



BBC Trust

Getting the best out of the BBC for licence fee payers

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Lord Patten publishes review of BBC governance

19 July 2011

The governance of the BBC is workable, generally effective and provides benefits to licence fee payers and the industry, but there are areas that could be improved, a review by the BBC Trust Chairman Lord Patten has concluded.

The review, announced by Lord Patten on his appointment in May, set out to establish whether the current governance arrangements could be improved within the framework of the Royal Charter, which runs until 2017.

It has concluded that:

There should be clearer roles and responsibilities between the BBC Trust and the Executive Board

The Trust should build on its existing relationship with Ofcom, which should have a strengthened market impact assessment role

The complaints and compliance systems within the BBC should be addressed to make them faster, simpler and more transparent

A simpler and more easy-to-understand system should be introduced for the way the Trust governs BBC services.

Specific changes include the creation of a new Chief Complaints Editor reporting to the Director-General to co-ordinate complaints handling across the BBC, and clearer and simpler information will be provided to the public on where they should go to complain about BBC content or services.

The Trust will also now formally consult Ofcom on any major proposals from the BBC Executive for changes to the BBC's activities.

The Trust will continue its annual reviews of the impartiality of the BBC's output, and will strengthen this by introducing and leading impartiality seminars that will enable the BBC to consider how to approach emerging and current topics.

To reflect the new responsibility for the World Service that the BBC is taking on, a new Trust committee with oversight of the BBC's international services will also be set up, chaired by the Trust's new International Trustee who will be appointed this autumn.

The Trust will improve its links with the BBC's Non-Executive Directors on the Executive Board, and their role will be strengthened.

The Trust will also simplify the way it governs BBC services, with a focus on simpler service licences which are easy to understand for licence fee payers and the industry. The Trust will conduct a full consultation on any changes, to make sure we retain the confidence of the rest of the media industry.

Chairman of the BBC Trust Lord Patten said:

"The Trust is working well but these changes will help make it an even stronger advocate for licence fee payers. They will strengthen the current governance arrangements, help audiences to understand how the BBC is accountable to them, and ultimately enable us to get on with the job of re-shaping the BBC for the future, ensuring that within a tough licence fee settlement it continues to deliver high quality and distinctive services."

The Trust's governance review conclusions can be read in full here.

Notes to Editors

The BBC Trust replaced the Board of Governors as the governing body of the BBC in 2007.

The House of Lords Communications Committee recently completed an inquiry on BBC governance, the conclusions of which have also fed into Lord Patten's review. The Committee's report can be found here.

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[Review of BBC governance](#)[BBC Executive Board](#)[Governance framework](#)[Ofcom](#)

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