

BBC Charter Review 2016

 Information Sheet - Diversity

*On 15 September 2016 the government published a draft Royal Charter and Framework Agreement. This is one in a series of information sheets, explaining some of the key policies contained in the drafts in more detail.*

**Background**

The Government believes that the BBC should better represent the UK's increasingly diverse population and, as a public service broadcaster, should be representative of all religions, cultures and ethnicities of the UK. The BBC should be at the forefront of representing diversity both on and off screen.

**The government’s policy**

Over the next Charter period, the government wants the BBC to be the leading broadcaster in addressing diversity issues on and off screen, by bringing a realistic and positive portrayal and representation of underrepresented groups, such as BAME and women into the mainstream, having a higher proportion of groups consuming its content and providing specific programmes and services.

The government has enshrined diversity in the new Charter’s public purposes which along with a commitment to serve all audiences enshrined in the BBC mission, will help hold the BBC to account for delivering for everyone in the UK. The BBC should be at the forefront of representing diversity both on and off screen and this is set out in a new general duty on diversity in the Charter, ensuring that the BBC must reflect the diverse communities of the whole of the United Kingdom accurately and authentically in the content of its output, the means by which its output and services are delivered (including where its activities are carried out and by whom) and in the organisation and management of the BBC.

Furthermore, the BBC has recently set out it's diversity strategy which you can find here, <http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/diversity/pdf/diversity-and-inclusion-strategy2016.pdf> . The Government is in full support of the BBC's diversity strategy, which includes new workforce targets for staff from black and ethnic minorities.

Ofcom will also be able to hold the BBC to account on its performance in this area.

**The provisions in the Charter and Agreement**

Charter

**Article 6. (5)** **Public Purpose:** amends the current public purpose ‘Representing the UK, its nations, regions and communities’ to *‘reflect, represent and serve the diverse communities of all of the United Kingdom’s nations and regions’;* this ensures the BBC will reflect the diversity of the UK both in its output and services and that it provides output and services that meet the needs of the UK’s diverse communities

**Article 10. (2) Engagement with the public:** ensures that the BBC takes into account the diverse perspectives of the whole of the UK into its decision making.

**Article 14. Diversity:** ensures that the BBC must accurately reflect the diverse communities of the UK in both content and output take into account the diverse communities, having particular regard to the need to reflect underrepresented groups.

**Article 20. (3) (d) The principle purpose of the Board:** the new BBC Board must set a framework which includes performance measures to assess the performance of the BBC’s UK Public Services in fulfilling its Mission and promoting the Public Purposes.

**Article 46. (4) Principle functions of Ofcom:** sets out the obligation for Ofcom to set an operating licence which must contain regulatory conditions requiring the BBC to promote the Public Purposes. Ofcom may also determine measures to assess the performance of the BBC in doing this.

**Article 50. Periodic and ad hoc reviews by Ofcom:** States thatOfcom must carry out two or more periodic reviews which consider the extent to which the BBC promotes each of the Public Purposes. The first one of these should be published in time to inform the mid-term review. Ofcom will also be able to carry out and publish additional reviews addressing any specific issue of concern identified by Ofcom relating to the activities of the BBC.

Agreement

**Clause 14. Performance Measures:** The BBC is required to set performance measures (and targets for these, where appropriate) and collect such information as is necessary to assess the performance of the UK Public Services in promoting the Public Purposes. Ofcom may also set further performance measures should they deem it appropriate.

**Schedule 2 Clause 2 (1)(d) The first operating licence:** In setting the first operating licence, Ofcom must consider the need for the BBC to take into account the needs of the diverse communities of the UK’s nations and regions. This is one of the ways Ofcom will be able to hold the BBC to account on their performance on diversity.

**Schedule 3 Clause 12 Equal Opportunities:** This clause specifies that the BBC needs to ensure equality of opportunity when employing anyone in connection with providing any of the UK Public Services.