

## Archived BBC public responses to complaints

# 2016

### BBC News, Coverage of the death of David Bowie, 12 January 2016

#### **Complaint**

We received complaints from viewers and listeners who felt there was too much coverage of David Bowie's death during BBC News programmes and bulletins.

#### **Response from BBC News**

David Bowie was by common consent one of our greatest pop stars who attracted a global following. He appealed across the ages and was one of the most influential musicians of his time. His death was both sudden and unexpected, his illness not revealed to anyone but a tight circle of friends. Our coverage tried to reflect his stature as a musician whose capacity for invention changed the shape of the industry, and the shock at his death around the world.

### Question Time, BBC One, 14 January 2016

#### **Complaint**

We received complaints from viewers who felt the panel had a right wing bias.

#### **Response from Question Time**

Over the course of a series *Question Time* aims to achieve balance and hear from a range of voices. Each programme usually consists of one senior politician from both the Labour and Conservative party, as well as representatives from other political parties. The rest of the panel is made of political commentators, journalists, and other public figures that add a different perspective and represent a range of viewpoints across the series. We also aim to ensure that each episode has a divergent and broad range of views from the panel on the likely topics that our audience wish to raise. David Dimbleby moderates the debate to ensure panellists are given the opportunity to make their views known in a fair way. It makes for an engaging debate and ensures that views are challenged and tested, as was the case with this edition of the programme. With the exception of the discussion on the merits or otherwise of arming UK police forces, where there was broad agreement from the panel that this was not appropriate in the UK, the other topics on Europe, Housing and Junior Doctors had a cross section of opinions across the panel. We hope this goes some way to explaining our thinking on how we put the programme together and can assure you that our intention is always to bring our audiences a good spectrum of contested views and opinions.

## **Happy Valley, BBC One, 9 February 2016 \*\*UPDATED\*\*\***

### **Complaint:**

We received complaints from some viewers who felt that the dialogue was difficult to hear in this episode.

### **Response:**

We worked very hard to ensure everything was audible while keeping the sense of reality and the rawness of the performances. *Happy Valley* is a drama that has been lauded for its realism and dramatic pathos – as such the dialogue is representative of the characters and area in which it is based; and we trust it didn't interfere with the audience enjoyment of the opening episode which was watched by 6.5 million.

### **Update:**

The producer, Juliet Charlesworth appeared on 'BBC Breakfast' on 18 February. She confirmed that the programme passed the BBC's normal technical audio reviews, and talked about the detailed checks and balances undertaken at the numerous stages of record and edit. A final check on the dialogue was performed on different set-ups, including on a domestic television, to ensure that it was audible and met the required broadcast standards. Following viewer feedback about episodes 1 and 2 of 'Happy Valley', the independent production company working with the BBC has decided to further investigate the sound for the rest of the series to ensure it doesn't interfere with the enjoyment of the millions watching.

## **The FA Cup: 6th Round Draw, BBC Two, 21 February 2016**

### **Complaint**

We received complaints from viewers who were unhappy with the comments made by Alan Shearer and Mark Chapman

### **BBC Response**

During the FA Cup draw, Mark Chapman inadvertently left out the KC Stadium when talking about where Watford's 6th Round match would be played, he did quickly correct this and has subsequently tweeted an apology to Hull City. When we went to the studio after the draw, Alan Shearer unfortunately made a similar mistake, however he corrected it as soon as he realised. Mistakes like this can happen in a live situation and we always endeavour to be as accurate as possible.

## **Shetland, BBC One, 26 February 2016**

### **Complaint:**

We received complaints from some viewers who were unhappy that some episodes of Shetland have been postponed for sporting events.

### **Response:**

The FA Cup and Six Nations are two of the biggest competitions in the sporting calendar and while we are pleased to be able to bring them live to viewers, our commitment to broadcast them does mean that schedules are subject to change. We always think carefully about the audience when we decide how to reschedule our programmes. With Shetland we have tried to balance this by rescheduling the displaced episodes in the programme's regular slot of 9pm on Friday nights. We hope this will minimise the disruption to viewers as they will know where to find it. However, we appreciate that some viewers will disagree with this approach and we're grateful for the feedback we've received.

## **Top Gear Filming, 13 March 2016**

### **Complaint:**

We received complaints from members of the public concerned by press reports that appeared to show Top Gear filming close to the Cenotaph.

### **Response:**

Top Gear has been on location around central London over the past few days. Ahead of filming, the production team worked closely with the Metropolitan Police Film Unit and the Special Events Unit of Westminster Council. This was a large-scale, complex shoot, prepared over a period of four months, which required numerous road closures, health and safety regulations to be in place, and also included full disclosure to local residents, including the Treasury and Foreign Office. The Cenotaph was at no point intended to feature in the programme and therefore will not appear in the final film. However, we are acutely aware of how some of the images in the press look via the angle and distance they were taken and for which, as Chris Evans has already said, we sincerely apologise. The driver of the car was briefed by production prior to filming as to where to drive and to not do any manoeuvres close to the monument, an instruction to which he fully adhered. We would like to make it absolutely clear that the Top Gear team has the utmost respect for the Cenotaph, what it stands for, and those heroic individuals whose memory it serves so fittingly.

## **The Boat Races coverage, BBC One, 27 March 2016**

### **Complaint:**

We received complaints from some viewers unhappy with aspects of our coverage of The Boat Races.

### **Response:**

Millions of people tune into The Boat Races every year and our audience is broad and diverse, something we tried to reflect in our coverage, including some brief inserts presented by Seann Walsh and Helen Skelton. We are sorry that some viewers did not enjoy this element of our coverage, but we were very pleased with how well our team told the dramatic stories of The Boat Races, across a complex two-and-a-half-hour live programme, in some extreme weather conditions.

## **Don't Make Me Laugh, Radio 4, 21 April 2016**

### **Complaint**

We received complaints from listeners regarding jokes made about the Queen and the Royal Family in this programme.

### **Response from the BBC**

While BBC Radio 4 comedy is a broad church and often pushes boundaries, we would like to apologise for this broadcast of Don't Make Me Laugh. We never intended for the scheduling of the programme to coincide with The Queen's birthday and are sorry for the offence caused by its timing and content.

## **Closure of the BBC Food website, May 2016**

### **Complaint**

We received complaints about our decision to close the BBC Food website.

### **Response from the BBC**

This decision to close the BBC Food website has not been taken lightly and forms part of our review of online services. Our aim is always to provide high quality, distinctive content and good value for the licence fee. Regarding concerns about deleting recipes – we never said that, nor will we. We currently have two sites and our plans are to move as much content as we can from the BBC Food website to the BBC Good Food site. The recipes you love will still be available and you will still be able to carry on baking and cooking with the BBC.

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## Top Gear, BBC Two, 29 May 2016

### **Complaint:**

We received complaints from viewers who were unhappy with a number of aspects of the show including the presenters and the format.

### **Response:**

It was inevitable that this refreshed Top Gear would be met with mixed reactions, but we believe Chris and Matt have successfully kicked off a whole new era in style. We realise, as with anything new, that it will take time to bed in but we're excited to bring our audiences even more thrills and action as the series continues. We really appreciate all of the feedback we've received and are looking forward to continuing to bring a strong and stable audience together in support of this new incarnation.

## Week In Week Out, BBC One Wales, 24 May 2016

### **Complaint:**

We received complaints from viewers unhappy with how the programme reported the challenges to public bodies in meeting the Welsh Government's new Welsh language Standards.

### **Cwyn:**

Rydym wedi derbyn cwynion gan wylwyr yn anhapus gyda'r ffordd yr ymdriniodd y rhaglen â'r heriau sy'n wynebu cyrff cyhoeddus wrth gwrdd â Safonau Iaith newydd Llywodraeth Cymru.

### **Response:**

We wish to apologise because this programme did not meet the usual high standards of the series. Although the programme reflected a number of positive steps to support the Welsh language in different parts of Wales and never set out to criticise it, on the specific issue of the Welsh Language Measure the programme did not sufficiently explain why the Measure was being introduced and its aims. Although cross-party support for the Measure was referenced, the programme should have reflected a broader range of viewpoints from Torfaen and beyond, including the perspective of individuals who wish to access services through the medium of Welsh. While there are legitimate questions to be asked about the potential implementation cost, as with any area of public expenditure, we do not believe that the description of Standards as carrying a "huge price tag" was substantiated in the programme. A figure that sought to provide an estimate of the total cost of the introduction of the Standards across the public sector in Wales was withdrawn on the day of broadcast as the data used was not robust and we had apologised for its inclusion in news reports earlier in the day. We accept that some elements of the programme should have been worded more precisely, such as the impression that the Standards would require councils to employ a separate Welsh speaking receptionist, whereas a Welsh speaking receptionist would of course be able to interact with the public in both languages. And while the programme reflected the fact that some councils were able to comply with the Standards at little or no cost, we accept that comparing Torfaen with similar neighbouring authorities could have been more instructive and there should have been a more thorough interrogation of the basis of the claimed costs.

### **Ymateb:**

Rydym yn ymddiheuro am y ffaith nad oedd y rhaglen hon yn cyrraedd safonau uchel arferol y gyfres. Tra bod y rhaglen wedi adlewyrchu nifer o gamau cadarnhaol i gefnogi'r Gymraeg mewn gwahanol rannau o Gymru heb unrhyw fwriad i'w chollfarnu; ar fater penodol Mesur y Gymraeg ni wnaeth y rhaglen egluro'n ddigonol pam fod y Mesur yn cael ei gyflwyno a'i amcanion. Er bod cyfeiriad at gefnogaeth drawsbleidiol i'r Mesur, dylai'r rhaglen fod wedi adlewyrchu ystod ehangach o safbwytiau o Dorfaen a thu hwnt, gan gynnwys safbwyt unigolion sy'n dymuno cael gwasanaethau drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg. Tra bod cwestiynau dilys i'w gofyn ynghlŷn â chost posibl gweithredu'r mesurau, fel gydag unrhyw wariant cyhoeddus, credwn hefyd nad oedd digon o dystiolaeth yn y rhaglen i honni fod gan y Safonau "huge price tag". Cafodd ffigwr oedd yn ceisio rhoi amcangyfrif o gyfanswm cost cyflwyno'r safonau ar draws y sector cyhoeddus yng Nghymru ei dynnu'n ôl ar ddiwrnod y darllediad gan nad oedd y data a ddefnyddiwyd yn gadarn, ac fe wnaethom ni ymddiheuro am gynnwys y ffigwr hwn mewn adroddiadau newyddion yn gynharach yn y dydd. Rydym hefyd yn derbyn y dylai rhai elfennau o'r rhaglen fod wedi eu mynegi yn gliriach; er enghraifft, y sgwrs o fewn y rhaglen a roddodd

gamargraff y byddai'r Safonau yn peri i Gyngor Torfaen orfod cyflogi derbynnydd ar wahân ar gyfer siaradwyr Cymraeg, lle wrth gwrs y byddai derbynnydd sy'n siarad Cymraeg yn medru delio â'r cyhoedd yn y ddwy iaith. Hefyd, er i'r rhaglen adlewyrchu'r ffaith y gall ambell i gyngor gydymffurfio â'r Safonau heb unrhyw neu fawr ddim cost, rydym yn derbyn y byddai wedi bod yn well cymharu Torfaen gydag awdurdodau cyfagos tebyg, ac y dylid bod wedi archwilio sail y costau honedig yn fwy trylwyr.

## **BBC News coverage of the death of Muhammad Ali, and schedule changes to BBC One, 4 June 2016**

### **Complaint**

We received complaints from viewers who felt there was too much coverage of the death of Muhammad Ali during BBC News bulletins and programmes.

### **Response from BBC News**

Muhammad Ali was one of the greatest sporting personalities of all time. His wit and charisma, combined with his stance on Vietnam and his influence on the civil rights movement, meant that he transcended sport to become a global figure for subsequent generations, long after he had left the ring. We believe it was right to dedicate time to explore his life, including its controversies and flaws, from his sporting achievements as the three-time world heavyweight boxing champion to his subsequent years with Parkinson's.

### **Complaint**

We received complaints from viewers who were unhappy about changes to the BBC One schedule on the 4 June 2016, in order to accommodate the showing of 'Muhammad Ali: The Greatest'.

### **BBC Response**

Muhammad Ali was widely regarded as a significant global figure of the 20th century, whose impact extended well beyond the boxing ring. We felt it was appropriate to change the schedule on Saturday night to pay tribute to the legend and mark his death with a special documentary on BBC One. It was watched by over 3 million viewers. We always think carefully about the audience when we decide to make late changes to the schedule and we appreciate that some viewers may disagree. We appreciate your feedback on this.

## **Wimbledon, BBC Two, 27 June 2016**

### **Complaint**

We received complaints from some viewers unhappy with the commentary during the match between Novak Djokovic and James Ward.

### **Response**

The Wimbledon Championships is one of the biggest events in the sporting calendar and we aim to bring extensive coverage of the action there. This particular match featured the defending champion and world number one against one of Great Britain's Davis Cup winning heroes, so we felt it was worth offering the best possible insight and analysis to the players and action. We believe we have put together a very strong international line up, with a wealth of experience, talent and knowledge covering all aspects of the game at the very highest level. We appreciate thoughts on commentating style can vary considerably so it is inevitable some viewers may dislike some of our commentary. That said, the issues that are raised are fed back to our Wimbledon production team every morning. They take a keen interest in what our audience are saying and use feedback to shape future programmes.

## **Newsnight, BBC Two, 29 June 2016**

### **Complaint**

We received complaints from viewers who felt presenter Evan Davis challenged Crispin Blunt MP too much during an interview on the EU referendum result and Conservative Party leadership campaign.

### **Response from Newsnight**

Frequently, interviewers get criticised for not being tough enough on interviewees who try to duck questions or filibuster. It's certainly fair to say Evan's exasperation came through in this interview, but we believe that on balance it was a perfectly fair encounter in which Mr Blunt was given plenty of opportunity to make his points and answer Evan's questions. We do recognise, though, that what is a "tough accountability" interview for some, can come across differently for others and we will certainly bear our viewers' concerns in mind as we plan future interviews.

## **Euro 2016: Wales v Belgium, BBC One, 1 July 2016**

### **Complaint**

We received complaints from some viewers unhappy with the commentary during the half-time period.

### **Response**

The European Football Championship is one of the biggest events in the sporting calendar and we aim to provide extensive coverage of the action. Throughout the tournament, in the absence of commercials, we have used the 15 minutes at half-time to analyse the match, but also to preview and review other key moments of the competition. On this occasion, ten minutes was devoted to analysis of the Wales v Belgium match, with extended contributions from the studio and also live from the stadium in Lille. In addition, as it was the first match we broadcast since England's exit, we felt it was editorially justified to provide a fresh perspective from Frank Lampard and our studio team. We believe we have put together a very strong presentation line-up, with a wealth of experience, talent and knowledge covering all aspects of the Euros. We appreciate thoughts are subjective, but are happy that we have provided balanced coverage of Euro 2016 throughout the tournament.

## **Cycling: Ride London, BBC One, 31 July 2016**

### **Complaint**

We received complaints from some viewers unhappy with the technical difficulties we encountered at the end of the programme.

### **Response**

Due to an unforeseen problem beyond our control, we encountered some technical issues which affected the pictures onscreen towards the end of the race. Our production team have looked into the cause of this and will try and ensure that this doesn't happen again in the future. We are sorry if this compromised our viewers' enjoyment of the race.

## **Sportscene, BBC Scotland**

### **Complaint**

We've received complaints from viewers who are unhappy the BBC Scotland programme **Sportscene** is no longer featuring highlights from the Scottish Championship.

### **Response**

The **Sportscene** highlights programme has historically concentrated solely on the top tier of Scottish football. In this respect it mirrors the remit of **Match of the Day**. From the start of the 2012/2013 season, the SPL and SFL, at the behest of the live subscription broadcasters, offered a temporary extension of existing television rights deals to allow for coverage of a number of games in the lower leagues. These matches were selected by SKY or BT, and BBC Scotland was able to access the footage for our highlights programme. This extension of the rights deal ended last season and our contract has now reverted to one that only allows us to broadcast television highlights of games played in the Scottish Premiership and either provided to us by the SPFL or taken from SKY and BT live games. BBC Alba will carry a number of live Championship games this season and we will continue to report on lower league matches on radio, online, and across our sports news outlets.

## **Olympics 2016, BBC One, 14 August 2016**

### **Complaint**

We received complaints from viewers who were unhappy with a reference to English fans during the Argentina v Great Britain tennis match.

### **BBC Response**

During the coverage of the Argentina v Great Britain tennis match between Juan Martin Del Potro and Andy Murray, the reference to English fans was made in error. Mistakes like this can happen in a live broadcast, and we are sorry for any offence caused.

## **BBC Sport, Rio 2016, Disruption to the usual BBC schedules**

### **Complaint**

We have received complaints from viewers unhappy with the disruption to the BBC schedules during the Rio Olympics.

### **BBC Response**

The Olympic Games is one of the highest-profile and most-watched sporting events in the world, and with many British hopefuls taking part this year it has generated a huge amount of interest within the UK. While we are glad to be able to bring the coverage of Rio 2016 to our audience, our commitment to broadcast it does mean that schedules are subject to change. Ultimately, our aim is to bring our audience the most comprehensive coverage of all the key moments during the games and there have been occasions where we have decided to make late changes to the published schedules to accommodate an event which has either overrun, or involved a sportsperson or team of interest. We try and ensure that our published schedules carry notices that overrunning may impact on later programmes, and when this happens we strive to find a solution which will satisfy as many viewers as possible. We do appreciate that moving or postponing programmes can be frustrating, and we carefully consider the available options and aim for the least amount of disruption.

## Question Time, BBC One, 15 September 2016

### **Complaint**

We received complaints from some viewers unhappy with Anna Soubry MP's comments about John McDonnell MP.

### **Response**

This edition of Question Time generated strong views on a variety of topics and we do accept that these can have the potential to cause offence. During the segment on the Labour Party, all panellists and audience members had the opportunity to engage and respond in what was a very lengthy discussion. In his capacity as chairman, David Dimbleby asked Anna Soubry to justify her specific points before ensuring that John McDonnell was given a full opportunity to respond to them. Whilst we don't comment on the appropriateness or otherwise of individual contributions made by panel members, we are satisfied that a wide range of views and perspectives were heard throughout the programme.

## Strictly Come Dancing, BBC One, 2 October 2016

### **Complaint:**

We received complaints from some viewers unhappy that Anastacia progressed in the competition without taking part in the Dance Off.

### **Response:**

Anastacia was unable to perform in the Dance Off due to an injury, meaning Melvin Odoom became the first to leave the new series. Anastacia sustained an injury in training. She was seen by a doctor on Friday and the injury forced Anastacia and Brendan to re-choreograph their routine on Saturday. After she chose to perform the altered routine her injury was unfortunately aggravated further. A decision was made in the Results Show that Anastacia and Brendan could not perform again. This is the first time this particular scenario has happened, but Strictly has rules for many situations including this one. The pre-agreed Strictly rule for this scenario states that if a contestant has performed on the Saturday show then finds themselves in the Dance Off but is unable to perform again due to injury, there can be no Dance Off and the final decision lies firmly and solely in the hands of the viewer vote. The couple with the fewest number of viewer votes in the Dance Off was Melvin and Janette and therefore they left the competition.

## BBC Breakfast, BBC One, 9 November 2016

### **Complaint:**

We received complaints from some viewers unhappy that BBC Breakfast was not broadcast.

### **Response:**

During the time BBC Breakfast would normally have been broadcast, the huge story of the US Presidential Election was very much still developing. President-elect Donald Trump's speech was around 8:00am, and we felt that our audiences would expect us to stay with our special programming for the most comprehensive coverage of this historic event. BBC Breakfast did advise viewers of the schedule change via Twitter, and the programme was back on air as usual the following morning.

## **Schedule disruption due to extended coverage of the US Presidential Election, BBC One, 9 November 2016**

### **Complaint**

We received complaints from some viewers unhappy with the general disruption to the BBC One schedule.

### **Response**

The US Presidential Election was one of the most talked about ever and because of that we built-in time to the BBC Two daytime schedule to accommodate for reaction to the results. This was always unpredictable given the time differences involved. However, when it transpired that Donald Trump had secured what most media outlets reported as a “shock victory” to become president-elect, we took the decision to shift our coverage to BBC One. The BBC News Channel was of course covering the event, but BBC One is our flagship channel. It is part of BBC One’s role to cover momentous occasions such as this and it is always reactive to breaking news and live sporting events. Throughout the morning we tried as best we could to navigate viewers in the midst of this rolling news story. Despite some earlier conflicting announcements we were pleased to be able to bring ‘The People Remember’ to BBC One viewers at the later time of 11.00am. We believe this series was important to BBC One as each episode was scheduled to play on that channel throughout the week in the run-up to Remembrance Sunday. The afternoon schedule was again disrupted. This was because media outlets were informed that Hilary Clinton would be making a speech (UK time 14.30). We therefore stayed with BBC News after an extended BBC News at One. As you may know this speech was delayed and did not happen until 16.40. However, by that stage the channel had committed to showing this speech live. To minimise any further disruption we could not revert back to the billed BBC One schedule until ‘Pointless’. We hope this explains some of the rationale behind the changes to the BBC One schedule on 9 November.

BBC One scheduling team

## **Two Minute Silence, BBC One, 11 November 2016**

### **Complaint**

We received complaints from some viewers unhappy that a Reading was not shown in full on BBC One.

### **Response**

The Two Minute Silence was shown in full on both BBC One and BBC Two. We had planned to end the broadcast on BBC One after the Bugler had finished playing, with further coverage of the Armistice Ceremonies continuing on BBC Two. Unfortunately, the Reading began earlier than anticipated resulting in the start of that being unintentionally broadcast on BBC One. Extended coverage did continue on BBC Two and the BBC News channel in the ‘BBC Newsroom Live’ programme. We would like to apologise to any viewers who were upset by the coverage.

## **The Andrew Marr Show, BBC One, 13 November 2016**

### **Complaint**

We received complaints from some viewers unhappy that Andrew Marr interviewed Marine Le Pen.

### **Response**

The Andrew Marr Show had several prominent items to reflect Remembrance Sunday, as well as an interview with the leader of France’s Front National party, Marine Le Pen MEP. Andrew acknowledged beforehand that some viewers may have found the timing or content distasteful, but he also fully explained the context and rationale for the interview with Ms Le Pen as follows:

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*"Now, today we are remembering the fallen, particularly of two World Wars, and we are doing so in a context of a world which feels particularly unstable, even dangerous. Our greatest ally - the United States - has been going through great political change, but what of our other great wartime ally, France? Since Donald Trump's victory, anything seems possible, and in France they're asking whether Marine Le Pen - the highly controversial leader of the right wing, nationalistic French National Front - will become their next President. She's polling strongly - at least 6 million voters so far - and most predict that she will reach the final round this spring. Now, if she won that would be a huge and significant moment for Europe - Marine Le Pen is hostile to Brussels, she's against NATO, she's against free trade, and she's a vehement supporter of Russia's Vladimir Putin. Now, I know this morning some people are offended and upset that I have been to interview Marine Le Pen, and that we are showing this interview on Remembrance Sunday. I understand that, but I would say this: Le Pen could - under some circumstances - become the next French President in the spring. This week in the immediate aftermath of the Trump victory, she's declared that the whole world has changed and that her brand of politics is on the march. What does that mean? In the end, we are a news programme and I don't think the best way to honour the fallen is to fail to report on the next big challenge to western security..."*

## **Robbie Rocks Big Ben Live, BBC One, 31 December 2016**

### **Complaint**

We received complaints from some viewers unhappy with elements of the Robbie Williams concert broadcast in the build-up to and after the fireworks.

### **Response**

BBC One has a long-standing history of ringing in the New Year with our audience. In recent years we have sought to enhance this special night by showcasing special live performances by some of the most successful artists/entertainers around. Robbie Williams is no exception to this; he is one of the UK's most successful solo male artists with an incredibly successful songbook of popular hits and millions tuned in to watch his live performance. Robbie's on-stage persona is now very well known, intended as tongue-in-cheek and that is very much part of his appeal. However, we do appreciate that it may not be to everyone's taste. Although the live concert started nearly two and a half hours after the 9pm watershed, and followed a late evening of adult-skewed programming, namely 'Mrs Brown's Boys' and 'The Graham Norton Show', we were mindful of the wider audience who might join BBC One to watch the fireworks. Robbie Williams was aware of this, and we placed particular emphasis on the part of his concert running up to the fireworks. This was not a BBC event and whilst it was unfortunate that some of the staging, Robbie's stage antics, and the language upset some viewers, we hoped it was at least clear from watching it that Robbie had been clearly briefed about any use of strong language beforehand by BBC Management. We hope that for the majority of viewers watching BBC One, the tone of the overall concert remained within general audience expectations for what was billed as a unique late-night Robbie Williams live performance.

## **BBC News, Coverage of the death of George Michael, December 2016**

### **Complaint**

We received complaints from some viewers and listeners who felt there was too much coverage of George Michael's death during BBC News programmes and bulletins.

### **Response**

George Michael was by common consent a hugely popular and influential pop star who attracted a global following and appealed across the ages.

His death on Christmas Day was both sudden and unexpected, so our coverage tried to reflect the shock around the world at the news. As our audiences would expect, we also recalled the controversies that affected his private life as well as his significant body of work which formed an enduring part of the UK's soundtrack since the early 1980s.

## **Radio 2, The Christmas That Goes Wrong - 25th December 2016**

### **Complaint**

We received complaints from some listeners unhappy with the broadcast, saying it was poor quality.

### **Response**

We appreciate that some listeners were disappointed with our Christmas Day transmission of 'The Christmas That Goes Wrong'. The BBC is at the forefront of celebrating and developing new British talent and The Mischief Theatre Company, who are the creators of this comedy brand, have met with incredible success in a very short time. Currently they have three sell out shows in London's West End running concurrently and are about to transfer to Broadway with their first production in the United States. It is key that the BBC encourages new writing and performing talent and we accept that not everything will be to everyone's taste. We are sorry that some listeners did not enjoy this particular show but we hope they will understand the importance of us looking for, and pursuing, talent from all areas of entertainment to bring to our audience. We recognise many listeners were expecting a tribute to Ed Stewart, who sadly died last year, to be broadcast in this slot. His programme from last year is currently available on the BBC iPlayer for those who wish to find it. On Radio 2 we took the decision that for this year the programme was so associated with Ed that we did not want to try to replace him in this slot.