

PURPOSE REMITS – March 2013

Introduction and measurement statement

Under the BBC's Charter, the Trust must set a purpose remit for each of the BBC's six public purposes:

1. Sustaining citizenship and civil society
2. Promoting education and learning
3. Stimulating creativity and cultural excellence
4. Representing the UK, its nations, regions and communities
5. Bringing the UK to the world and the world to the UK
6. In promoting its other purposes, helping to deliver to the public the benefit of emerging communications technologies and services and, in addition, taking a leading role in the switchover to digital television.

Each remit has a list of priorities setting out what the BBC needs to do to promote that purpose.

The Trust assesses the BBC's performance against this list of priorities every year. Our assessment applies to each of the purpose remits and is conducted through quantitative surveys designed to assess licence fee payers' perceptions of how well the BBC is delivering each priority. We will also use other evidence, including input from our Audience Councils and any relevant research findings from the BBC Executive.

There are some limits to what we can learn from audience research. Some of our priorities cannot be easily measured (for example, we cannot quantify the precise contribution that the BBC makes to public participation in global debate, or in a range of cultural and sporting activities), although we will still try to use survey methods to test these. In other cases we will supplement quantitative annual surveys with more in-depth audience research (as we have, for example, to investigate perceptions of the distinctiveness of BBC television).

We will report the results of our performance assessment in our Annual Report, and these findings will also help us to measure the BBC's progress against the strategic objectives we have set for them for the rest of this Charter period, to:

- Increase the distinctiveness and quality of its output
- Improve the value for money it provides to licence fee payers
- Set new standards of openness and transparency
- Do more to serve all audiences

SUSTAINING CITIZENSHIP AND CIVIL SOCIETY

The Charter and Agreement note the importance of sustaining citizenship through the enrichment of the public realm and obliges the Trust to ensure that the BBC ‘gives information about, and increases understanding of, the world through accurate and impartial news, other information, and analysis of current events and ideas.’ In doing so, the Trust is obliged to ‘have regard to the need to promote understanding of the UK political system (including Parliament and the devolved structures) including through dedicated coverage of Parliamentary matters, and the need for the Purpose Remit to ensure that the BBC transmits an impartial account day by day of the proceedings in both Houses of Parliament.’ The Trust is also obliged to have regard to ‘the need to promote media literacy’, and the importance of sustaining citizenship through the enrichment of the public realm.

What the BBC will do to achieve this purpose

1. Provide independent journalism of the highest quality.

BBC journalism should be independent, accurate and impartial – providing news and current affairs of relevance, range and depth which audiences trust. BBC Journalism should offer a range and depth of analysis not widely available from other UK providers.

2. Engage a wide audience in news, current affairs and other topical issues.

The BBC should provide news and current affairs that interests and informs people of all backgrounds, ages and levels of knowledge, enabling them to engage with the major issues of today.

3. Encourage and enable conversation and debate about news, current affairs and topical issues.

BBC news and current affairs output should help inform conversation and debate among friends, family and wider groups.

4. Build greater understanding of the parliamentary process and political institutions governing the UK.

The BBC should help all its audiences understand how the UK is governed at a European, national, regional and local level.

5. Enable audiences to access, understand and interact with different types of media.

The BBC should help people become ‘media-literate’ – giving them the confidence to make full use of all media including information technologies. The BBC will help its audiences engage critically with media – to find what they are looking for from trustworthy sources, to understand what it is about, to form an opinion about it and, where necessary, to respond to and interact with it.²

¹ The BBC’s contribution to the promotion and sustainment of citizenship is not exclusive to this Purpose, and will be achieved through its other Purposes, particularly Promoting Education and Learning and Representing the UK, its Nations, Regions and Communities.

² The BBC’s contribution to media literacy is not exclusive to this priority, and is covered within some of its other Purposes, particularly Promoting Education and Learning and Emerging Communications.

PROMOTING EDUCATION AND LEARNING

Education and learning lie at the heart of the BBC's mission and have a part to play in the delivery of all its Public Purposes. The Trust should ensure that the BBC stimulates interest in and knowledge of, a full range of subjects and issues through content that is accessible and can encourage either formal or informal learning. The Trust is also required to ensure that the BBC provides specialist educational content and accompanying material to facilitate learning at all levels and for all ages.

What the BBC will do to achieve this Purpose

1. Stimulate informal learning across a full range of subjects and issues for all audiences.

The BBC should enable people to learn about many different topics in ways they will find accessible, entertaining and challenging.

2. Engage audiences in activities targeted to achieve specific outcomes that benefit society.

The BBC should engage audiences in output that brings benefits to the UK as a whole. Such output might, for example, promote healthier living, or encourage an active interest in the UK's history, heritage and environment.

3. Promote and support formal educational goals for children and teenagers and support adult education, especially related to essential skills development.

The BBC should maintain its key role of providing formal educational output for everyone in the UK, including skills for learning, work and life. The BBC should provide a safe environment for learning, especially for children.

STIMULATING CREATIVITY AND CULTURAL EXCELLENCE

The Trust should ensure that the BBC 'enriches the cultural life of the UK through creative excellence in distinctive and original content' and to 'foster creativity and nurture talent'. The BBC should also 'promote interest, engagement and participation in cultural activity among new audiences'. In doing so it should 'have regard to the need for the BBC to have a film strategy, and for appropriate coverage of sport, including sport of minority interest'.

What the BBC will do to achieve this Purpose

1. Provide output that is distinctive and creative on all its platforms.

BBC output should be distinctive. The BBC should regularly include output that breaks new ground, develops fresh approaches, sets trends, and takes creative risks, from drama and comedy to entertainment and sport. It should do this across all the platforms on which it operates.

2. Ensure enrichment for all audiences by covering a wide range of creative and cultural activities.

The BBC should offer its audiences the best examples of many kinds of creative activity including music and sport, always striving to expand horizons and encourage audiences into unfamiliar territory, including minority sports.

3. Encourage active participation in cultural activities.

The BBC's programming should stimulate people to take part in a wide range of cultural and sporting events and activities. Partnerships with other organisations will often help in achieving this.

4. Provide a wide range of enjoyable and entertaining content.

Entertainment should remain a key priority for the BBC. BBC output should entertain, in the sense of engaging, absorbing, challenging or delighting audiences in ways that demonstrate creative excellence.

5. Foster creativity and nurture and support UK talent across a wide range of genres.

The BBC should nurture UK talent by introducing new production, writing and on-air talent to audiences. The BBC should also aim to bring the best talent to its audiences from across the UK's creative community.

REPRESENTING THE UK, ITS NATIONS, REGIONS AND COMMUNITIES

The Trust should ensure that the BBC: 'reflects and strengthens cultural identities through original content at local, regional and national level, on occasion bringing audiences together for shared experiences'. In addition, the BBC should 'promote awareness of different cultures and alternative viewpoints, through content that reflects the lives of different people and different communities within the UK'. The Trust is also required to 'have regard for the importance of reflecting different religious and other beliefs; and for the importance of appropriate provision in minority languages'.

What the BBC will do to achieve this Purpose

- 1. Represent the different nations, regions and communities to the rest of the UK.**
Across the range of its network output, the BBC should portray and celebrate the range of cultures and communities across the UK at national, regional and local level.
 - 2. Cater for the different nations, regions and communities of the UK.**
The BBC should provide a range of output, including original content, designed to meet the needs of the nations, regions and communities of the UK.
 - 3. Bring people together for shared experiences.**
The BBC should broadcast individual programmes that bring together a very wide range of people – for example, great state occasions, important national sports events and high-quality entertainment.
 - 4. Encourage interest in, and conversation about local communities**
The BBC should provide engaging output that gives an accurate picture of the many communities that make up the UK and informs understanding and stimulates discussion about their concerns. The BBC should provide forums in which these communities can debate among themselves.
 - 5. Reflect the different religious and other beliefs in the UK.**
The BBC should give people opportunities to understand the beliefs of others, and to examine their own beliefs critically.
 - 6. Provide output in minority languages.**
In its output, the BBC should support the UK's indigenous languages where appropriate. It may also provide output in other languages used by licence fee payers in appropriate contexts.
-

BRINGING THE UK TO THE WORLD AND THE WORLD TO THE UK

The Trust must, amongst other things, seek to ensure that the BBC fulfils a dual obligation: make people in the UK aware of international issues and of the different cultures and viewpoints of people living outside the UK through news and current affairs and other outputs such as drama, comedy, documentaries, educational output and sports coverage, and to bring high quality international news coverage to international audiences.

What the BBC will do to achieve this Purpose

1. Build a global understanding of international issues:

(a) Provide international news broadcasting of the highest quality.

The BBC's journalism for international audiences should share the same values as its journalism for UK audiences: accuracy, impartiality and independence. International audiences should value BBC news and current affairs for providing reliable and unbiased information of relevance, range and depth.

(b) Enable audiences and individuals to participate in the global debate on significant international issues

The BBC should inform conversation and debate with impartial and accurate coverage and through discussion.

2. Enhance UK audiences' awareness and understanding of international issues.

The BBC should provide high quality coverage of global issues in its news and current affairs and other output for the UK. Coverage should serve all audiences and ensure a breadth of perspective. The BBC should offer a high-quality service of international media monitoring.

3. Broaden UK audiences' experience of and exposure to different cultures from around the world.

The BBC should provide output that increases all UK audiences' knowledge of other societies from around the world and their concerns. The BBC should also bring to its UK audiences high-quality international music, film, arts and other creative work.

EMERGING COMMUNICATIONS

The Charter and Agreement require the Trust to ensure that the BBC helps to deliver to the public the benefit of emerging communications technologies and services. In addition, the Agreement has required the BBC to take a leading role in the switchover from analogue to digital television (now nearly complete) by supporting Digital UK, by improving the technical infrastructure and by providing information and support to audiences. These goals will in part be achieved through the BBC's activities in promoting its other five Public Purposes, in particular by the production and promotion of high-quality digital content and services that encourage audiences to obtain the maximum benefit from the opportunities available. The BBC is committed to achieving these aims in the most cost-effective way possible.

What the BBC will do to achieve this Purpose

1. Make engaging digital content and services available on a wide range of digital platforms and devices.

The BBC will offer interesting and enjoyable content and services that can be received through many different platforms such as digital television, digital radio, mobile devices and the internet.

2. Work with the industry to continue to deliver improvements to the UK-wide distribution of public service content.

The BBC should continue to deliver and invest in emerging broadcasting and distribution technologies, including red button, HD, IPTV, mobile and 3D, where there is public value to do so.

3. Increase coverage of Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB).

The BBC should enhance its national DAB coverage and work with Government and industry to prepare for any potential radio switchover by putting together plans to build out infrastructure for local DAB in line with the joint Memorandum of Understanding.

4. Support Digital UK's communications activity to build awareness of, and readiness for, digital switchover.

The BBC should work with Digital UK to ensure that all UK television viewers know about switchover and have the opportunity to prepare for it.

5. Work in partnership with other organisations to help all audiences understand and adopt emerging communications technologies and services.

The BBC should work with other UK bodies to end the 'digital divide' between those who enjoy the benefits of digital technologies and those outside that group.

6. Support the Government's targeted help scheme to help the most vulnerable during digital switchover.

During digital switchover some vulnerable groups will need help to buy and install new equipment. The BBC should help deliver the Government support scheme for these groups.
