



31st July, 2020.

OPEN LETTER

The Rt Hon Oliver Dowden CBE MP
Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport,
100 Parliament Street
London
SW1A 2BQ

Dear Mr. Dowden,

In December 2016, the BBC entered into another Royal Charter together with a Framework Agreement of same date. This further Royal Charter and Framework Agreement stipulated that the BBC should be continued until the period ending 31st December, 2027 (“the Documents”).

It is stated in these documents that ‘the objects, constitution, organisation and regulation of the BBC should be reformed so as to enable the BBC still better to serve the interests of Our People’.

The duties of the BBC as reflected in the documents are: ***‘the fulfilment of its Mission and the promotion of the Public Purposes.’***

The Mission is to act in the public interest, serving all audiences, which is to inform, educate and entertain.

The Public Purpose is

- To provide impartial news and information to help people understand and engage with the world around them.
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- To support learning for people of all ages.
- To show the most creative, highest quality and distinctive output and services.
- To reflect, represent and serve the diverse communities of all the United Kingdom’s nations and regions and, in doing so, support the creative economy across the United Kingdom.
- To reflect the United Kingdom, its culture and values to the world.

Any other 'activities' outside of the above, such as non-service activities, commercial activities may be carried out by the BBC but **MUST** fulfil the Mission and promote one or more of the Public Purposes.

We submit that the BBC is in breach of its duties to the Public as set out in the Royal Charter and Framework Agreement in the following manner:

1. It has failed in its duty to provide impartial news and information.
2. It has allowed itself to be put in a position where its duties and interests conflict.
3. It has failed to act in the public interest by serving all audiences.
4. It has not reasonably and properly reflected the UK, its culture and values but the values and world view of a minority element of the UK in the form of a metropolitan liberal element with a separate world view not shared by the majority. It is a conduit for pervasive and institutional liberal left-wing bias.
5. It has failed to make necessary economies in the BBC with regards to salaries.

MPs were allowed for many years to claim the licence fee in their expenses from public taxes. This has now ceased. The BBC has a significant pension liability of some £530m.

Perhaps this is why over 75's must now pay a 'TV licence' to reduce this deficit?

We attach our findings that support our argument and we, the Public, believe that by their conduct the BBC are estopped from claiming their 'licence fee' from the general public.

Yours sincerely

Helen Davies

cc:

Lord Burns, Chairman Ofcom
Sir David Clementi, Chairman BBC
The Prime Minister, Rt Hon Boris Johnson, MP
The Rt Hon Dominic Raab, MP, Foreign Secretary

Brexit

The BBC was and is totally out of touch with the mood of the majority of the British people. It clearly supported the Remain side of the EU Referendum; when panels for shows were put together, they never produced balanced audiences and often allowed Remain activists to take part; even at the time of the Referendum, they referred to one of their political journalists as the 'guru'.

The public were subjected to a deluge of unashamed anti-Brexit propaganda - not just on news & current affairs programmes, but also in comedy panel shows, chat shows, even Doctor Who and Have I Got News for You!

Even on their political show, Question Time, audiences and guest panellists were rarely in 'Leaves' favour. I personally attended one show. Moving around, meeting other guests before the show, I found it extremely hard to find anyone from the actual town from which it was being broadcast, let alone having voted Leave. Filling out forms before attending, then again reaffirming on arrival, gave the production team ample knowledge of exactly who everyone was and where they were sitting as well as who they had voted for; as Dimbleby confirmed, it was the producer in his ear piece who would advise who to let speak.

They maintained continuous coverage of the 'People's Vote', yet never once showed the alternative such as a Petition delivered to Mrs. May at No 10 with over 1.2 million signatures demanding that she uphold the democratic Referendum result. They continue, even today, to report 'Russian' involvement in UK elections, however they never disclose to the general public that a foreigner to the UK, namely George Soros, funds the likes of 'Best for Britain' who are behind 'People's Vote' and campaigns to stop Brexit; one Director, an ex-political advisor the EU, who is also connected to 'Open Britain' and the Jo Cox Foundation. Other organisations such as Demos UK, Hope not Hate, Scientists for EU, Rights Watch UK and Bright Blue. Bright Blue is an independent think tank and pressure group for liberal conservatism to name a few with many MPs as members and accepts funding from George Soros.

The BBC has been caught out many times lying but has also shown itself to be nothing more than a political propaganda machine, such as with Brexit, Climate Change and even in the recent General Election. It was always biased and pushing one side of the argument.

'BBC Caught out spreading lies about climate change affecting Vietnamese crop production' (<https://www.cfact.org/2019/09/30/bbc-caught-spreading-lies-about-climate-change-vietnam-crop-production/>)

'Staged scenes of Indian children labourers sweating for a pittance for Primark' (<https://www.express.co.uk/comment/expresscomment/253400/No-surprise-that-the-BBC-has-been-caught-out-in-a-lie>)

'The BBC lied to Parliament by giving MPs and auditors glowing progress reports on a £100m computer project that embarrassingly flopped.' (https://www.theregister.com/2013/06/12/bbc_dmi_digital_media_initiative/)

'BBC caught red handed lying' (<https://countrysquire.co.uk/2020/05/02/bbc-news-caught-red-handed/>)

In the recent BLM march/protests during lockdown, the BBC reported that a woman police officer had 'knocked herself off her horse' when in fact it was a protestor that threw a brick at the horse. Even during the BLM protests, the BBC appeared to support the protests yet did not reflect that the majority of the country did not agree to statues being brought down. Even as described in the memoirs of Peter Sissons, "the BBC has continually employed producers who have single minded world views that did not include an understanding of free markets, borders, independence or anything slightly conservative. They are constantly 'London centric' in their reporting and come across as most London middle-class liberal 'elites'." Constantly out of tune with the majority of people, they were panicked by the Leave result, and portrayed the result as a consequence of 'lies, populism' and even 'Russian involvement'.

Duties and conflict of interest

With regards to work in Russia over the years, and its' now continuation of 'charitable' work around the world, with funding from major organisations like the EU, UN, UNICEF, Gates Foundation, Comic Relief, Foreign Governments etc no doubt, you, yourself, and the Foreign Secretary were well aware of this organisation as the Royal Charter states Article 54 (Overseas Concessions) that the BBC *must obtain the consent of the Foreign Secretary before it (a) acquires and licence, concession, right or privilege from; or (b) enters into any arrangement with the Government of any country or place overseas.* Also any activity must fit with the Mission and Public Purposes; and promote one or more of the Public Purposes. Such activities should support or enable the provision of the UK Public Services and the World Service. (Royal Charter and Framework refer)

In 1992, The Marshall Plan of the Mind Trust was launched to make programmes for radio and television stations in Russia.

(<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm199899/cmselect/cmfaaff/815/9101206.htm>)

"The Soros Foundation contributed the capital equipment while the Know How Fund underwrote the running costs. Members of the Foreign Affairs Committee will be aware that the Ekaterinburg school is to be expanded substantially" (BBC Media School in Ekaterinburg runs courses on production and editorial practice for television and radio journalists from all over Russia). The main funder was the Government's 'Know How Fund'.

In 1997, the BBC introduced a new company called "The BBC World Service Training Trust" with its objects *'to educate and train journalists.....' and 'educate the public in the arts and sciences including health, law, social policy, public administration...and other educational material for the benefit of the public.'*

In 1999, the Trust changed its name to the BBC World Service Trust; the trade, assets and liabilities of BBC Marshall Plan of the Mind Trust transferred into the Trust. Grants of £137,826 received from the Department for International Development and £116,306 from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

The World Service's activity in Russia funded from sources other than the Grant in Aid will in future be handled by the newly established "BBC World Service Trust" which was formerly "The BBC World Service Training Trust". BBC short wave transmitters from the UK and from Cyprus were targeted on European Russia, Ukraine and Belorussia and the focus of the Russian broadcasting was broadly on the concerns of listeners in the European part of the Soviet Union. The Russian Service is the BBC's biggest service for the Former Soviet Union. Its average airtime is more than eight hours a day (57.75 hours a week). The emphasis is heavily on news and current affairs. The Russian Service's annual budget is £5 million

together with £1.46 million for Central Asia/Caucasus and £1.2 million for Ukrainian. (from Memorandum submitted by BBC World Service to Select Committee on Foreign Affairs, September 1999)

So “The BBC World Service Training Trust” was renamed “The BBC World Service Trust” then in 2012 it was renamed, and now known as “BBC Media Action”. It is a registered charity.

It now confirms that their charitable objects include advancement of health, the prevention or relief of poverty and overseas aid in a 3 year plan (2018-2021).

Funding over the years and today come from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (£5.6m), Department for International Development (£2.3m), Met Office (£268k) which would mean that more of our taxes have been used without public knowledge.

Is the public aware of this charity and its change in organisation? Does it fulfil the principles of the Royal Charter and Public Purpose?

Although it maintains it runs as a charity and is independent of the BBC, it accepts, every year, cash unrestricted donation of £450,000 from the BBC Group and BBC Global News Ltd gift in kind office services.

Other donors are :

Comic Relief, British Council, Action Aid, Red Cross, Foreign governmental offices (USA, Canada, Norway to name a few) and universities, UN, USAID, UNICEF, UNOPS, UNESCO, World Food Programme, The EU, Gates Foundation, Barr Foundation, Irish Aid, BMB Mott McDonald have also donated throughout the years.

It has allowed itself to be put in a position where its duties and interests conflict.

This no doubt breaches the BBC’s Royal Charter, which demands independence and states that the BBC should not **‘accept funds from any organisation whose interests or actions could raise doubts about the objectivity of programming’**.

and the BBC’s own guidance policy states

The BBC should not normally enter into a partnership with a foreign government. Relationships with UK government departments, religious organisations, charities and organisations which undertake lobbying should also be treated with care to ensure our impartiality is not undermined.

(See Section 4 Impartiality: 4.4.20 - 4.4.21)

BBC Framework Article 33 (The World Service) point 2 The World Service consists of the broadcast or other distribution of output, and the delivery of services, in English and other languages, aimed primarily at users outside the UK, and is defined in the World Service Licence issued under clause 34. The World Service consists of the broadcast or other distribution of output, and the delivery of services, in English and other languages, aimed primarily at users outside the UK, and is defined in the World Service Licence issued under clause 34.

BBC World Licence Article 2

(8) Without limiting the ability of the BBC and the Foreign Secretary to agree other objectives under paragraph (6), the objectives for the World Service must contribute to the fulfilment of the Mission and the promotion of the Public Purposes including providing high-quality news coverage, current affairs and factual programming to international audiences, firmly based on British values of accuracy, impartiality, and fairness.

Although charity is commendable, expenditure was £38.6m, funding £31.2. with total income over £37m This has allowed for over 15 offices worldwide with its head office based in London. £72k for fundraising dinner and corporate partners - £18m was used to help people outside the U.K. in their 'governance' of their country.

The UK Public already contribute their taxes to Government run Foreign Aid and many other Governmental Departments use tax payers funds to help charities. Why the BBC?

BBC staff are also used and all Trustees are also Directors and members are paid by the BBC. All UK staff employed on a continuing basis have employment contracts with the BBC. Total staff costs over £14 m and total of key management over half a million.

EU funding – MPS tabled motion

Ten years ago, in 2008, 11 MPs tabled an early day motion regarding the EU funding of the BBC.

Soft loans and payments amounting to 258 million euros over the previous five years were paid by the EU to the BBC. Such payments surely compromised the independence and objectivity of the BBC? The BBC allegedly also benefited by a cash equivalent of approximately 39 million euros which was made up of 20.4 million actual saved interest on loan facilities of 240 million, 2.5 million in grants, 14.6 million to BBC World and 1.7 million euros in indirect payments. Further undisclosed sums in respect of joint projects no doubt breaches the BBC's Royal Charter, which demands independence and states that the BBC should not 'accept funds from any organisation whose interests or actions could raise doubts about the objectivity of programming'.

This motion called on the Government to establish an independent inquiry into EU funding of the BBC and its impact on the BBC's objectivity on European matters and the debate, at the time, on a referendum. It would appear that this motion was never heard.

According to the BBC's own editorial guideline policy, *"The BBC should not normally enter into a partnership with a foreign government. Relationships with UK government departments, religious organisations, charities, and organisation which undertake lobbying should also be treated with care to ensure our impartiality is not undermined."*

In the financial year 2013/14 the BBC took £878,000, while in 2014/15 it received £778,000 from the EU. The broadcaster has received £476,000 (2015/16) but may be larger.

The BBC has admitted taking more than £2 million in European Union funding over the past three years, but said it had taken the cash under the European Union framework programme, to fund its research and development arm, which is working on projects such as 3D broadcasting, and ultra-high definition filming.

According to the European Union web site on funding, for the period 2017-18, the BBC had been given a grant of 1,282,331m euros.

In 2015, the BBC was given 19,325,735 euros.

In 2016, the BBC was given 6,806,536 euros.

This no doubt breaches the BBC's Royal Charter and does not fulfil the Mission nor the Public Purpose.

Critics of the corporation said that accepting any EU funding in the run-up to the referendum, expected before the end of 2017, was inappropriate.

BBC contribution to charities

Why are the BBC donating sums to charities such as £25,000 and £50,000 yearly to Chatham House? BBC Monitoring also contributed £1,000-£9,999. This is licence fee money as is not in line with the Mission or the People's Purpose.

Salaries

The Prime Minister of UK has a salary of just over £150,000.

However, at the BBC, the Board Members, (9) total paid out was £412 million (average £457,777). Basic pay, plus pension, plus car allowance, private health care for the family, performance bonus

Executive Directors (4) had a total paid out to them 2018/19 of £1,879 million

Total paid out 2018/19 to Executive Committee (11) - £4,953 million includes (4 Executive Members)

Grand total paid out to Board and Executives for 2018/19 was £5,365 million

An extra £200,000 bonus pay was paid to the CEO of BBC studios

Huw Edwards (News at Six and News at Ten) nearly half a million pounds

Chris Evans (BBC Radio Breakfast Show) over £1,250,000m

Gary Lineker (Match of the Day, Sports Personality of the Year) over £1,750,000

How do these extortionate salaries fulfil the Mission?