

27 July 2017



Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
4th Floor
100 Parliament Street
London
SW1A 2BQ

Dear Secretary of State

Thank you for your letter of 25th July concerning Ofcom's consultation on its draft Operating Licence for the BBC. While Sharon White is replying in more detail, I am replying on behalf of the Board, as is appropriate in the circumstances.

We carry out our responsibilities as independent regulator in a carefully evidenced way which respects both the letter and spirit of the Charter and Agreement. The Board considers the issues on a regular basis, informed by legal advice, the work of the Ofcom executive and by advice from Ofcom's statutory Content Board, whose members have a wide range of experience in the sector.

We have taken great care in designing the detailed regulatory framework, including the draft Operating Licence. As Sharon sets out in more detail, we are building the new Licence and performance framework around the BBC's public purposes as established in the new Charter and the detailed requirements in the Framework Agreement. We are also mindful of the clear distinction drawn in that Charter and Agreement between the duties of the new integrated BBC Board to run the BBC, and Ofcom's responsibilities to hold the BBC fully to account and act as a strong and independent regulator.

You raise a number of issues in your letter, including some that stakeholders have raised with you, and some which are the subject of current public debate. All of them are already central to Ofcom's considerations.

It is important that, now that the Charter is sealed, the way in which we discharge our regulatory responsibilities is not only evidenced but transparently independent. That means giving and being seen to give due weight to views from a range of perspectives on how we

go about our role, in arriving at our independent judgement. I know that you will appreciate the importance of that. We will publish your letter to us and my and Sharon's replies, as we are doing with responses to our consultation, shortly.

Yours sincerely
Patricia Hodgson