



Department
for Culture,
Media & Sport

REVIEW OF THE BBC ROYAL CHARTER - TERMS OF REFERENCE

December 2025

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Department for Culture, Media and Sport

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Presented to Parliament
by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport
by Command of His Majesty

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Background

The BBC is governed by a Royal Charter and Framework Agreement, which provide the constitutional basis for the BBC as a public corporation and guarantee its independence from the government. The Charter and the Framework Agreement also set out the BBC's Mission and Public Purposes as a national broadcaster, and how it is funded, regulated and governed, including its oversight and accountability to the British public.

The BBC's current Charter came into effect on 1 January 2017 and expires on 31 December 2027. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport is responsible for drawing up the Charter and the Framework Agreement and will lead a Review into the BBC's current responsibilities that are set out in the Charter. The Review will inform recommendations to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport on the future remit of the BBC under a renewed Charter and Framework Agreement. The Review will consider how the BBC has discharged its responsibilities under the current Charter and the challenges and opportunities the BBC will face over coming years, as well as stakeholder feedback and the views of the wider public across the whole of the UK on the future of the BBC.

Purpose and objectives of the Review

The BBC is a vital British asset that plays a unique role in public life and helps define our nation. The government is committed to supporting the BBC to thrive for decades to come.

However, the media landscape is rapidly changing. The BBC faces increased global competition, changing viewing habits and pressures on its licence fee income. The Charter Review is an opportunity to futureproof the BBC and set it up for success so that it can continue to deliver its important public service obligations over the next Charter period and for decades to come. Essential to this is ensuring the financial sustainability of the BBC and maximising public trust in the corporation and its output. This will help ensure the BBC has the support of the people who pay for it, is adequately accountable, and represents and delivers for every person in the UK.

The Charter Review will therefore take evidence on and consider measures that support the following objectives:

- A BBC that is **sustainably funded** for decades to come to support its vital public service role;
 - a. Exploring funding models that can provide a sustainable level of funding for the BBC, to support the BBC in serving all UK audiences in an increasingly competitive media environment.
 - b. Exploring funding options for S4C, minority language broadcasting and the World Service.
 - c. Ensuring that any future funding model is collected and enforced fairly.
 - d. Ensuring that the BBC is delivering maximum value by identifying efficiencies across the whole organisation.

- A BBC that commands **the public's trust**, is independent and accountable to the public it serves, and represents all communities across the UK;
 - a. Exploring measures to enhance the BBC's accountability to, and engagement with, the public across the UK.
 - b. Exploring measures to uphold the independence of the BBC.
 - c. Exploring the BBC's role in providing trusted and truthful news and information, countering disinformation, supporting democracy and social cohesion both in the UK and internationally, and supporting UK soft power and security, including via the World Service.
 - d. Reviewing how the BBC can set the highest standard for a supportive and safe working environment across the wider creative sector as it promotes fair treatment and addresses bullying, harassment and discrimination.
 - e. Ensuring the BBC supports diversity in its workforce and tells a unifying national story, as well as being accessible and responsive to serving the diversity of all communities across the UK, including those in the nations and regions and through minority language broadcasting.
- A BBC that **drives growth, opportunity and good jobs** across the nations and regions of the UK, working in partnership with others;
 - a. Identifying how the BBC can further support the wider media and creative sectors in line with the government's Industrial Strategy, including by working with independent producers, developing partnerships and skills and training initiatives.
 - b. Reviewing how the BBC prioritises delivering its public services and strikes the appropriate balance in terms of commercial impact in the markets in which it operates and supports media plurality, including in the local media ecosystem.
 - c. Exploring how the BBC can act as a driving force in technology and innovation for the benefit of the wider creative economy and public good, supporting social cohesion and digital inclusion.

Review process and timelines

Alongside the Terms of Reference, the government is also publishing a green paper and launching a public consultation.

The government intends to work constructively with the BBC over the course of the Charter Review. It will also consult with Ofcom, the devolved governments, S4C, industry, parliamentarians and other relevant stakeholders. Expert, independent advice and research will be sought on a range of issues to inform the evidence base of the Charter Review.

The government expects to publish a white paper in 2026, setting out its preferred policy direction for the future of the BBC. A draft Charter will also be published and debated in Parliament before the current Charter expires.

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