



Meeting of the BBC Editorial Guidelines and Standards Committee

MINUTES

19 November 2024

Boardroom 3028, Broadcasting House, London

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. Minutes of the 1 October Meeting and Matters Arising
2. Thematic Review Updates
3. Senior Editorial Policy Adviser's Report
4. Emerging Editorial Risks and Issues
5. Public Perceptions of Impartiality
6. Complaints Reporting
7. Papers for Approval/Noting
8. AOB

EDITORIAL GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE MINUTES

1. Minutes from the 1 October Meeting and Matters Arising

1.1 The minutes of the meeting on the 1 October were approved.

Matters Arising

1.2 The Matters Arising paper was noted. David Jordan provided an update on the revision of the Editorial Guidelines. The public consultation had opened on 7 November and would run for six weeks.

2. Thematic Review Updates

Thematic Review of Representation and Portrayal

2.1 The Committee welcomed Anne Morrison and Chris Banatvala, co-chairs of the thematic review of representation and portrayal, who had been invited to provide a briefing on progress to date.

2.2 The Committee noted that over fifty internal and external stakeholders had so far been interviewed, including senior, editorial and commissioning leaders in the Content and Nations Divisions, to understand which areas of portrayal and representation could potentially provide examples of both good practice and issues of challenge.

2.3 Committee members discussed some of the themes and observations which had emerged so far.

Implementation of the Thematic Review of BBC Coverage of Public Spending and Taxation

2.4 A significant internal communications initiative in October ensured that a range of additional resources linked to the thematic review of taxation and public spending was made available to staff and freelancers in the days leading up to the new UK government's first Budget.

Implementation of the Thematic Review of BBC Coverage of Migration

2.5 The Committee noted that Madeleine Sumption had engaged in a number of sessions with presenters regarding the findings of the thematic review of migration.

- 2.6 The Committee approved the approach to the six monthly post implementation review of the thematic review of migration and agreed that it would come to the January meeting of the Committee.
- 2.7 The Committee discussed potential topics for future thematic reviews and agreed that a full paper on the options would come to the January meeting.
- 2.8 The Committee agreed that an update on the key findings from the internal content reviews undertaken by the Executive should also come to the January meeting.

3 Senior Editorial Adviser's Report

- 3.1 The Committee considered the Senior Editorial Policy Advisor's report.
- 3.2 The Committee discussed the implementation plan for the recommendations arising from David Grossman's internal editorial review. Committee members approved the plan.
- 3.3 The Committee discussed other areas of coverage which could usefully be reviewed.

4. Emerging Editorial Risks and Issues

- 4.1 The Committee discussed current and upcoming editorial risks. In addition to editorial risks associated with ongoing global conflicts, the Committee discussed the challenges of covering populist political campaigning.

5 Public Perceptions of Impartiality

- 5.1 The Committee received a presentation on audience perceptions of impartiality from the BBC's audience research team.
- 5.2 In addition to the usual impartiality tracking data, the presentation included a deep-dive into the opinions of Reform voters and an initial look at the audience response to the BBC's coverage of the US election.

5.3 The Committee discussed the presentation.

6. Complaints Reporting

Analysis of Editorial Complaints Stage 2

6.1 The Committee considered the Stage 2 complaints report. Committee members discussed the complaints which had been upheld.

6.2 The Committee noted that the Asserson Report was being escalated to the Editorial Complaints Unit.

7 Papers for Approval/Noting by Exception

7.1 The Committee discussed the editorial whistleblowing report, noting that there had been improvements to the triage process. Committee members noted that the full whistleblowing report was regularly assessed by the Audit and Risk Committee.

7.2 The Committee noted papers outlining two serious editorial breaches and the subsequent management actions taken to address them.

7.3 The Committee noted the stage 1 complaints reporting for September and October.

7.3 The Committee noted the Ofcom monthly complaints reports.

8. AOB

8.1 The Committee noted a briefing on Chris Packham's contractual relationship with the BBC.