application for News in FY10/11, 11/12 will see the continued optimisation of the product set across more operating systems, platforms and devices.

4.6 Developing the common platform

We will continue to develop the 'common platform': a scalable technical infrastructure that is shared across multiple products. This common platform will deliver a richer and more consistent BBC Online to audiences through features including cross-platform availability, personalisation, sharing via social networks, support for multiple languages (both within the UK and globally), and a unique range of accessibility features. In 11/12 progress will also be made with the rationalisation and retirement of a number of legacy technical systems.

4.7 Making it easier for suppliers to work with us

We will continue the work started in 2010/11 to improve the way we engage with our suppliers.   We will want to simplify the tendering and commissioning processes, provide a single point of contact for each product and ensure more meaningful engagement around our technical platform

5. Budget

By 2013/14, BBC Online will have reduced its service licence budget by 25% to c£103m gross of production related overheads.

The programme to deliver these savings starts in 2011/12, but implementation of the changes has been phased over the next two years. Therefore the full benefits of the savings initiatives are not felt immediately and spend on the BBC Online service licence will trend downwards over 2011/12 and 2012/13, achieving the 25% lower run rate in 2013/14.

The 2011/12 service licence budget, incorporating these first year savings is c£120m.

For external spend the eligibility definitions remain unchanged from previous years. BBC Online is committed to deliver a minimum of 25% of the eligible base – c£18m in 2011/12. The final number delivered is dependent on the precise level and mix of spend in BBC Online.

6. Organisational development

In parallel with the development of the Online Strategy, an organisational review has been completed in order to ensure that the structure, processes and behaviours of the business are optimised for success. Some of the key recommendations from the review, regarding leadership, product management and governance, will be in place for the start of FY11/12, the rest will rollout in full by year end.

Governance: an agreed Governance operating model covering all key pan-product issues and activities, for example editorial strategy and measurement.

Key processes: Consistent, documented service and product management processes (e.g. new feature launch, escalation procedures) will be in place in FY11/12.   These changes will extend to include the way we engage with our suppliers.   A single point of contact for each product will ensure the newly simplified tendering and commissioning process will provide suppliers a more useful and effective.   Particular emphasis in 2011/12 is being put on larger technical suppliers: the introduction of a limited number of 'framework' contracts should allow fewer, bigger technical contracts to be managed in a better way for both the BBC and the suppliers.

Performance measures: Clear, consistent performance measures, shared across Online, will be established for General Managers, Portfolio Heads, Product Managers and Editorial Leads.

New ways of working: we will create and sustain a new BBC Online leadership community.   Specialist active support from BBC People will be given to the key product roles – Editorial Portfolio Head, Editorial Executive, Product Manager, General Manager, marketing and audience representatives.

As a result of these changes, a number of posts will be closing. These closures were announced in communications on 24 January 2011.   Subject to the consultation with the Unions, we are proposing the closure of up to 360 posts, phased in over the next two years.   The cuts will not fall equally across each BBC division.   We estimated that 120 posts will close in Future Media, 70 posts in Journalism (News and Nations non-News), 85-90 in Vision, 35-39 in Audio & Music, 17 in Children's and 24 in Sport.

At the same time as these changes are being implemented the greater part of BBC Online moves to Salford Quay. Some or all of six products will be based there:
- Homepage
- Search
- Sport
- CBeebies
- CBBC
- Knowledge & Learning

This additional dynamic represents a unique opportunity: new teams under new leadership in a new environment have the chance to fashion new and better ways of working.

7. Product priorities

7.1 News

- Continuous improvement of the live experience
- All bespoke programme sites other than Today, Newsbeat and Newsnight, will be automated, with a central team drawing out the best content to be showcased on the main News site
- Entertainment News with increased emphasis on culture, media and the arts
- The number of blogs will be reduced with a new focus on 'correspondent pages'
- Local sites fully integrated into News, with a focus on News, Sport, Weather and Travel, with bespoke Knowledge content only where it is related to the News agenda or to locally produced broadcast output
- Refresh the Market Data proposition
- V2 News mobile and tablet applications and browser products on other operating systems

7.2 Sport

- Major refresh of the Sport product beginning with the website, providing a new user experience and information architecture that lays the foundation for London 2012
- Move to increased use of metadata to create automated sections across the website and enable more efficient coverage, with increased use of external linking
- Increased editorial coverage of minority sports in the build-up to London 2012
- Optimisation and refreshed design for mobile browser service
- Deliver a Sport mobile application for the UK
- There will be a number of closures: the sport news video bulletin; the 606 website; and the Sport Academy website. There will be a consolidation around the core news and live event coverage, a process that has already begun with the closure of the Fun & Games section of the site. There will be a reduction in the depth of coverage of some non-priority sports and events.

7.3 Weather

- Major desktop website refresh, in line with Global Experience Language (GEL)
- Forecasts for more locations, covering more days in more detail and more frequent updates
- Improved maps to include temperature and wind information
- More social/sharing tools

- Multi-language support

- Fully refreshed weather homepage with highlighted editorial features

- Mobile site refresh to include more content currently available on the desktop site

- Weather and Travel News delivering specific content for London 2012

7.4 Radio & Music

- The new Radio & Music product will bring together all BBC radio station sites, music events and podcasts into a single, cohesive ecosystem. This will integrate radio listening and music discovery experiences with highly interactive station destinations with programme pages, social media and deeper content, as well as pan-BBC content and external links. The product will deliver on three key promises:
    i.   A dynamic live experience - as easy as turning on the radio, but with added benefit of track info, live interaction, synchronous video/visual (where appropriate) and opportunities to dive deeper
    ii.   Easy and intuitive access to the best and most relevant audio (and music video) from the BBC – past and present.
    iii. Music recommendation/guidance from genre-defining talent

- Preparation and planning for new Radio & Music product, with an expected launch before April 2012

- Launch Tastemaker and A/V showcase as part of refreshed Music offer

- Further iterations of UK RadioPlayer

7.5 CBeebies

- Migrate CBeebies site to same production system as CBBC to ensure it can be managed effectively. Functionality developed in one area will be available across the other sites

- Rework of the 'Grown Ups' site to engage parents more fully, including experimenting with engagement via social networking services

- First release of games for mobile, based on 'Something Special' brand

- Development of social tools, linking up with metadata systems to power onward journeys, and delivering feeds of children's content allowing syndication

- Work with Games Grid and independent suppliers to maximise the potential of the game portfolio

- Mobile services to be based on commissioned content

- Nations and Regions will be incorporated through commissions

7.6 CBBC

- Develop game template engine

- User Journeys: drive reach and appreciation by better preference prediction of what people are interested in. Onward journeys to rest of BBC and web via metadata system

- Socialness: leaderboards, mini-leagues, and reflecting the crowd to make the experience less lonely

- Mobile game delivery

7.7 TV & iPlayer

- Major evolution of BBC iPlayer shifts to focusing the portfolio of channel, brand, programme and archive sites into a single, converged product, allowing audiences to find, enjoy and interact with their favourite TV brands

- BBC iPlayer will flow smoothly between PC, TV, mobile, and tablet, emphasising the strategy on 4-screen

- The audience experience will shift from static to dynamic, evolving the experience pre-TX, during TX, and post-TX

- A canonical page per programme will act as the logical destination for viewing, controlling, and enhancing the experience

- Mobile experiences will balance rich applications with the breadth of mobile Web; BBC iPlayer will go where audiences go

- Deeper experiences on connected TVs, gaming devices, and BluRay disc players will bring BBC iPlayer directly to the TV, and make enjoying it feel more like TV

- Greater emphasis on social will drive community curation and experiences on and off BBC Online

7.8 Homepage

- A major update of the Homepage in 2012 with a number of incremental releases to follow

- Improvements include

  o Allowing users to save settings and roam across devices

  o Alignment with GEL

  o Deliver Nations' Editions of the Homepage, allowing more appropriate content to be surfaced for users in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

o   Improved social discovery such as most read, most watched etc.

7.9 Knowledge & Learning

- The current service will be refined in 11/12 whilst the detailed planning for new product continues.   The new Knowledge and Learning product will not be fully released until 2012/13.

- A small number of improvements will be made to the existing offers, including:

  o   Creating 'Learning outcomes' across BBC Online

  o   Alignment of Arts, History, Nature, Religion and Science subject areas with relevant indices in Learning, News, Children's, TV & iPlayer and Radio & Music

  o   Alignment of Food, Gardening, Health and Consumer and learning content (Languages, Webwise) with News indices, where applicable

  o   Enhanced external linking: Things To Do; teachers content; Skillswise & Webwise

  o   Bitesize and teacher-navigation solution to become single entry points for all Nations, supporting the devolved curricula

7.10 Search

- Ensure all content can be indexed by the central search systems and work with production teams to improve data structures

- Enable external links to be presented as part of our standard search results

- Continue development of subject, people and place search results feeds to form basis of emerging contextual navigation proposition

8. Enabler priorities

8.1 User Experience and design priorities

- Refresh GEL materials to reflect a vision for a coherent and compelling experience across the ten products and across platforms

- Ensure GEL is built into major product refreshes, including Sport, Homepage v4, Radio & Music, TV & iPlayer, Weather and the new Knowledge & Learning product

8.2 Online Technology Group priorities

- Implementation of new analytics tool across the business, ensuring management information systems are updated for the start of 2011/12.

- Continue development of iBroadcast, providing an increasingly powerful and scalable tool for managing Audio/Visual content on BBC Online

- Continue rationalisation of content management platforms and the transition away from legacy website components

- Refine the AV production workflow, converging to a single delivery model for TV, Radio, News, Regional provision of live streaming and on-demand content

- Capacity will be improved to increase the number of on demand hours delivered and decrease time taken to publish programmes after transmission, as well as expanding live stream capability in preparation for the Olympics

- Address technical debt in metadata systems including redesign of components of the existing PIPS and Dynamite systems to yield architectural efficiencies