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NUJ submission to the BBC Charter Review public consultation

The National Union of Journalists is the representative voice for journalists and media professionals across the UK and Ireland. The union was founded in 1907 and has 30,000 members. It represents staff and freelancers working at home and abroad in the broadcast media, newspapers, news agencies, magazines, books, public relations, communications, online media and as photographers and illustrators.

What the BBC does: scale and scope

Q1. How can the BBC's public purposes be improved so there is more clarity about what the BBC should achieve? Q2. Which elements of universality are most important for the BBC?

1. The BBC's purpose set out by Lord Reith was to produce programmes and services that inform, educate and entertain. The NUJ believes this purpose to be as relevant today as it was for the fledgling corporation. The BBC's public purposes will define, to an extent, the scope of the corporation as a public service broadcaster. The NUJ believes the BBC provides great value at 40p per day for four TV channels, 10 national radio stations and a network of local radio stations, an internationally-acclaimed website, BBC Parliament, the World Service, S4C, BBC Monitoring and five orchestras and choirs. As the nation's broadcaster, it is important that it provides services for all its licence-fee payers. The BBC accounts for 40-plus per cent of the total investment in UK original content: it is the most important commissioner of new content in the UK, spending about £1bn a year on non-news commissions. It is the largest single investor in TV news production and a by-word for broadcasting quality. The NUJ is not saying the BBC is perfect; elements of its services could be improved but, as a model providing a wide offering across genres and interests, it is doing a good job. To downgrade the BBC, whether on ideological, anti-statist grounds or because commercial rivals such as Rupert Murdoch are putting on pressure, would be wanton vandalism.
2. **Michelle Stanistreet**, the NUJ General Secretary, said on the day of the green paper's publication: "There is no evidence the public want to see a smaller BBC which, as the green paper says, may become 'more focused on a narrower, core set

of services'. The BBC is a world-respected public service broadcaster, something we should be proud of, and something we need to preserve.

3. "The BBC is watched and listened to by 96 per cent of the UK population. It is the largest single investor in TV news. Every £1 of licence fee spent by the network generates £2 of economic activity. The licence fee is the single biggest investor in the arts and creative industries and the biggest commissioner of new music in the world. Why, if we have something so popular, great value for money and a huge asset to the cultural fabric of the nation, would we want to reduce its scope with a remit to produce programmes in which the commercial sector is not interested? Its purposes must be to continue to inform, educate and, importantly, entertain. After the shabby, secret deal cooked up between the BBC director general, Tony Hall, and the Chancellor, George Osborne, for the BBC to pay for free licences for people over the age of 75, this consultation must be open and the views of the public and the industry, including the staff of the BBC must be listened to."
4. The clue is in the name. The **British** Broadcast Corporation creates a shared culture in a way that no other institution does. We are all united by Blue Peter, Dr Who, David Attenborough, Victor Meldrew, Monty Python, the Shipping Forecast, the Today programme, MOTD, Last Night of the Proms, the Clangers, Civilisation, the Great British Bake Off, Strictly Come Dancing, Teletubbies, Miranda, TW3, The Office, A History of the World in 100 Objects, the Singing Detective and Only Fools and Horses to name just a few. We all turn to the BBC for the great state occasions: the royal marriages and investitures; the funeral of Princess Diana; the Olympics; and general elections. We all watched the landing on the moon and the 9/11 attack on the BBC.
5. Regional television news and local radio provides news and information on travel, weather and sport. The BBC's services provide it best of all. This detailed information is presented not as dry facts but with warmth, sympathy, humour and authority by people who know and live in the same area. BBC local radio is particularly important for elderly people, especially the housebound, whose contact with the outside world is severely limited. Without it, they would be even more lonely and their lives very much sadder. In this respect, BBC local radio is a unique public and social service of immense value.
6. The NUJ argues strongly against a scaled-down BBC, although this is already happening as a result of the corporation budget's being cut by a fifth and, in the case of news, one-quarter. The report prepared for Ofcom in 2015 by Oliver & Ohlbaum Associates¹ covering 2003-2013 noted that original-content investment by UK public sector broadcasters fell 24.7 per cent in real terms during the past decade. It said there had been "no significant volume loss and no noticeable quality loss" and audience satisfaction remained high. Yet, the report said: "Broadcaster budgets have been under pressure and, to deliver the desired level of originated content, they have moved towards cheaper genres." Ofcom also noted: "As licence-fee income

has fallen in real terms, the last few years have seen the BBC reduce its investment in programmes in some key PSB genres, such as drama, current affairs, specialist factual and education.”

7. The BBC’s public purposes, as set out in the charter are: **sustaining citizenship and civil society; promoting education and learning; stimulating creativity and cultural excellence; reflecting UK audiences; global outlook; delivering to the public the benefit of emerging communications technologies and services.** The NUJ believes these public purposes still hold good but there may be a case for providing levers and sanctions, so the purposes do not become a woolly wish-list.
8. There is a case for reinforcing the BBC’s public purposes by making direct reference to key genres. These (and this is not an exclusive list) should include news, current affairs, documentaries, natural history, arts, culture, entertainment, comedy, drama and programmes for children.

- **Sustaining citizenship and civil society:** the BBC plays a huge role in providing high-quality news, current affairs and political debate. Its role as an impartial broadcaster is crucial to this. The BBC is free from shareholder pressure, advertiser influence and the chase for ratings. People understand this and that is why the BBC commands a high level of trust. Ofcom’s latest public service broadcasting review showed eight in 10 viewers (79 per cent) believed public service broadcasting fulfilled its purposes, such as trustworthy news and high-quality programmes that reflect the UK, a notable increase from 69 per cent in 2008. During the general election, BBC election coverage reached nine in 10 UK adults in the last week of the campaign. The so-called cost-cutting programme, Delivering Quality First, has led to the BBC scaling down its political programming. Panorama no longer has dedicated reporters. ITV has significantly retreated from its public service broadcasting commitments during the past decade. It produces fewer non-news/factual programmes and local news has been cut considerably. Ofcom allowed ITV local news to be reduced by a third in its latest 10-year broadcast licences for ITV, STV, UTV and Channel 5. As it stands, the BBC is struggling because of cuts to staff numbers. Cuts to the Home Newsgathering department, which supplies reporters, camera crews, producers, broadcast trucks and kit to all BBC outlets (radio and TV) across the UK, has resulted in the Midlands bureau (geographically from the Welsh border to Great Yarmouth, Oxford to Chesterfield, including the Thames estuary and the rest of East Anglia) being covered by one bureau chief, two producers and two reporters. The bureau chief and the main reporter live outside the patch, in Wales. News is a seven-day-a-week operation, but weekend staffing in London is now at skeleton levels. Outside the M25, there are no staff members available, apart from a small team in the North of England. When major news stories break, staff are called in from days off.

The BBC is distinctive in that it provides news coverage from your doorstep to the darkest corners of the globe. The level of trust it commands cannot be bought. There is nothing that undermines democracy more than a media dominated by the state, a media mogul or international conglomerate.

- **Promoting education and learning:** the BBC has a long and distinguished history in promoting education and learning. For half a century, the Open University has produced programmes with the BBC. From the days when many people were given the opportunity to take degrees by watching late-night lectures delivered by professors in kipper ties, to many thousands of innovative, exciting education clips used in schools for all stages of the curriculum, the BBC has played TV teacher. BBC Bitesize, the Learning Zone and iZone are huge repositories of high-quality learning resources. The **BBC schools** website pulls together these resources: Newsround, the current affairs show for young people; Ten Pieces, which aims to open up the worlds of classical music, dance and digital art to young people; and BBC News School Report, which gives 11- to 16-year-old UK students a voice and the chance to produce their own news reports. These examples show the distinctive service the BBC provides:

- One pupil's struggle with anorexia: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schoolreport/31954786>
- Pupils discuss why they self-harm: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01wdlpg>
- Northern Irish children and country music:
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schoolreport/31815070>

For grown-ups, BBC Four and Radio 4 provide an excellent and unparalleled array of documentaries on a wide range of subjects which enlighten, inform and entertain. These programmes may not command the viewing figures of Strictly Come Dancing, but they provide programming for a different group of viewers and represent a quality marker of BBC output. The BBC could also expand its education and documentary output by creating new partnerships with other academic institutions.

- **Stimulating creativity and cultural excellence:** every £1 of licence fee spent by the network generates £2 of economic activity in the creative sector. In the period 2011-12, the BBC generated £8.3bn for the UK economy. The licence fee is the single biggest investment in the arts and creative industries in this country. In 2013-14, the BBC injected £2.2bn into the creative industries.

Gareth Neame, the executive producer of Downton Abbey, in an interview in the Guardian², said it would be madness for the BBC to stop making commercial programmes. He said: "I am the person who took Downton Abbey to ITV; I never picked up the phone to the BBC. My income and job is not dependent on the BBC ... However, it is wrong that people who are not practitioners believe market forces can just pick up the slack if the BBC is cut back. The BBC is a highly dysfunctional place, like all big organisations, but it is also 'our Hollywood', the only organisation big enough to make its own creative decisions. The proposal that it should stop making commercial programmes is a madness."

The Proms are an example of cultural excellence; a BBC institution which has become one of the premier musical events on the globe. If the BBC didn't do it, it just wouldn't happen. Who else would provide a concert series where you could see world-class performances for £5.00? Again, the BBC should create more partnerships with arts and cultural institutions.

- **Reflecting UK audiences:** the BBC must provide a service that reflects UK audiences. It must also have a workforce which does the same. This is an area which should be improved. The move to MediaCity, Salford, has made the corporation less London-centric. However, the Mailbox, the much-vaunted BBC facility in Birmingham which costs the BBC £2.14m a year, is half-empty. Apart from the Archers, the Asian Network is the last remaining network radio based in the city. Ofcom's Advisory Committee for Wales³ said Wales was served less comprehensively outside the BBC than any of the other UK nations, with weaker print media and commercial radio services offering a reduced challenge to the BBC in terms of a plurality of voices. One in five (21 per cent) viewers in Scotland and one in four (26 per cent) viewers in Northern Ireland felt they were portrayed negatively in PSB programmes. Ofcom found that more than half (55 per cent) of respondents from black ethnic groups felt they were under-represented in PSB programmes and a similar proportion (51 per cent) felt they were negatively portrayed. About half (51 per cent) of disabled people felt under-represented. Latest figures from the BBC show 13.1 per cent of its staff are from BME backgrounds; the industry average is 5.4 per cent. This must be addressed by the new governance structure (see below).
- **Global outlook.** This year, the World Service reached 210 million people. For many around the globe it is a vital service; the BBC is still able to expose the brutality and corruption of regimes which try to hide their acts by repression of the media. According to *The Soft Power 30* report⁴, compiled by the communications consultancy, Portland, the UK leads the world in soft power, putting it above Germany, the United States, France and Canada. "Soft power" is the term used to explain the use of positive attraction and persuasion to achieve global influence. The UK scored high on culture, digital, and global engagement. The World Service now comes under the BBC's budget and is funded from the licence fee. This is already having an effect on the way it is being produced, with BBC news teams and World Service news teams being merged. There are fears that this will dilute the character, tradition and ethos of the service. The World Service provides an important and highly valuable service representing the UK abroad and reporting on global affairs but it should be funded by taxpayers not licence payers.
- **Delivering to the public the benefit of emerging communications technologies and services:** the BBC's Digital Media Initiative (DMI) was a £100m disaster but, on the whole, the BBC has been a major innovator in broadcasting technology since the birth of radio and TV. From the Radiophonic Workshop to BBC micro-computers to Ceefax then Freesat – a joint enterprise with ITV which allowed the change from

analogue to digital – and iPlayer, which opened up view-on-demand, the corporation’s engineers and scientists have been pioneers. The whole media landscape has benefited from the BBC’s innovations. The Commonwealth Games were used to test 360 TV, a method of filming from all angles. The NUJ believes this work should remain one of the BBC’s purposes, but more rigid accountability is necessary to ensure that the DMI-style fiasco is not repeated.

Q3. Should Charter Review formally establish a set of values for the BBC?

9. The NUJ does not see the need for Charter Review to “formally establish a set of values for the BBC”. The BBC, on the whole, has an ethos that is shared by its staff: a responsibility to its licence-fee payers; the need to remain independent; to maintain standards of accuracy and integrity in its journalism and to cherish British culture while reflecting and celebrating the diversity of its population.

Q4. Is the expansion of the BBC’s services justified in the context of increased choice for audiences? Is the BBC crowding out commercial competition and, if so, is this justified?

Q5. Where does the evidence suggest the BBC has a positive or negative wider impact on the market?

10. According to the Barwise and Picard report for the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism⁵, without BBC TV the investment in first-run UK content would be 25-50 per cent lower. Ofcom’s research shows ITV 1’s investment in content is directly linked to the investment made by the BBC in BBC One.
11. Ofcom, in its latest review of public service broadcasting (PSB), in July 2015², said: “The approach to the BBC in the forthcoming Charter Review will be critical to the future of the PSB system overall ... It is the largest investor in new UK programmes, and the only major commissioner in certain genres, such as children’s. It supports the wider creative economy both directly (e.g. through commissioning from the independent production sector) and indirectly (e.g. through investment in skills and training). But as licence-fee income has fallen in real terms, the last few years have seen the BBC reduce its investment in programmes in some key PSB genres such as drama, current affairs, specialist factual and education. Charter Review will need to balance the need for the BBC to produce a range of high-quality content and innovate across all major platforms against preventing it from crowding out commercial innovation.” The watchdog adds that new services, such as Netflix and Amazon Prime, are “aggressively expanding and increasingly popular”. It said: “The evidence today is that these platforms are largely complementary to traditional TV viewing, rather than substitutional, although drama is one genre where some substitution appears to be taking place. However, these companies are evolving very

quickly, using global scale to fund technology innovation and, increasingly, content investment.”

12. ITV's profits are up 25 per cent. Great news for the shareholders, but not such good news, it seems, for the viewers who have been voting with their remote controls. The broadcaster's share of viewing fell to 21.1 per cent from 22.2 per cent in the first half of last year. A drop in appetite for the main ITV channel was more pronounced, down to 14.8 per cent from 15.8 per cent last year, believed to be its lowest share on record. Adam Crozier, the broadcaster's chief executive, had been otherwise engaged in a spending spree buying companies such as Talpa Media, maker of the BBC's *The Voice*, Mammoth Screen and Twofour Group, rather than investing in his own staff.
13. News that Liberty Global, the owner of pay-TV company Virgin Media, had raised its stake in ITV to 9.9 per cent increased speculation of a buy-out of ITV, despite denials by the American owner, John Malone. Last year, Malone paid £550m for All3media, the maker of *Midsomer Murders*. If Malone, known variously as the cable cowboy, Darth Vader and Mad Max within the industry, took over at the same time as the BBC was being downsized and expected to produce only the unpopular bits of media eschewed by commercial broadcasters, what effect will this have on the UK's cultural identity? Channel 5 is now owned by the American company Viacom and many of the UK's major independent producers have been acquired by US broadcasters.
14. Sky reported annual revenues of nearly £11.3bn, with its like-for-like pre-tax profit rising 6 per cent to £1.196bn in the year to the end of June, 2015. Its total revenues increased by 5 per cent to £11.28bn. Rupert Murdoch's company expanded with purchases in Germany and Italy and its UK and Ireland market increased with more than 12 million new customers signing up. His revenues in the UK and Ireland in 2015 were up 6 per cent to £7.8bn with operating profit up 12 per cent to £1.35bn.
15. These figures show a buoyant commercial broadcasting market, not one which has been crowded out by the “licence-fee-cushioned BBC”. Elsewhere, global players such as Amazon Prime and Netflix are flourishing and expanding.
16. Culture Secretary, John Whittingdale, seemed to be questioning why the BBC should be producing shows as *Strictly Come Dancing* and *The Great British Bake Off*, which could be made by the commercial sector, when he spoke to *The Guardian's* chief culture writer, Charlotte Higgins, in July 2015⁶. While the case could be made for saying the BBC should not be buying up formats such as *The Voice*, why would you want to stifle the talent which brings about popular entertainment? The final of *Bake Off* was watched by 13.9m viewers (more than one in five of the entire population). Providing quality entertainment is a valid role for a PSB – as well as providing part of the licence fee's value, BBC entertainment has provided a benchmark for other broadcasters and programme makers. Programmes such as *Sherlock* and *Dr Who* are popular worldwide and are great money-spinners for the BBC.

17. In radio, the BBC provides services that are quite distinct from those provided by commercial stations. It might be the case that reducing the number of BBC services available will drive listeners to commercial stations when their chosen service has disappeared but the service they find will not be the same. Taking such action could well benefit commercial broadcasters but what benefit would there be for the listener?
18. The News Media Association, which represents owners of Britain's newspaper industry, blames BBC online news for the demise of local newspapers. More than 200 titles have folded in the past decade but this isn't because of the BBC – when the going was good, newspaper group managements milked the profits for their shareholders and executives, made unwise acquisitions and failed to invest in journalism. By the late 1990s, profit margins ranged from a minimum of 20 per cent to 35 per cent and more. When the recession came, advertising dried up and then failed to migrate to newspaper websites while newspaper groups continued to award their executives fat pay cheques and cut their staff to the bone. It's not that they aren't making money; profits are still coming in. The BBC claims it is the only news organisation committed to reporting the whole of the UK, community by community, region by region, nation by nation. If the website is severely downgraded, there is no evidence the newspaper groups will fill the gap. That said, the BBC needs to work in partnership with local media, to credit local papers for stories it follows up and hasten the rollout of the Local Live pilots, where local newspapers send a link to their strongest stories which then feature on the BBC News website.
19. Research by media analysts Enders showed that UK newspaper publishers have been damaged by the internet. The problem has been raising sufficient revenue from their digital platforms. They said: "To be blunt, the BBC plays no role in exacerbating these challenges." (*The BBC, the press and online news*, August 2015)
20. On cross-promotion, it is absolutely logical for the BBC to promote its programmes across its channels in the same way that it is entirely logical for, say, ITV to cross-promote its programmes across its own four television channels. Or for Sky to cross-promote its "694 television and radio channels" (source: sky4me.tv).
21. On the issue of contestable funding, it should be noted that broadcasters other than the BBC have made and continue to make programmes that might be considered to have "public service characteristics". In particular, news, documentaries, drama and arts have all, over the years, had extensive input from ITV and Sky and continue to do so. For this reason, the idea of switching BBC funds to commercial broadcasters to provide such programmes is laughable and offensive. It would mean in effect, licence-payers contributing to the profits of commercial companies. Where children's programmes are concerned, a more imaginative solution might be sought. For example, Ofcom could make provision of children's programmes a condition of commercial broadcasters having a licence to broadcast.

BBC Funding

Q11. How should we pay for the BBC and how should the licence fee be modernised? Q12. Should the level of funding for certain services or programmes be protected? Should some funding be made available to other providers to deliver public service content? Q13. Has the BBC been doing enough to deliver value for money? How could it go further? Q14. How should the BBC's commercial operations, including BBC Worldwide, be reformed?

- 22.** The method of funding the BBC appears to have been decided. As part of the BBC Charter Review consultation, Culture Secretary John Whittingdale said that, while he would prefer to move to a subscription model, the technology to do so was not yet available. He said he would close the loophole which allows people to watch the BBC on catch-up free; that is a sensible move. The NUJ supports the continuation of the licence fee, but would like to see research on other models, such as the German household-levy method or a tax on electrical equipment. The NUJ objects to governments raiding the licence-fee pot for other purposes. Licence-fee payers believe they are paying for the BBC's broadcasts and other services and not for backdoor government funding, such as the roll-out of broadband or licences for over-75s. The corporation's Director-General, Tony Hall, seemed to think he had secured a cash-flat deal, with an increase at CPI (Consumer Price Index), but it now appears the funding will be decided as part of the consultation process.
- 23.** Media consultants Enders said: "The transfer of the over-75s subsidy loads a whacking extra cost onto the BBC, no less than £613 million in the latest annual accounts for 2014/15, but likely to be closer to £750 million by 2020/21. It is in no way compensated by the government's semi-commitment to let the licence fee rise in sync with the CPI, pending Charter Review, or to pad it out with several ameliorating factors, such as modernising the licence fee to include catch-up in households without TV sets."
- 24.** The BBC has made substantial savings as part of the so-called Delivering Quality First cost-cutting programme – by 2017 more than £1.5bn of savings will have been made. The budget for news has been cut by a quarter. On 2 July, 2015, consultant PwC ranked the BBC among the most efficient public sector organisations. Its overhead costs were about 8 per cent and due to fall to 7 per cent, compared with the public sector average of 11.2 per cent and the regulated industry average of 8.8 per cent. The decline in the proportion of households with a television means the BBC's income in the final year of 2016/17 is projected to be more than £150m less than was predicted in 2011. There are no signs of how this shortfall can be made up. There is very little left to salami-slice and, as matters stand, whole services, such as local radio, could be axed.
- 25.** The low cost of the licence fee has been accompanied by savage savings in recent years which have directly affected the people who make the programmes. They have lost jobs and seen their pay shrink in real terms. At the same time, much of the BBC's

senior management has been rewarded with large salaries, new posts with obscure job titles and huge payoffs. The NUJ would like to see less spent on management and more on the people who create and deliver the output.

26. At its 2014 Delegate Meeting (DM), the National Union of Journalists adopted the following policy regarding BBC remuneration: BBC senior management salaries should be capped at a figure no higher than 10 times the lowest-paid staff member. No one engaged by the BBC should be paid less than the full-time equivalent of the London Living Wage. There should be a maximum BBC salary of £150,000 per annum (including bonus payments, car allowances, pension top-ups and any other benefits).
27. In 2014/15, BBC Worldwide, the main commercial arm of the corporation, generated headline profits of £138.6m plus headline sales of £1,001.8m and returned £226.5m to the BBC. Selling popular programmes makes commercial sense, especially if the profits are ploughed back into the BBC rather than the shareholders of a privatised company.
28. The NUJ believes there must be a mechanism which protects decisions on the BBC's funding from political interference. The corporation should not be in a position where the Prime Minister of the day can make bully-boy "jokes" to the BBC's political editor that he can shut the BBC down.

BBC and governance

Q15. How should the current model of governance and regulation for the BBC be reformed? Q16. How should Public Value Tests and Service Licences be reformed and who should have the responsibility for making these decisions? Q17. How could the BBC improve engagement with licence fee payers and the industry, including through research, transparency and complaints handling? Q18. How should the relationship between Parliament, Government, Ofcom, the National Audit Office and the BBC work? What accountability structures and expectations, including financial transparency and spending controls, should apply?

29. It is obvious to all, including its chair Rona Fairhead, that the BBC Trust is a dead duck. Watching the BBC's top brass passing the buck in front of the Public Accounts Committee, in March 2015, was an unedifying spectacle. The NUJ believes many of the recent problems in the BBC were caused by the top managers of the organisation being totally disconnected from the journalists and creative programme makers at the corporation. That is why the NUJ believes staff should be a part of whatever governing structure replaces the trust. Staff rang the alarm bells when things went wrong, but nobody listened. The new structure should be democratic and accountable. It should include representatives of BBC staff and the licence-fee payers and not just provide three-day-a-week sinecures for establishment figures. It should be able to challenge the BBC's programming and management and provide

independent financial scrutiny, for example via the National Audit Office. Whistle-blowers must be allowed to report perceived misdemeanours. The new governing structure would have to be completely independent of government and part of its role would be to maintain that independence – although subjected to scrutiny by select committees and Parliament.

30. Any new governance structure should take the role of a watchdog to ensure the BBC, in terms of its workforce and programming, represents the diversity of its licence-fee payers. It should have access to sanctions if targets are not met.
31. Ofcom needs to take on a greater role in its scrutiny of the BBC. The corporation has a poor record of employing the BME population in front of and behind the camera. In January 2015, the Lords Communications Committee said of the broadcasting industry there "simply weren't enough women". Lord Best, the committee's chairman, said women "are under-represented, both as staff and as experts, in news and current affairs broadcasting". Ofcom should have a beefed-up role in ensuring equality monitoring at the BBC and should have a range of sanctions, but handing the governance of the BBC wholesale to Ofcom would be a mistake. Sharon White, Ofcom's chief executive, said the watchdog could take on the wider regulation of the BBC, but ruled out absorbing the governance role of the BBC Trust, saying she would "draw a line in the sand" over the issue.
32. At its 2014 DM, the NUJ adopted the following policy aimed at ensuring that licence fee payers and the BBC workforce are represented in the governance of the BBC: The BBC Trust [or its successor] should be one-third elected by licence-fee payers, with a further third of its members elected by the BBC workforce, whether journalists, caterers, production and technical staff or cleaners. The BBC Trust [or its successor] should exercise its existing power to appoint non-executive directors to the BBC executive board and accept the nomination of staff members elected by the BBC workforce to make up one-third of the board, with one seat reserved for staff on the remuneration sub-committee.

Should the existing approach of a 10-year Royal Charter and Framework Agreement continue?

33. The service licence for commercial TV is 10 years, so a 10-year Royal Charter makes sense.

Conclusion

It is illogical to believe that reducing the size and scope of the BBC will in any way benefit viewers and listeners in the UK. The reverse is true. Creating a smaller BBC will answer the ideological motives of some politicians and the commercial motives of newspaper owners and television services which charge by subscription. But it will bring great harm to public service broadcasting. It will mean the people of the UK will have reduced choices in their viewing and listening and they will have to pay more for them.

The NUJ has members working in all the UK's broadcast media. We support each of them, in public service and commercial sectors. The existence, size and scope of the BBC in its present form do not threaten our colleagues in the commercial broadcasting sector or in newspapers.

The question is this: if we were to reduce the size and scope of the BBC, which services would be cut? Because, whichever they might be, an individual licence-payer somewhere will be affected and will either lose their programme or online service or find they have to pay for another one from a commercial operator. They will lose and the operator will gain. This is wrong because we believe the interests of the audience should come first.

The BBC belongs to the nation

References:

1. Oliver & Ohlbaum Associates, *Public Service Broadcasting in the Internet Age – Trends in TV Content Investment* (originated-content investment by the four UK PSBs between 2003 and 2013) published 02,07,2015 <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/consultations/psb-review-3/statement/>

2. *We don't have to have completely happy endings at Downton Abbey*, by Maggie Brown, The Guardian, Sunday, 9 August 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/media/2015/aug/09/downton-abbey-ending-garety-neame>

3 *Public service broadcasting in the internet age: The Nations of the UK and their regions*, 2 July 2015, http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/consultations/psb-review-3/statement/PSBR_natreg.pdf

4 *The Soft Power 30*, Portland, <http://softpower30.portland-communications.com/>

5 *What if There Was no BBC Television? The net impact on UK Viewers* <http://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/publication/what-if-there-were-no-bbc-television>, February 2014

6 *The battle for the BBC*, by Charlotte Higgins, Tuesday, 14 July 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/media/2015/jul/14/battle-for-the-bbc>: John Whittingdale; "There are some areas where I think the BBC is way outside the definition of what I call public-service broadcasting, shows where quite obviously they are copying a format which is already available in the market, such as The Voice ... Is there a public-service argument for Strictly? Debatable."

Appendix

Only the BBC!

The NUJ's members in the BBC are proud of the corporation's role as a public service broadcaster. This is what they say about just a few of the programmes they believe show the corporation at its best.

Investigative journalism

Panorama's exposure of the abuse of vulnerable adults at Winterbourne View Hospital is an example of the BBC's excellent investigative journalism, despite the many cuts to the news budget. Joe Plomin, producer director of Panorama, said: "No other broadcaster in the world invests as seriously in the sort of undercover investigations I produce – nor would they. It could never make commercial sense. The sort of long-term infiltrations of institutions where all else has failed and where complaints have been ignored would not happen outside of the BBC, at least not in the way we manage them over very long periods. I worry whether salami slicing or outsourcing the BBC could one day have an unintended consequence. Could it mean that I am told of terrible abuse, but am not able to investigate it? And where all agencies have already failed, where complaints have been ignored, what would that mean for the vulnerable who had turned to us?"

At the heart of the community

BBC Radio Lincolnshire has been at the forefront of innovative projects, bringing high-quality arts events to a part of the world often decried as a cultural desert. Lincoln Lip Dub was a community event that could only have been organised by local BBC, which celebrated the historic heart of this cathedral city. It involved creating a film with more than 500 members of the public and 43 community groups, who danced and sang their way through the city's streets. It has been viewed by about 200,000 people around the world and has played a role in promoting the city to visitors. The radio station also took a major part in city's celebration of the anniversaries of the Magna Carta and the First World War. In the past year, the station provided comprehensive coverage of local and national elections, organising and broadcasting hustings from each constituency; preparing constituency profiles, adding live coverage and reaction from every election count, far outstripping the efforts of commercial radio.

BBC Radio Sheffield's week-long series in March marked 30 years since the end of the miners' strike and assessed what progress former pit communities had made since the mines shut down.

Westminster

BBC Parliament & Democracy Live put the politicians on air unedited and with little or no commentary. Many MPs love that and support it. No commercial broadcaster delivers that level of parliamentary coverage.

The Political Research Unit produces detailed internal briefs on Parliament, political parties, elections etc, for the whole of the BBC. It has been described as the envy of other broadcasters.

Voice – and eyes – of the people

The BBC's user-generated content hub brings together eyewitness accounts from citizens across the globe. It was the tsunami on 26 December 2004 which led the way in this brand of reporting. Since then, events such as the terrorist attack in London on 7 July 2005, the Buncefield fuel depot fire, protests in Iran and Burma, where journalists had been banned, the London riots of 2011 and the Arab Spring, people on the ground have sent their pictures and tweets to the BBC. The journalists on the hub check every image, video or key contact before broadcasting them, to make sure they are genuine.

Cultural identity & community values & faith

Radio Cymru is the only national radio station in Welsh, providing a full range of programmes which no-one else would make, from political discussions to hymn singing. Cymru Fyw is the only national online site in Welsh.

BBC Local Radio's commitment to two hours of faith-based local content each Sunday morning is unrivalled in any other media, giving a vital platform to sharing and exploring an aspect of our community values which is often referenced but seldom investigated.

BBC Radio 3's Choral Evensong and Choral Vespers is the only example in the world of an hour's live sacred classical music performed to the highest standards by a different line-up of top professionals each week. It is broadcast (and repeated) in perfectly-engineered quality - but at staggeringly low cost - for the enjoyment of music lovers from any faith - and none - in its original authentic liturgical context.

BBC Radio 4's Sunday programme is the only example of rigorous, balanced, international, multi-religion and ethics news and current affairs, factual and features journalism in the world.

The Asian Network connects the 3 million UK-Asian population like no other commercial organisation. Especially when it comes to news, the Asian Network covers high-impact stories right from the heart of the Asian community, because we know what matters to our audience. You won't find a newsroom in any other organisation that can do what we do.

Public-interest journalism

As a correspondent, the BBC gives me time to find and develop original stories of public interest. Recent examples include a story about Libyan soldiers who sexually assaulted women in Cambridge and police confusion in three forces over which should attend a motorbike crash on the border of three counties. Both stories were picked up nationally, with extensive coverage.

Joyously highbrow

A History of the World in 100 Objects – only Radio 4 and only the BBC could undertake a project that offers its listeners a history of the world, as told through 100 hundred objects in the British Museum's collection. This unique partnership project between two leading public sector organisations has had 40 million downloads worldwide. It has been described as "perfect radio" (Independent) and "joyously highbrow ... deserves to take its place alongside television classics such as Kenneth Clark's Civilisation and Jacob Bronowski's The Ascent of Man" (Telegraph). Shakespeare's Restless World – a 20-part series, also presented by Neil MacGregor, was a further result of this partnership as was the acclaimed Germany: Memories of a Nation.

BBC Radio 4

A special edition of **All in the Mind**, to mark the programme's 25th anniversary won the Mind mental health radio award in 2014. There were some very powerful and moving stories from listeners about not only their experience of mental health but their relationships with people around them and how the programme had in many cases changed their lives.

Bookclub is a fantastic opportunity for ordinary people to meet the world's leading authors in an intimate setting to discuss their novels. We often welcome groups of students from schools and sixth form colleges. We also support smaller communities through Outside Broadcasts from small literary festivals – not just the big ones like Hay, Cheltenham and Edinburgh which enjoy the support of major newspapers.

Digital success: I'm working on a series about UK computer pioneers since the 1940s and it is clear that the drive in the 1980s to release the BBC Microcomputer System, and the associated educational programmes, such as Making the Most of the Micro did an enormous amount to start a huge boom in the UK's software industry. Children who learned coding on the Micro went to form companies that created computer games, start software houses and begin the big internet sites we have today. The new BBC **Make It Digital** season in 2015 aims to inspire a new generation of coders by handing over a new piece of software called the Microbit free to every 11-year-old in the UK to help teach them how to code.

The **Radio 4 Appeal** is a unique BBC initiative to support the charity sector. Every week we work in partnership with a charity, giving an invaluable chance, particularly for small charities, to become more widely known and reach new potential donors. The charities are scrutinised so minutely before being given a Radio 4 Appeal that to have achieved this is considered a seal of approval in the charitable world and often leads to further donations.

The Infinite Monkey Cage is the programme that started the boom in combining comedy and science, winning a Sony Gold prize (radio's equivalent of an Oscar). It appeals to young audiences and smashes through the boundary between science and our wider culture.

The Life Scientific - where else but Radio 4 can you find a scientific discussion on weekday prime-time radio (09.00)? It doesn't even have the draw of a big-name presenter. Only the BBC would dare to try such a show. Everybody said it would fail, but it has not just worked but has become hugely popular beyond its target audience and has won a listeners' award.

BBC Radio 3

The BBC Proms is the world's biggest music festival and is shared across the globe via radio, television and multiplatform. In 2015 there were 88 concerts and more than 80 complementary indoor and outdoor events. Well over 300,000 tickets were sold – 37,500 of them to first timers at the Proms and 8,600 to under-18s. **The Wireless Nights Prom**, a 2015 collaboration between Radio 3 and Radio 4, brought a whole new audience to classical music <http://www.bbc.co.uk/events/e5q5v2#b068tsj1>. Presenter Jarvis Cocker weaved story, song and classical music into a unique event to be enjoyed both at the Royal Albert Hall and at home.

It's often claimed that **Breakfast on Radio 3** is "aping" Classic FM, due to its high proportion of shorter, well-known classical pieces. But spend half an hour listening to one, then the other, and you'll hear there's a world of difference, musically, in presentation, and in station sound.

Through the Night on Radio 3 is produced by the BBC and shared with European Broadcast Union broadcast partners across Europe. It's full of unique music and live performances across the world. You cannot hear these performances on CD. The range and diversity of classical music played in Through the Night is enormous. There is no other programme on UK radio like it.

Radio 3's **The Verb** entertains while taking writers and writing seriously. We support talent by investing part of the budget in commissioning new writing. In collaboration with the Arts Council and writing organisations, we mentor new writers from across the North – a region which is under-represented in the national media.

Big themes

Themed days such as Democracy Day <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-30734123> and Freedom 2014 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-25683135> brought together a range of the BBC's departments and platforms to create these unique events.

BBC training

As well as its breadth of programmes, the BBC also provides world-class training for not only its staff but also for workers the wider creative industries. The BBC Academy works across the BBC and with outside partners such as Creative Skillset. Much is offered online from online courses open to everyone to podcasts and craft skill training videos, in an industry where training opportunities can be rare, let alone free. The BBC Academy also runs entry level schemes, such as apprenticeships, desperately needed to bring in new talent and increase diversity in the industry. It spearheads and runs BBC and industry campaigns to increase diversity on and off screen, with events such as Expert Voices, Women in Radio and BAME Welcome Back for Black, Asian and minority ethnic professionals.