Executive Board

5 October 2009
1030 – 1530

Rm 3028, Broadcasting House, London

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Papers for noting

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1
Attendees

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

With
Jessica Cecil, Head of the Director-General’s Office
Lynsey Tweddle, Head of the Executive Unit (secretary)
Jo Clarke, Assistant Head of the Executive Unit
John Smith, Chief Executive, BBC Worldwide (items 2 – 4)
John Tate, Director, Policy and Strategy (item 2)
Gautam Rangarajan, Head of Strategy (item 2)
Robert Johnston, Reward Director (item 3)
George Entwistle, Controller, Knowledge (item 5)
David Fawcett, Head of Policy (Services) (item 5)
Ken MacQuarrie, Director, Scotland (item 6)
Alix Pryde, Controller, BBC Distribution (item 6)
James Heath, Controller, Journalism Strategy (item 6)
1 Minutes from the Executive Board meeting on 7 September 2009

1.1 The minutes from the September Board were approved and the summary for publication noted.

2 General update, including Digital Britain and Strategy Review

2.1 Mark Thompson advised the Board that a Disasters Emergency Committee Appeal on behalf of Indonesia, Vietnam and the Philippines was due to broadcast the following day.

2.2 Caroline Thomson updated the Board on developments in the political and media environment since the RTS conference. John Tate briefed Board members on the drafting of a Digital Bill and the party conference season so far. He also provided a media market update.

Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

2.3 A draft MOU had been presented to the Board in July 2009 and subsequent changes to the MOU were highlighted in a revised paper tabled at the meeting.

2.4 The Board approved the MoU.

3 Remuneration Review

3.1 Lucy Adams updated the Board on the remuneration review.

4 Commercial update

4.1 John Smith updated the Board on commercial matters.

5 Under 19s Learning: Strategic Assessment Exercise

5.1 This paper provided an account of the Strategic Assessment Exercise which had been undertaken to establish strategic principles, priorities and opportunities for the future direction of the Learning portfolio.

5.2 The Board noted the receipt by the BBC Trust of a Fair Trading complaint regarding Bitesize and its possible impact on approval of the strategy. It was agreed that there was potential for partnerships in the proposals, especially with regard to outreach but the Board also agreed that the strategy should be clearer about areas the BBC should not enter.

5.3 The Board endorsed the conclusions of the strategic assessment, subject to the Trust’s adjudication on the Fair Trading Complaint

6 BBC Alba Service Review

6.1 This paper reminded the Board that in January 2008, following a Public Value Test, the BBC Trust approved the launch of BBC ALBA on the digital satellite and cable TV
platforms with a supporting website. As part of this approval the Trust requested that a review of the service, including its performance to date and a decision about its future distribution on Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT), take place before 2010.

6.2 The Board approved the proposal to make the BBC ALBA television service available to the Scottish audience via DTT. The paper was approved for onward progression to the Trust.

7 Building the BBC brand

7.1 Sharon Baylay introduced this presentation which focused on ‘Building the BBC brand’.

7.2 The Board endorsed the direction of the strategy

8 Director updates

a) Audiences and all services

8.1 Sharon Baylay and Jana Bennett updated the Board on audience figures and services for the last month, which included key highlights for Vision, Audio & Music and online.

b) Journalism

8.2 Mark Byford provided an update on Journalism matters.

c) Regulatory and industry

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

d) Finance

8.4 The Board noted the finance report which provided an update on the current financial position of the BBC.

Papers for approval

9 The Safety Responsibilities of the Executive Board and BBC Direction Group

9.1 This paper responded to the findings of an Internal Audit report on health and safety governance structures carried out in July 2009.

9.2 The Board noted the findings of the audit and that health and safety would now form part of the Chief Operating Officer’s responsibilities.

9.3 The Board approved the Executive Board and BBC Direction Group health and safety responsibilities as set out in the paper and the revised BBC Safety Committee terms of reference as set out in Appendix 1.
10 **Network Supply Review**

The following two papers explained that management had undertaken a full evaluation of the BBC’s strategy for radio supply, considering independent supply alongside Out of London production.

a) **Radio Network Supply Review – Independent Supply**

10.1 This report presented the findings and recommendations for the Review of Independent Supply. A separate report would be prepared by the Trust, in fulfilling its regulatory requirements.

10.2 The Board approved the recommendations in the paper for onward progression to the Trust.

11 **BBC Partnership with S4C: update and funding**

11.1 This paper explained that the BBC Trust was shortly expected to begin a renegotiation of its Strategic Partnership with S4C, the Welsh language television channel. The current three-year agreement was due to expire on 31 December 2009, and the paper presented management recommendations on how the process should be managed, particularly since it was now unlikely a new deal could be agreed before the current partnership lapsed given the short time period.

11.2 The Board approved the recommendations in the paper for onward progression to the Trust.

12 **Impact on Network and Nations & Regions News of BBC’s Continuous Improvement Programme**

12.1 This paper explained that the Trust had requested a report on the impact of the Continuous Improvement Programme (CIP) in News and Nations’ News. The Trust was interested in the operational impact of CIP and whether there has been any discernable impact on the quality and distinctiveness of the BBC’s news output given the strategic importance of the genre.

12.2 The Board approved the paper for onward submission to the Trust.

13 **Digital Terrestrial Television – Making Temporary Spare Capacity available to the Market**

13.1 This paper reminded the Board that it had agreed to cease broadcasting two Freeview interactive streams in the autumn. Whilst Multiplex B would be utilised by HD services in post-switchover regions, there would be two vacant video streams in the other regions until they too underwent switchover. The paper asked the Board to approve offering access to this temporary spare capacity (which expired at the end of switchover) to the market using a competitive process. This would deliver spectrum efficiency, aid new service launches on Freeview and provide value for money by generating revenue to offset distribution costs.
13.2 The Board noted the context and approved the release, through a competitive process, of the temporary spare capacity to the market.

14 Freeview High Definition (HD) quarterly update

14.1 This paper provided the first quarterly update on the Freeview HD Programme. It explained that the BBC was leading this development, working in partnership with other public service broadcasters, Freeview, infrastructure suppliers, manufacturers and retailers.

14.2 The Board noted the update and approved the paper for onward submission to the Trust.

15 Podcast Extended Availability Trial

15.1 This paper requested approval of a three month Category 2 Trial to make selected podcasts available for more than 7 days. The paper explained that this would provide data for a Competitive Impact Assessment by Fair Trading, which would in turn inform a decision by them and Public Policy on making BBC podcasts available in perpetuity. The trial would run from early October to December 2009.

15.2 The Board approved a three month trial of extended podcast availability.

16 Risk Status and Outlook Report – October 2009

16.1 This paper informed the Board of the current status of key risks as identified and reported by Divisions/Groups and the forecast changes in the risk exposure over the next six months. The paper explained that the primary source of information in the report was from returns completed in June. However, the report had been updated to reflect more recent events and independent assessment by the Risk Management team.

16.2 The Board noted the report.

17 Extension to Series Stacking Trial

17.1 This paper made the case on technical and editorial grounds to extend the Audio & Music ‘Series Stacking’ Trial so that it could include a key element of Radio 4’s ‘Complete Smiley’ season and test a new facet of Series Stacking. It explained why the timing of the trial made ‘Smiley’ a key element.

17.2 The Board approved the trial proposals and agreed that copies of the trilogy should be circulated to Executive Board.

18 Any other business

18.1 No other business was raised.
Papers for noting

19 Summary of papers and actions from Finance Committee

19.1 The Board noted the summary of discussions and actions at the Finance Committee meetings held on 23, 28 and 30 July, 5 and 27 August and 3 September 2009.