



Meeting of the BBC Board – Scotland Committee
Minutes
28th October 2025
BBC and MG ALBA, 54 Seaforth Rd, Stornoway HS1 2SD

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

- 1 Introduction and minutes of previous Scotland Committee
- 2 Director, Scotland Report
- 3 Regional Update
- 4 MG ALBA partnership
- 5 Market Report
- 6 Director, Nations Report
- 7 Audiences
- 8 Finance
- 9 AOB and Close

ATTENDANCE

Members:

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

With:

- Samantha Sing, Divisional Finance Director, Nations
- Lorna Clarke, Commissioning Director, Music
- Jennifer MacKenzie, Business Co-Ordinator (secretary)
- Margaret Mary Murray, Head of Gaelic Services & Inclusion (items 3 and 4)
- Calum McConnell, Commissioning Editor, Gaelic Services (item 3)
- Iona MacRitchie, Senior News Editor, Gaelic Services (item 3)
- John Morrison, Chair, MG ALBA (item 4)
- Marion Sinclair, Board Member, MG ALBA (item 4)
- Donald Campbell, CEO, MG ALBA (item 4)
- Tove Okunniwa, Director, Group Partnerships (item 4)
- Lesley Farquharson, Audience Research Manager (item 7)
- Gail Capaldi, Senior Finance Business Partner (item 8)

Introduction and minutes of previous Scotland Committee

- 1.1 The minutes of the previous Committee meeting (24th July 2025) were approved and no new conflicts were presented.
- 1.2 The Chair thanked the BBC Gaelic team for their welcome and expressed thanks for the opportunity to meet with MG ALBA and to meet stakeholders and guests at a reception which would follow the Committee.
- 1.3 The chair welcomed Lorna Clarke (Commissioning Director, Music) to the meeting as a regular guest from the BBC Content division.

2. Director, Scotland Report

- 2.1 The Committee heard an update of the ongoing strong working relationship between the BBC and MG ALBA.
- 2.2 The Committee heard of the new appointment to BBC Scotland of the Head of Audio and Events.
- 2.3 The Committee heard of the launch of the Radio Scotland Saturday Show, highlighting strong collaboration between News, Sport and Audio teams. A new News breakfast programme will launch in November.
- 2.4 The Committee heard that men's international football had attracted large audience numbers.
- 2.5 The Committee noted the 50th anniversary of the programme, *Sportscene* on BBC Scotland.
- 2.6 The Committee were updated on the rights position for the 2026 Commonwealth Games.
- 2.7 The Committee heard an update on the success of a new BBC Scotland drama, *The Ridge*.
- 2.8 The Committee heard of the Festive scheduling plans.
- 2.9 The Committee were told of recent podcast successes.
- 2.10 The Committee heard of a commissioning focus on developing **entertainment formats**.
- 2.11 The Committee were updated on the BBC Make a Difference Awards.
- 2.12 The Committee heard of external engagements the Director, Scotland had undertaken.
- 2.13 The Chair noted that research has been commissioned regarding the performance and economic impact of *The Traitors*.

2.14 The Director noted Scotcast's growing audience performance, and training for Scotland journalists to work on the BBC Verify brand.

2.15 The Committee heard that the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra performed at the Edinburgh International Festival and at the BBC Proms.

2.16 The Director noted a meeting with the new Secretary of State for Scotland.

3. Regional Update

3.1 The Committee heard from the BBC Gaelic leadership team about their strategic ambitions and challenges.

3.2 The Committee heard from the Gaelic News Editor. It was noted that a Digital Reporter has been recruited and is based in the Western Isles.

3.3 The Chairman asked about the younger generation learning Gaelic. The importance of Gaelic Medium Education was noted and the interdependency with economic buoyancy for the retention of young people in island communities.

3.4 The Director, Nations suggested a BBC Nations sub-committee would meet to discuss indigenous language content.

4. MG ALBA

4.1 The Committee discussed the partnership between the BBC and MG ALBA along with future opportunities for content and stakeholder engagement. The Board were shown a short video showcasing BBC ALBA content and MG ALBA performance. The MG ALBA Chairman spoke about the importance of having a partnership with a shared vision, noting their support in the run-up to Charter discussions.

4.2 Director, Group Partnerships spoke of the importance of the Partnership Review.

4.3 The Committee heard from the MG ALBA Chief Executive regarding social and digital media developments, as well as the vital importance of a sustainable future funding model.

4.4 The Chair thanked MG ALBA and noted how well the partnership is working, and the importance of a digital strategy.

5. Market Report

5.1 The Director Scotland has been called to appear for a second time at Westminster's Scottish Affairs Committee, with the date to be confirmed.

6. Director Nations Report

- 6.1 The Committee heard plans for work to strengthen the BBC's commitment to Across the UK, including a new commissioning structure.
- 6.2 The Committee noted plans to improve geographical representation of the UK, and an intent to better serve young audiences.
- 6.3 The Committee heard an update on plans for future election coverage, including a pan-Nations Election steering group to coordinate campaign coverage.
- 6.4 The Committee noted plans for an Award Ceremony for staff members to honour those who have gone above and beyond in their service to the BBC.

7. Audiences

- 7.1 The Committee noted the latest audience trends for BBC Scotland.

8. Finance

- 8.1 The Committee noted the finance update.

9. AOB

- 9.1 There were no other matters arising.
- 9.2 The next Scotland Committee meeting would be held on 25th March 2026.