Executive Board

12 April 2010

1030 – 1530

Rm 3028, Broadcasting House, London

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Attendees

Present
Mark Thompson (Chair), Director-General
Mark Byford, Deputy Director-General (by telephone, item 1)
Lucy Adams, Director, BBC People
Sharon Baylay, Director, Marketing, Communications & Audiences (MC&A)
Jana Bennett, Director, Vision
Erik Huggers, Director, Future Media and Technology (FM&T)
Zarin Patel, Group Finance Director
Peter Salmon, Director, BBC North
Caroline Thomson, Chief Operating Officer
Marcus Agius, Senior non-executive director
Val Gooding, Non-executive director
David Robbie, Non-executive director
Samir Shah, Non-executive director
Robert Webb, Non-executive director

With
Jo Clarke, Acting Head of the Executive Unit (Secretary)
Kerstin Mogull, Chief Operating Officer, FM&T (item 2)
Anna Tavares, Deputy Head of Strategy, Vision Commissioning (item 3a)
James Mickelthwait, Head of Strategy, FM&T (item 3b)
George Entwistle, Controller, Knowledge (item 4)
David Fawcett, Head of Policy, Policy and Strategy (item 4)
Saul Nasse, Controller, Learning, (item 4)

Apologies
Tim Davie, Director, Audio and Music (A&M)
Mike Lynch, Non-executive director
Jessica Cecil, Head of the Director-General’s Office
Minutes from the Executive Board meeting on 12 April 2010

1.1 The minutes from the March Board were approved. Executive Board members noted the summary of the minutes for publication.

2 Digital Media Initiative (DMI)

2.1 The Board noted that the purpose of the paper was to secure the implementation of the Digital Media Initiative in a way that maximised financial and strategic benefits and guaranteed value for money for licence fee payers. These benefits included

- Putting Quality First (including re-investing savings in quality content, developing partnerships and strengthening digital public space)
- A ‘networked’ BBC built around sustainable centres of digital production across the UK
- A pan-BBC digital archive
- An end-to-end digital workflow and a solution for managing digital assets, including the development of common industry metadata standards in partnership with the industry.

2.2 The Board discussed the proposals set out in the paper. Board members noted that all the divisions had been consulted in the preparation of the paper and agreed that a key factor in the success of the project was the readiness of the divisions to implement the proposals and fully exploit the potential of the technology.

2.3 The Executive Board agreed that it was important to set clear targets for the benefits that were expected from each division, and to track and evaluate the delivery of those benefits. Board members noted that in some genre areas greater benefits could be expected than in others. It was as yet unclear the extent of the financial benefit which could be anticipated in drama, given that footage was not re-used. However, it was also clear that as familiarity with the technology and process grew, experimentation was starting to deliver un-anticipated benefits.

2.4 The Executive Board approved the full implementation of DMI

2.5 The Executive Board noted the financial, strategic and creative benefits contingent on the implementation of DMI

2.6 The Executive Board approved the paper for onward submission to the Trust’s Finance and Compliance Committee in May.

3 Service Licences

3.1 a) BBC Executive Submissions to the Trusts Review of BBC One, BBC Two and BBC Four
3.1.1 The BBC Trust launched its review of BBC One, BBC Two and BBC Four in September 2009, as part of its rolling programme of service reviews as required in the Charter and Agreement. It was agreed with the BBC Trust to postpone the Executive submission until Spring 2010 in order to reflect the recommendations and themes of the pan-BBC strategy

3.1.2 Putting Quality First. The final Trust report is expected to be published in summer 2010. The Executive Board was invited to approve Part 1 and Part 2.1 of the Executive submission. The response to two further questions (Part 2.2) raised by the BBC Trust will be integrated into the Part 2 submission and brought to divisional boards / Executive Conference at the end of April.

3.1.3 Executive Board noted the key aims for the channels. It was confirmed that none of the proposals would require a change to the service licences.

3.1.4 Executive Board discussed the programming priorities for the channels, with particular reference to the plans for improving the relevance and ambition of some pre watershed factual programming on BBC One and making BBC Two the home of international current affairs.

3.1.5 Executive Board noted that the way in which BBC One and BBC Two were described for the audience was being re-examined to help make the differentiation clearer.

3.1.6 Executive Board approved Part 1 and Part 2.1 of the Executive Submissions to the Trusts Review of BBC One, BBC Two and BBC Four.

3.2 b) The Red Button Service Licence Review

3.2.1 Executive Board noted that Red Button had been assessed as a high performing service, delivering a high quality user experience offering: navigation between the BBC’s linear and on demand services; enhanced linear video; and interactive features.

3.2.2 Executive Board noted the recommendation to continue to classify all IPTV related spend on the Red Button service licence, despite the blurring of the boundaries of BBC Red Button and BBC Online caused by convergence. The Board agreed the importance of assessing the impact of convergence on the appropriateness of Red Button service licence arrangements on an ongoing basis.

3.2.3 Executive Board approved the paper for submission to the Trust

4 Under 19’s Learning - Update

4.1 In October 2009, Executive Board endorsed the conclusions of a Strategic Assessment Exercise (SAE) of the under-19s Formal Learning portfolio. This had been commissioned by the Trust following the closure of BBC Jam, and was due to be submitted after Executive Board approval. However, its progress was delayed while the Trust considered a complaint from the British Educational Suppliers Association (BESA).

4.2 Executive Board welcomed Saul Nassé, the new Controller of Learning, who explained that the BESA complaint had now been resolved and that consequently the Learning Strategy could proceed to the Trust.
4.3 Executive Board noted that since the SAE findings were approved in November, the development of *Putting Quality First* had impacted the proposals. In particular, the necessary new online investment could be funded by recycling existing money which would not now be spent on Blast.

4.4 Executive Board reiterated its endorsement of the findings of the Strategic Assessment Exercise and the updated proposals which the paper made in relation to them.

4.5 Executive Board noted that it was important for the BBC to re-establish itself in the field of knowledge programming with conviction and commitment.

5 Director updates

a) Audiences and all services

5.1 Sharon Baylay updated the Board on key highlights for the previous month.

b) Journalism

5.2 Helen Boaden provided an update on Journalism matters. The following paper was also considered:

*Assessment of the BBC’s News Provision for Scotland*

5.3 This paper set out the Terms of Reference for an assessment of the BBC’s news provision for Scotland. The assessment would be management-led and completed by the end of 2010. The conclusions would be presented to the Executive Board and the Trust.

5.4 The Executive Board noted the proposed assessment and approved the Terms of Reference.

c) Regulatory and Industry

5.5 Caroline Thomson provided an update on regulatory and industry matters.

d) Finance

5.6 The Board noted the update on the BBC’s financial position.

Papers for approval

6 Diversity Board Papers

6.1 a) Divisional Diversity Action Plans

6.1.1 The paper highlighted activity across divisions against their Diversity Action Plans during the last quarter.

6.1.2 Executive Board noted progress across the divisions and approved the report for submission to the Trust Finance and Compliance Committee.
6.2 b) The BBC’s Arrangements for promoting Equal Opportunities as Required Under the Charter and Agreement

6.2.1 The Executive Board is required under the Charter and Agreement to report annually to the Trust on its arrangements to promote equal opportunities.

6.2.2 Executive Board noted the report and approved it for onward submission to the Trust.

6.3 c) BBC Equality Schemes – Reviewed and Extended for 2010-11

6.3.1 This paper introduced the BBC’s equality schemes (Race Equality Scheme, Disability Equality Scheme and Gender Equality Scheme) which have been reviewed and extended for 12 months. These documents maintain the BBC’s compliance with the law as it stands now and over the coming year a Corporate Equality and Diversity Plan will be produced in response to the new Equality Duty. This element of the proposed Equality Bill is due to be enacted in Autumn 2011.

6.3.2 Executive Board noted that Equality Schemes had been considered and approved by the Diversity Board.

6.3.3 The Executive Board approved the Schemes for submission to the Trust’s Finance and Compliance Committee meeting.

7 Statements of Programme Policy for 2010/11

7.1 Statements of Programme Policy (SoPPs) are the BBC’s annual promises to viewers, listeners and users about how individual BBC services will contribute to its public service remit. They are primarily editorially-based but also include hours conditions. SoPPs are a regulatory requirement imposed on the BBC (via the Agreement) and on ITV, C4 and Five.

7.2 The SoPPs have been developed by Heads of Strategy and Controllers in each of the Content Groups and approved by Divisional Directors. In addition, the SoPPs are due to be presented to the relevant national Audience Councils for information and they will be considered by the Trust Audience and Performance Committee (APC) meeting on 5 May.

7.3 The Executive Board considered the proposed SoPPs for 2010/11 and approved them for submission to the BBC Trust.

8 Freeview HD Quarterly Update

8.1 This paper is a regular update to the Trust on the Freeview HD programme.

8.2 The Board noted the update and approved the paper for submission to the Trust.
9 The Radio Investigation Service

9.1 Executive Board noted that the BBC has an obligation under the BBC Agreement to make "reasonable arrangements for the investigation, at the BBC's expense, of complaints of interference by electro-magnetic energy affecting domestic television and radio reception within the UK". Since 1998, it has met this requirement by contracting the Radiocommunications Agency (now Ofcom) to provide the Radio Investigation Service (RIS). This service comprises a call centre, technical triage experts and a field investigation team costing £2.1M a year. About 25% of cases resolved by Ofcom are as a result of a field engineer attending the consumer's home to verify their installation and to identify the location of any interference.

9.2 The BBC has terminated the existing contract with Ofcom, effective 30 June 2010. It will provide a replacement service to the RIS by developing the existing Capita contract and by a technical triage service. A significant difference in the future running of the service will be to cease field visits to consumer homes, thereby reducing the operating costs of the service.

9.3 Executive Board noted and approved the new arrangements for investigation of complaints of electro-magnetic interference.

10 Appointment of BBC Worldwide Director

10.1 This paper was withdrawn.

11 Any Other Business

11.1 No other business was raised.

Papers for noting

12 Summary of papers and actions from Finance Committee

12.1 The Board noted the summary of discussions and actions at the Finance Committee meetings held on 12 & 26 February and 11 March 2010.