



Meeting of the BBC Editorial Guidelines and Standards Committee

MINUTES

16 May 2023

Boardroom 3028, Broadcasting House, London

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. Minutes of the 9 March Meeting and Matters Arising
2. DCMS Mid-term Review
3. Thematic Review Updates
4. Internal Content Reviews
5. Emerging Editorial Risks and Issues
6. Review of the Editorial Guidelines: Update
7. EGSC Report for the Annual Report and Accounts
8. Complaints Reporting
9. AOB

ATTENDANCE

Members:

- Nicholas Serota Non-executive director (Chair)
- Tim Davie Director-General
- Robbie Gibb Non-executive director
- Deborah Turness CEO, BBC News and Current Affairs

With

- Richard Sharp Chairman, BBC Board
- David Jordan Director, Editorial Policy and Standards
- Caroline Daniel Editorial Adviser
- Michael Prescott Editorial Adviser
- Peter Johnston Director, Complaints and Editorial Reviews
- Phil Harrold Company Secretary
- Jo Clarke Secretary to the Committee
- Rizwana Rahmani Executive Lead, Editorial Policy and Standards
- Clare Sumner Director, Policy (item 3)
- Helen White Project Manager, Serota Implementation (item 4 and 5)
- Simon Coates Secretary, Thematic Review (item 4 and 5)

APOLOGIES

None

EDITORIAL GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE MINUTES

1. Minutes from the 9 March Meeting and Matters Arising

- 1.1 The minutes of the meeting on 31 January were approved.
- 1.2 The Committee noted updates on actions from the last meeting.
- 1.3 The Committee noted an update on progress with the review of social media. John Hardie, a former CEO of ITN had been engaged to undertake the review and would be speaking to stakeholders across the organisation. Committee members were welcome to provide input.

2. DCMS Mid-term Review

- 2.1 The Committee noted an update on progress with the DCMS Mid-term Review of the BBC's governance and regulatory arrangements.
- 2.2 The Committee discussed the process of the review as it related to impartiality, editorial standards and the role of the Editorial Guidelines and Standards Committee within the BBC's governance structure.

3. Thematic Review Updates

EGSC Reviews Workplan

- 3.1 The Committee considered a paper setting out a workplan and timetable for the editorial reviews. Committee members were asked to provide any feedback to Peter Johnston.

Thematic Reviews Updates

- 3.2 The Committee noted that the co-leads for the Review of BBC Coverage of Migration, Madeleine Sumption and Samir Shah, had now been engaged.
- 3.3 The co-leads from the Review of BBC Coverage of Taxation and Public Spending, Michael Blastland and Andrew Dilnott, had been retained for staff engagement on implementation of the Review's findings and had subsequently reviewed coverage of

the Budget. The Committee agreed that they should be asked to contribute to the full review of the implementation of the first thematic review, planned for the Autumn.

- 3.4 The Committee discussed providing ongoing guidance to staff regarding the findings of the review and agreed that a set of bullet points around key issues arising from the review should be produced.

4. Internal Content Reviews

- 4.1 The Committee noted an update which provided an overarching summary of the outcomes of a number of recent content reviews. The full findings had been considered by the Executive Committee.

5. Emerging Editorial Risks and Issues

- 5.3 The Committee discussed some of the key areas of risk in BBC coverage over the coming period and how they were being addressed. These included coverage of the elections in Northern Ireland; the political situation in Scotland and gender identity issues. The Committee discussed the approach to the upcoming US Elections and the possible candidacy of Donald Trump.
- 5.4 The Committee noted that issues of impartiality had been well-managed in coverage of the Coronation of King Charles III and Eurovision. The Committee requested that its thanks be passed on to the teams responsible.

6. Review of the Editorial Guidelines

- 6.1 The Committee noted an update on the review of the Editorial Guidelines. Initial revisions had been drafted and a paper would come to the July meeting.

7 EGSC Report for the Annual Report and Accounts

- 7.1 The Committee considered the draft Committee Report for the Editorial Guidelines and Standards Committee for inclusion in the BBC's Annual Report 2022-23.
- 7.2 The Committee discussed a number of drafting suggestions. The final draft of the report would return to the Chair for final sign-off.

8. Complaints Reporting

Complaints Reports

- 8.1 The Committee noted a paper which detailed complaints at Stage 1 of the complaints process for February and March 2023 and Executive Complaints Unit and Ofcom's findings published in the same time period.

Monthly Complaints Report to Ofcom

- 8.2 The Committee noted the monthly complaints reports provided to Ofcom

9. AOB

- 9.1 The Committee noted that colleagues from Ofcom would join the next meeting of the Committee on 6 July.