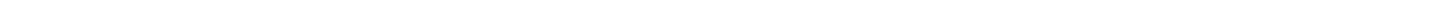


BBC Trust

Workplan 2010-11



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From the Chairman

The BBC Trust is the governing body of the BBC and it is our role to get the best out of the BBC for licence fee payers. We aim to work in an open and transparent manner and this is why we publish our workplan at the outset of each year.

We know from our work with licence fee payers across the UK that what the public want most from the BBC is great programmes and content – and this is the focus of our work. The public are, understandably, less interested in the machinery of the BBC, but they do want to know that we are doing our job.



This plan covers the work of the BBC Trust for the period from April 2010 to March 2011. Much of our work is dictated by the BBC's Charter, such as ensuring that the BBC complies with the highest editorial standards. Our work also involves responding to the rapidly changing external environment in which the BBC operates and as such we are unable to be specific about every activity that we will be undertaking this year.

However, in addition to this ongoing and unpredictable work we have set ourselves an ambitious agenda of planned activities that we believe will make the BBC even stronger. We believe that these projects will ensure that the public can continue to have trust and confidence that the BBC is being run in their best interests.

One of our most important initiatives last year was the Strategic Review of the BBC's operations that we agreed with the DG. We have recently received proposals from the Director-General and the Executive Board on the future strategy for the BBC and we are now engaged in the process of consulting with the public and other BBC stakeholders on these proposals. This project will be the central focus of our work in the coming year.

Last year the media policy landscape was dominated by the ongoing debate about the future funding of public service broadcasting. Our input into this debate was to ensure that the views of licence fee payers were heard clearly. In this coming year we will remain vigilant in ensuring that all the decisions we make about the future of the BBC are made independently and in the best interests of licence fee payers.

We will also continue our drive to ensure that the BBC offers high quality and distinctive programming and that it provides excellent value for money. We will pursue these objectives via a number of major editorial, service and value for money reviews this year.

In this plan we outline some of the work for the coming year. Our plans have been informed by feedback from the public and from other stakeholders and also by input from our advisory bodies across the UK, the Audience Councils. We are always interested to hear your thoughts and comments on this plan, so do please get in touch if you have views you wish to feed back to us, contact details are on the back page of this plan.

Sir Michael Lyons
Chairman, BBC Trust

About the BBC Trust

The public expects great programming and the highest editorial standards from the BBC. It is our job at the BBC Trust to support and challenge the Director-General and the Executive Board to make sure the BBC delivers this.

Your Trust, our responsibility

It's the Trust's responsibility to get the best out of the BBC for licence fee payers. Whether that means protecting it from political interference or the pressure to become more commercial, or ensuring that the BBC provides excellent value for money and stays true to its founding principles, it's our job to do it.

Who are we?

The Trust is the governing body of the BBC and is made up of 12 Trustees. To support us in our role, we have a team of professional staff, the Trust Unit, who work for the BBC but report directly to us. The Trust Unit's independent advice helps us to assess objectively any proposals from the Executive and to carry out our role most effectively.

The role of the Trust

The Trust is the governing body of the BBC – its role is both supervisory and regulatory. We are responsible for setting the high-level strategy for the BBC and shaping the organisation as it delivers the six public purposes as outlined in the BBC's Charter.¹

We also sit in judgement on some aspects of the BBC's operations. One important role is to hear appeals against decisions not to uphold complaints about editorial output. We must ensure that the BBC maintains the highest editorial standards and also that when it makes mistakes, lessons are learnt.

Our principles

Being funded by the licence fee puts the BBC in a highly privileged position. While we encourage the BBC to innovate and develop new services to meet changing demands from licence fee payers, we are also aware of the impact that this has on the wider media market. We listen to people inside and outside the BBC when making decisions affecting the future shape of the BBC.

A key principle for us is to ensure that we always act transparently, and consider the public's views when making decisions. We publish the evidence we have used to come to our decisions as well as the decisions themselves. To find out what the public's views are, we carry out nation-wide audience research and get advice from our Audience Councils. These Councils advise us directly on audience views and concerns.

More information about the BBC Trust, our responsibilities and activities and the regulatory framework within which we operate is available from our website: bbc.co.uk/bbctrust

¹ Details of the BBC's public purposes can be found on our website:
http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/about/how_we_govern/purpose_remits

Our work this year

Overview

During the period 2010 – 2011 the Trust will build on some of our work from previous years and will also undertake a new programme of work.

Most importantly we will continue the work we set in train in the middle of 2009 to establish a new pan-BBC strategy. The strategic review is aimed at developing a clear sense of the BBC's vision, strategy and mission to deliver its public purposes and to ensure that all BBC activities demonstrate value for money. We published the Executive's proposals to the Trust for public comment and are now engaged in public consultation and other methods of considering these. We will aim to provide a provisional view of our conclusions this summer and a final strategy in the autumn. We will then oversee the Executive in delivering and implementing the results and report publicly to you on the outcome of this.

We have set out the remainder of our work programme under the three parts of our role, as defined by the Charter.

- i. **Stewardship of the licence fee** and the BBC's other resources. This includes further value for money studies and scrutiny of BBC spending
- ii. **Upholding the interests of licence fee payers** within the BBC. This will include a review of the impartiality of the BBC's science coverage
- iii. **Effectively promoting the BBC's public purposes.** This will include continuing our programme of reviews of the BBC's services

Demonstrating effectiveness

The Trust assesses the performance of the BBC in delivering its public service remit and reports on this publicly each year in the BBC Annual Report alongside a comprehensive account of the BBC's activities and expenditure for the financial year. We also take this opportunity to report against our own stated workplan and priorities for the previous year.

This summer's BBC Annual Report will contain a full account of our achievements against our workplan for 2009-10. We will report our progress against this workplan in the BBC Annual Report for 2010-11.

In addition, we will report progress against specific projects included in this workplan throughout the year on our website and via our communications activities and public meetings. Our updates will include editorial appeal findings, results of public value tests and any other pending or completed approvals, the findings of service licence and value for money reviews and much other information. We redesigned our website in 2009 to make it easier for the public to find out about our work.

i. Stewardship of the licence fee

Our strategic role

The Trust is the guardian of the licence fee. We work on behalf of the public to ensure that the money they pay for their television licence is spent in the best possible way. Each year we set the budget for the BBC as a whole and for individual services.

Ensuring value for money is a very high priority for us. We aim to ensure that the BBC spends every penny of its licence fee funding carefully. That's why we concentrated last year on issues like remuneration for senior managers, and also completed value-for-money studies on topics such as how effectively the BBC covers major events like the Olympics and the Glastonbury festival. We will be following up on that work this year, as well as launching some new initiatives around value for money.

Projects this year

Value for money reviews

The Trust commissions value for money studies as a means of ensuring that the BBC delivers real value for licence fee payers. We publish the outcome from these studies as the BBC is accountable to the public for the way in which it spends the licence fee. The forward plan for these studies is developed with the assistance of the National Audit Office (NAO). The Trust has agreed its programme of value for money work for 2010-11 after discussions with the Comptroller and Auditor General.

This year, there will be value for money reviews of:

- the management of **continuing drama (soaps)** production
- the management of the BBC's **digital media initiative**.

The Trust will also separately commission an independent review of the process by which the BBC plans and manages the acquisition of **sports rights**.

Efficiencies

The Trust has already set an ambitious efficiency target for the BBC Executive for the current licence fee period. For the five year period from 2008-09 to 2012-13, we have asked the Executive to deliver three per cent annual net cash-releasing savings across all of its activities.

The Trust believes that the BBC can continue to make efficiencies in its operations and last year directed the Executive to reduce overall talent costs. This year we will be reviewing the progress against this and the 3% efficiency target.

Executive pay

Last year the BBC Trust agreed a new strategy for Executive pay at the BBC, which will see the amount paid to senior managers across the organisation reduce by 25 per cent over three and half years. We also suspended bonuses indefinitely for the most senior executives at the BBC. In 2010-11 we will be tracking progress against this and ensuring that the BBC continues to show leadership on this issue.

Commercial activities

Following our review of the BBC's commercial strategy last year we will be considering a three-year rolling strategy for BBC Worldwide and ensuring the other recommendations of the review are implemented in full. We will do this alongside the broader strategy review (see page 3). Some specific proposals from BBC Worldwide may also require regulatory scrutiny by the Trust

Fair Trading

In 2007 the Trust adopted and published a policy on the competitive impact of the BBC's activities on the wider market, a fair trading policy and competitive impact codes. The Trust is committed to keeping these policies and codes under review and conducting a comprehensive review of these once every three years. This year we will undertake our first comprehensive **review of the BBC's fair trading policy** and related codes.

Programme supply

In order to deliver the best content and programmes to the public, the Trust believes that it is necessary to have fair and transparent arrangements for commissioning programmes from the independent production sector as well as from within the BBC. In 2008 we reviewed the '**window of creative competition**' which is the process in place for assessing programme supply from independents in television. We have committed to do this every two years and in 2010 we will undertake the second such review.

Last year we also began a review of the supply of **radio** programmes from the independent sector. We will consult on this area this year and publish our findings and recommendations.

In addition, this year we will review the operation of the quota for the supply of **online content** to the BBC from the independent sector.

S4C partnership

The BBC produces and contributes Welsh language programming to S4C under the terms of a strategic partnership. We are currently working with S4C to renew the partnership, and we will focus on ensuring that the licence fee is being invested effectively.

ii. Upholding licence fee payers' interests

Our strategic role

The Trust ensures that the BBC works effectively in the public interest and that licence fee payers' views are placed firmly at the centre of the BBC's activities.

We also aim to ensure that the BBC makes a positive contribution to Britain's ever-changing broadcasting landscape.

The Trust is committed to consulting with audiences and the BBC's other stakeholders in order to understand where the BBC is getting it right, where it is going wrong and how it can improve.

Last year we did this through a wide-ranging consultation on the BBC's editorial guidelines. This year we will be launching a major impartiality review on the BBC's coverage of science.

Projects this year

Impartiality review

The Trust has a duty to ensure that the BBC continues to meet the high levels of impartiality expected of it by licence fee payers. One of the ways we do this is by conducting wide-ranging impartiality reviews of the BBC's output. Our last one was on network news and current affairs coverage of the UK nations and we continue to monitor and report on the BBC's progress in this area.

This year the Trust will carry out a review of the **impartiality of the BBC's science coverage and output**. We will engage with licence fee payers, industry experts and the scientific community as part of this review.

Review of the complaints framework and procedures

The Trust oversees the BBC's complaints processes and is the final arbiter on complaints within the BBC. This year we plan to carry out a **review of the BBC's complaints framework** and associated procedures to ensure that they are working in the best interests of licence fee payers. We will consult publicly as part of this work.

As part of our duty to ensure that the BBC handles complaints quickly, fairly and according to the agreed framework, the Trust will carry out a second 'mystery shopping' investigation into how complaints are treated when they reach the BBC.

Listening to audiences across the UK

As part of our commitment to hear directly from licence fee payers, the Trust is supported by Audience Councils in each of the Nations of the UK. These Councils advise us directly on audience views and concerns.²

Among the issues that the Audience Councils have raised with us recently, there are two that we will be giving particular attention to this year.

Universality of access to BBC services

Last year our Audience Councils across the UK told us that a major issue for some audiences was the lack of access to some BBC services in small areas across the UK. This year we will consider this issue in the context of our reviews of the radio stations for each of the devolved nations and English local radio.

Portrayal

We are committed to ensuring that the BBC represents the nations, regions and communities within the UK. During the last year we have been working with our Audience Councils to investigate ways in which the BBC might better portray the full diversity of the UK's nations and communities. We will continue to work to fully understand what matters to audiences. We will investigate perceptions of portrayal across BBC output and the areas in which change could make a difference. We will also work closely with BBC management who have been conducting a number of projects looking at the portrayal of particular audience groups. Our aim is to ensure that the BBC is meeting audience expectations in this area.

Equalities

We are committed to ensuring that we get the best out of the BBC for licence fee payers, in all their diversity. That's why we take very seriously our role in assessing and holding to account BBC management's performance in meeting its equality responsibilities. In April 2010 the Government's Equality Bill – which introduces a single and integrated duty to promote equality – will be enacted. Over the course of the year we will work with BBC management to develop the BBC's single equality scheme, ready for publication in April 2011. A key part of this will involve consultation with stakeholders across the six equality strands (disability, race, gender, age, religion or belief and sexual orientation).

² See page 10 for further information on Audience Councils and how they operate.

iii. Effectively promoting the public purposes

Our strategic role

The BBC's role is to promote its six public purposes through services which inform, educate and entertain audiences.

The Trust assesses and reports on the BBC's performance in promoting the public purposes each year. It also focuses on delivery of the public purposes in its service licence reviews, and when it considers proposals for new or changed services. For example, many of our service reviews (e.g. BBC One, Red Button, Radio 4 this year) focus on the importance of BBC's delivery of high quality news and current affairs.

Last year we reviewed Radio 2, the BBC's most popular radio station and 6 Music. We also began a major review of the television services, BBC One, BBC Two, BBC Four and the Red Button.

This year we will continue our programme of service reviews, focusing on three of the BBC's network radio stations and its six radio services for the nations and regions of the UK.

We may also need to consider proposals from the Executive Board to launch new services or other activities, or to make changes to the existing services. We have a range of regulatory procedures, including the Public Value Test, which assesses the value the service may create as well as any potential impact it could have on other providers of services in the market.

Projects this year

Reviewing the performance of the BBC's services

The Trust has a duty to assess the effectiveness of the Executive in delivering the BBC's services. Our programme of reviews of the UK public services continues:

- we will complete our reviews of **BBC One, BBC Two, BBC Four** and the **Red Button** in summer 2010. This work is focussing on the need for the BBC's highest profile services to be distinctive via the provision of a broad range of creatively ambitious programming to audiences across the UK.
- we will begin a review of **Radio 3, Radio 4 and Radio 7** with public consultation running through spring and summer 2010.
- we will begin a review of nations and local radio: **Radio Wales, Radio Cymru, Radio Scotland, Radio nan Gaidheal, Radio Ulster/Foyle and the BBC's English local radio stations**. As part of this, we will address the issue identified by the Trust's Audience Councils regarding audience access to BBC services. We

will also look at the impact of recent investment in these services. We will consult publicly as part of these reviews in late 2010.

We will also follow-up our review of **BBC Online** which completed in 2008 by carrying out a review of the effectiveness of the management controls that were created on the recommendation of the Trust. We will publish our findings on this area.

Global News

As part of the overarching strategy review the Trust will assess the BBC's international news offering. The Trust will also continue to assess how the World Service is performing with audiences overseas with its ongoing programme of reviews of particular parts of the World Service portfolio.

Contributing to our work

Getting involved in our work

Your views shape our work and the priorities we set the BBC's management, so we want to hear them. That's why we aim to operate in as transparent a way as possible. We do this in the following ways.

Audience Councils

The Audience Councils are advisory bodies to the BBC Trust. They provide a direct link between the Trust and audiences across the UK. There is an Audience Council for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, each chaired by their respective National Trustee and consisting of audience members drawn from the diverse communities that make up each nation.

More information on each of the Audience Councils is available from our website:

www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/about/audience_councils

Consultations

We run public consultations to help us make better-informed decisions and to ensure your views are heard. The ways in which the Trust will consult will vary – sometimes we consult via our website and sometimes we use leaflets and face to face engagement. However, we always aim to reach the audience groups, and other stakeholders, who will be most likely to have views on a particular area, or be affected by it.

Full details of all consultations, together with more details about how we consult, can be found on our website:

<https://consultations.external.bbc.co.uk>

Contacting the Trust

You can write to the Trust at: 180 Great Portland St, London, W1W 5QZ

Email us at: trust.enquiries@bbc.co.uk

Phone us on 03700 103 100 (textphone: 03700 100 212) between 9.30am and 5.30pm on weekdays.

You can receive updates on our work, including details of consultations and publications, by subscribing to our email service. Use the link on our website here:

www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/contact/newsletter.html.