MINUTES OF THE BBC TRUST MEETING

Held on Wednesday 11 May 2016
at the BBC Trust, 180 Great Portland Street, London

Present:

Rona Fairhead               Chairman
Sir Roger Carr              Vice-Chairman
Sonita Alleyne              Trust member
Richard Ayre                Trust member
Mark Damazer                Trust member
Mark Florman                Trust member for England
Bill Matthews               Trust member for Scotland
Aideen McGinley             Trust member for Northern Ireland
Elan Closs Stephens         Trust member for Wales
Suzanna Taverne             Trust member
Lord Williams               Trust member

Apologies:

Nick Prettejohn             Trust member

From the Trust Unit:

Alex Towers                 Director, BBC Trust
Kate Atkins                 Chief Adviser, Governance
Peter De Val                Head of Legal
Kath MacLeod                Head of Communications
Tristan Pedelty             Head of Policy and Charter
**CHARTER REVIEW**

42.1 The Director, BBC Trust gave his understanding of the likely contents of the Government’s White Paper on the new BBC Charter, which was due to be published the following day.

42.2 Trust members noted that this outcome was the product of constructive engagement between the Government, the BBC and the public. They agreed that, based on this assessment, the Government’s proposals would strengthen the BBC’s governance and regulation and cement a financial settlement to sustain a strong BBC. They supported the introduction of an 11-year Charter, which would separate the Charter review process from future electoral cycles.

42.3 However, members expressed concern that, in some areas, the Government proposals to protect the BBC’s independence did not go far enough. In particular, they said it was important that the processes around future funding settlements and appointments to the BBC Board were transparent and clearly set out in the new BBC Charter and Agreement.

42.4 Trust members noted that the public had been clear during the Charter review process that they wanted a BBC that delivered something for everyone. They reiterated their view that the new Charter should assure, when drafted that the BBC continued to provide a universal service with a broad range of content that was widely available for free.

42.5 Members noted that, following the publication of the White Paper, there would be a lot of detail for the Government, the BBC and Ofcom to work through to get the new Charter and Agreement drafted before 31 December. They welcomed the Government’s commitment to debates in Parliament.

42.6 The Director and Head of Communications said they would keep members updated throughout the day on the likely contents of the White Paper and the Trust’s proposed response.