



Meeting of the BBC Board – Scotland Committee

Minutes

24th July 2025

The Tun - Edinburgh

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

- 1 Introduction and minutes of previous Scotland Committee
- 2 Director, Scotland Report
- 3 Market Report
- 4 Director, Nations Report
- 5 Politics Scotland
- 6 Finance
- 7 Audiences
- 8 AOB

ATTENDANCE

Members:

- Muriel Gray, Non-Executive Director (Chair)
- Rhuanedd Richards, Director, Nations
- Samir Shar, Chair, BBC Board
- Luke McCullough, Corporate Affairs Director, Nations
- Hayley Valentine, Director, Scotland

With:

- Ric Bailey, Chief Advisor Politics (*item 5*)
- Lynsey Bews, Correspondent (*item 5*)
- Glenn Campbell, Politics Editor (*item 5*)
- Gail Capaldi, Senior Finance Business Partner (*item 6*)
- Lesley Farquharson, Audience Research Manager (*item 7*)
- Mark Grinnell, Executive Lead (*secretary*)
- Howard Simpson, Head of News (*item 5*)
- David Wallace Lockhart, Correspondent (*item 5*)

Apologies:

- Lorna Clark, Commissioning Director, Music

1. Introduction and minutes of previous Scotland Committee

- 1.1 The minutes of the previous Committee meeting (12th March 2025) were approved and no new conflicts were presented.
- 1.2 The Chair welcomed the Interim Director Nations to her first meeting of the BBC Scotland Committee.
- 1.3 The Chair updated on recent stakeholder meetings and welfare meetings with staff groups.
- 1.4 The Chair congratulated the Director Scotland on recent coverage of the TRNSMT Festival.
- 1.5 The next Committee would be held in Stornoway and would be attended in person by all members of the Committee.

2. Director, Scotland Report

- 2.1 The Committee heard a summary of the recent restructuring of the BBC Scotland executive team including new appointments in News and Audio leadership.
- 2.2 Three big new drama commissions have been announced and will go into production soon, following the announcement of the closure of the *River City* series.
- 2.3 The Committee noted significant recent content commissions, including a documentary about Baroness Michelle Mone, OBE
- 2.4 BBC News plans for coverage of the US President to Scotland were noted by the Committee.
- 2.5 The Committee noted changes to audience consumption since the change of from *The Nine* to the new programme and time slot.
- 2.6 Digital experimentation in vertical video with digital impact team in BBC Pacific Quay had been successful.
- 2.7 The Committee heard about recent Sport acquisitions including audience viewing for Cup Final coverage.
- 2.8 The Committee noted work ongoing to refresh the breakfast output on BBC Radio Scotland.
- 2.9 The Orchestra lead has joined the BBC Scotland Exec leadership team. It is the 90th anniversary year with the Traitors' Prom planned for the weekend.
- 2.10 A piece of work has been commissioned on court reporting skills in News.
- 2.11 The Committee noted the success of a 'Rise' event for children at BBC Pacific Quay.

3. Market Report

- 3.1 The committee noted the headlines from the regulator's Public Service Media Review including Ofcom's summary of prominence on public platforms.
- 3.2 The committee noted the latest figures on Scots and other spoken languages in Scotland.
- 3.3 BBC Sounds internationally has now been switched off and Nations services can now be accessed via BBC.com
- 3.4 The Committee noted plans recently announced by STV to launch a radio station in Scotland.
- 3.5 The Chair heard a summary of Political engagement meetings held recently.

4. Director, Nations update

- 4.1 The Director outlined her plans for the role, including a strong strategic relationship between Nations, News and Content divisions; stakeholder and audience engagement; and progressing editorial and product strategies.
- 4.2 The Committee heard plans for strengthening the working culture in Nations.
- 4.3 The Director would hold a programme of engagement with staff in Scotland.
- 4.4 The Committee heard an update on leadership in Nations, including the appointment of the substantive Director of BBC Local in England to the role of Interim Chief Operating Officer in Nations. There is now an acting Director of BBC Wales in post.
- 4.5 The prominence of local content is a priority.

5. Politics

- 5.1 The Committee heard a summary of the political picture in Scotland and of current opinion polling.
- 5.2 Plans for election coverage would include fact-checking via BBC Verify.
- 5.3 A meeting would be held, with journalists from Network and Scotland, to review plans for coverage.
- 5.4 The Committee heard a summary of key issues in Scotland in the run up to the election.
- 5.5 The forthcoming election coverage would interrogate promises made by political parties in and be 'solution focused'.

5.6 Draft election guidelines would be distributed to staff.

6. Finance

6.1 The Committee heard the latest accounts and finance forecast.

7. Audiences

7.1 The Committee heard the latest audience consumption figures for BBC Scotland content.

8. AOB

8.1 There were no other matters arising.

8.2 The next Scotland Committee meeting would be held in Stornoway on the 29th October.

ENDS.