



HOUSE OF LORDS

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WOMEN IN NEWS AND CURRENT AFFAIRS BROADCASTING

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Witnesses: John Hardie, Jonathan Levy and Fran Unsworth

Sonita Alleyne and Richard Ayre

USE OF THE TRANSCRIPT

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Members present

Lord Best (Chairman)
 Baroness Deech
 Lord Dubs
 Baroness Fookes
 Baroness Hanham
 Baroness Healy of Primrose Hill
 Lord Horam
 Bishop of Norwich
 Lord Razzall
 Lord Sherbourne of Didsbury

Examination of Witnesses

John Hardie, Chief Executive Officer, ITN, **Jonathan Levy**, Head of News Gathering, Sky News, and **Fran Unsworth**, Deputy Director of News and Current Affairs, BBC

Q19 The Chairman: Welcome to the three of you. Thank you very much for giving up time to come before our Committee and join in with this inquiry. It is really helpful to have you with us. Thank you indeed. We are being broadcast, as you would expect. Whether the watching world is very numerous we are not sure, but, anyway, you are on the record.

I am going to ask you, if you would, to introduce yourselves very briefly and give us your own perspective, where you are coming from, what about this inquiry is special to you. Just very briefly give us an intro to your own perspective on these matters and then we are going to have our questions around the table. We find that we run out of time quite often as the questions proceed, so I am going to ask you, if you could, to be brief. Particularly, if someone has already answered the question, we will assume that you agree with the other person unless you tell us differently. Otherwise we get each of you telling us the same story.

With those words of warning, but with our deep gratitude that you have been able to join us, could I ask you to introduce yourselves in turn and say a little bit about where you are coming from on this?

John Hardie: Good afternoon. I am John Hardie. It has been my privilege for the last five years to be Chief Executive of ITN. ITN is a privately owned, commercial company operating in television production, specialising in television news and businesses that arise from that. This Committee has previously heard evidence from me in its review of news plurality about the range, quality and distinctiveness of the services we currently provide under contract news for all three of the commercial public service broadcasters: ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5. There is no ITN editorial take on matters of the day. Each service is distinctive and our ability to make sure that such a range of successful services can thrive is, in part, built upon ITN's culture, which I would say is open, competitive and egalitarian. That includes the fact that it has been and continues to be a place where women can thrive, can build long-term careers and rise to the very highest levels. Today, as I am sure we will explore in more detail, we are seeking to amplify that culture through our policies and day-to-day practices and find more ways to improve our performance in broader diversity as

well as in gender equality. We welcome the work of this Committee in exploring new initiatives in this area.

Fran Unsworth: I am Fran Unsworth and I am the Deputy Director of BBC News and Current Affairs. I suspect that I do not need to tell you what BBC news and current affairs does; I think everybody probably knows that. I have worked as a woman in the BBC now for more than 30 years, so I guess I have some firsthand experience of what it is like to work in such an organisation. If I can address the point here directly of this Committee, I think it is fair to say that at BBC News we have been possibly somewhat late to the party on this issue. Whilst you do not want to get ahead of your audience, for some years we were behind the audience in this question of, particularly, gender representation on the air. We have spent the last couple of years, probably, putting in place quite a lot of policies and measures to bring ourselves up to speed with this, which are now beginning to pay off, but we are not there yet.

However, we are making some progress. It has been specified as a priority for our Director-General, Tony Hall and for James Harding, the Director of News and Current Affairs, who have made diversity a centrepiece of their own strategies.

If we look at some of the figures on gender in the BBC and in news, it is not bad. Across the BBC as a whole it is 48% of the workforce and, in news, 47% of the staff are female. However, when you get down to how many are in leadership roles those figures get worse: about 37%, by our count, are in leadership roles, so there is some clear room for improvement there. Having said that, we do have quite a few critical roles that are filled by women: Fiona Campbell, current affairs; me; Sue English, Head of Political Programmes; Helen Boaden ran news for eight years. We recently appointed some women to quite key on-air roles and a few examples are: Carrie Gracie in China, Katya Adler is about to take up a post in Europe and I could mention many others.

We have also launched a number of initiatives to improve diversity on-air as well. We have a programme that we started and are sharing with the industry called the Expert Women programme, which is training women as specialists in order for them to be confident enough to appear on our programmes. We also have a project called 100 Women, which is a global project looking at women around the world and featuring them in our output. Internally, we have several women-in-leadership programmes underway, which are about mentoring and sponsorship for key women to get them into senior positions and a global women-in-news network, which is an internal body that has about 900 members across the BBC. So, whilst I would undoubtedly say there is some way to go, it is fair to say that we are making some progress too.

Jonathan Levy: Good afternoon. I am Jonathan Levy. I am Head of News Gathering at Sky News, which is a 24-hour news organisation owned by BSkyB. I am very grateful for the opportunity to appear before you to reiterate Sky's commitment to the equal representation of women in news and current affairs. Sky News, I believe, has made great strides in this area in the last two years. We have manifestly increased the number of female contributors to Sky News in our coverage, from around 20% in 2012 to over 35% today, and women are also very well represented in leadership roles, both on-air and off-air at Sky. We have some very high profile women in our presenter line-up—Kay Burley, Anna Botting—and also in senior reporting roles—Alex Crawford. Two members of our political team are women, an area where, in the past, there has not been great representation. We are proud that our

editorial staff comprises a 50-50 split between men and women and we also have women in some significant leadership roles behind the camera, including the Head of Home News, the Head of Operations, the Head of Politics and also her deputy. So, whilst it is not exactly job done, we think we are making great progress in this area.

Q20 The Chairman: Thank you very much. You have answered, more or less, the starting point question, so thank you for that. There are a couple of edges to that that I might just explore with you. Regarding changes over the last five years, all of you except perhaps you, John Hardie, have addressed the question of change in recent years. At ITN, would you say things are very different from five years ago?

John Hardie: I did not take the opportunity to maybe go into as much detail with my submission earlier. I started with the culture of ITN, so let me expand on that. I said earlier that I thought it was a place where women can and do thrive and that is true more so now than, perhaps, ever, but it has been a proud history. Women at ITN have not simply had jobs; they have been in leadership positions and have defined part of ITN over its history, from Diana Edwards-Jones in the 1960s, Dame Sue Tinson in 1982, the first editor of a national news programme, all the way to Deborah Turness, who until just over a year ago was the editor of ITV News. Now, having had a long-term career at ITN, she is the President of NBC News, not only the first non-US national to hold that position, but the first female to hold that position. Those are just the tip of the iceberg. There are many more examples of that in ITN's history and current days.

What has happened in the last few years is that we have recognised the strength of that culture, but also sought to introduce policies and practices to amplify the culture that was already there, in particular in the area of flexible working practices and making more accommodations so that women in particular, but also men who are part of relationships, can adjust their working life in order to plan and continue a career for a much longer time than perhaps was the case 10 or 15 years ago.

Again, I would put this in the context of our broader diversity policy, because the policy that we have created most recently is one about diversity and equality, because we do not think you can simply isolate the issue of gender equality and not put it in the context of broader diversity requirements. For all of us in broadcasting, including in news broadcasting, this has become a much sharper area of focus in the last few years, so I do think that we have made steps forward. We have particularly paid attention to decision-makers, so women going into roles that make all the key decisions, and we are pleased that, across ITN, 51% of our editorial staff are female. Those are the ones making the news decisions of the day, the decisions about contributors and the major hiring decisions. We recognise that in some areas behind the camera—camera operators and so forth—we are slightly at the lower end of the scale and that is something we need to look at more. So I think we have made progress on top of a good history, but we will absolutely say that we want to go further, particularly in the context of broader diversity within both our workforce and our representation onscreen.

The Chairman: Thank you very much. Fran Unsworth, on the difference between radio broadcasting and TV, are women in a different place in those two aspects of broadcasting?

Fran Unsworth: No, I do not think they are, because we are a newsroom that has merged, in effect, so radio and TV work out of the same buildings; people cross over between radio and

TV. If you work in the newsgathering department, you work across radio and TV and the web, so I do not think there is a particular difference in gender balance between radio and TV at the BBC, no.

The Chairman: Thank you for that. I am going to turn to my colleagues now and ask them to declare any interests before they speak.

Q21 Baroness Healy of Primrose Hill: Obviously, editorial freedom and independence are key for you, but do you feel that news and current affairs has a particular responsibility to accurately reflect the gender balance of its audience and society as a whole? Does that affect how you produce the news?

John Hardie: The short answer is yes. We think it is both an ethical and a commercial imperative to be better representative of the audience we serve. The ethical reasons are clear, I believe. What we also find, though, is that, for an audience out there, we are sometimes appraised at ITN for getting through to people, and you have to get the totality of Britain right. Therefore, when people watching us see people on screen that they can identify with and see are like themselves, that we are covering the right kind of news stories and we are not missing things because we do not have the right representation among our staff and that we are bringing on contributors who broadly represent the general public, that makes it a stronger programme and it makes it more likely that our ratings will be better. Therefore, from an ITN point of view, we absolutely see a complete convergence of ethical and commercial needs to make further progress in this area.

Fran Unsworth: At the BBC, we take the view that absolutely we need a diverse workforce and that is about the universal licence fee. Everybody pays the licence fee, so therefore everybody has the right to see themselves reflected back in our editorial choices and in how we present what we are doing. There are particular responsibilities that go along with the licence fee in this particular area, yes.

Jonathan Levy: Likewise, I would echo that. Ethically there is a responsibility, but also there is a fundamental editorial responsibility. Both in front of the camera and behind the camera, the greater the diversity of voices, the more likely you are to more accurately reflect the world upon which you are reporting. If you limit the number of people contributing to the editorial conversation, you are going to get narrower coverage, so both ethically and editorially there is a huge responsibility to have the right representation of the genders.

Q22 Lord Dubs: Despite what you say, we have had evidence from individuals and groups who suggest that women with professional experience and expertise are not considered by news and current affairs broadcasters for recruitment and promotion. Indeed, the NUJ said, "Women journalists still earn less than their male counterparts and are denied the same promotion opportunities, either because of unfair recruitment processes or because family responsibilities have narrowed or curtailed their careers". Do you have any formal procedures to ensure that recruitment for your news and current affairs positions is fair and based on merit? Can you tell us something about them?

Jonathan Levy: To begin with, in terms of pay there is no disparity between male and female employees at Sky. They are paid the same, given equal experience and qualification for the role, and all our employment procedures are completely open and transparent. We are an equal-opportunity employer.

In terms of the policies and procedures we have in place, in order to have women return to the workforce having left to have children, we have a very generous maternity procedure. We offer 26 weeks' fully paid and a further 13 weeks' statutory pay, which encourages women to return to work having had children. We have flexible work practices for returning mothers and, as I referenced earlier, we have women in senior editorial positions across Sky News, including the Head of Home News, the Head of Operations and the Head of Politics, so I do not recognise the phenomenon that previous contributors to this Committee have identified.

Fran Unsworth: There is no question at the BBC but that people are appointed on merit. That is not the issue and it is an open and transparent process, but you have to look at whether there is a thinning out and why there is a thinning out of the available women to apply for senior jobs within an organisation. The figures speak for themselves: 37% of leadership roles are filled by women in the BBC, not 50%, so you have to ask yourself why that is. Where I part company with, possibly, previous people who have given evidence to this Committee is in the sense that it is a discrimination thing. I think it is more complex than that. If we are looking at what these jobs are, at the time at which women are going to be competing for them, they are probably in their mid-30s. Quite a lot of women might rule themselves out of these roles because some of them are absolutely full on, time consuming. We can go some way towards making it easier for them—job shares, flexible working—but there is quite a lot of work involved in a senior editorial job. Some women have told me that it comes at a particular time in their lives when possibly they do not want to commit to that much work. The available pool that you are choosing from then becomes narrower. Of course, that then has a knock-on effect all the way up and we have to think very hard about how we would want to address this, because we do want to address it.

John Hardie: I would amplify some of those comments. In terms of women getting jobs that matter, ITN has three editors and three deputy editors. All six of those positions were recruited in the last two years; three of those positions are women and three are men. As far as the pay and so forth is concerned, like everyone else, we have the same pay levels for the same jobs. Every year, we sit down and we take a look at all our people, because we do annual pay increases across the company, but then we do a review of all individuals to see if, for any reason, any group or any person has fallen out of line from benchmarking, not just from a point of view of gender equality, but for whatever reason. Recommendations are made. I personally review all those and we make adjustments, so we are attuned, because I guess the underlying issue can be, if someone steps off the ladder for a couple of maternity leaves, say, and they come back on, have they fallen behind? We are always looking for what that individual is doing and whether they are being paid the proper, appropriate market rate for their job. Like my colleagues here, I do not recognise the quite strongly expressed statements or findings that other people have come forward with. I think we are quite attuned to the issue here of equal pay for equal work.

Lord Dubs: So you think the quote from the NUJ does not have a basis in fact.

John Hardie: All I can say is what do we recognise in our own practice? What do we recognise in ITN? We have not run that same study among our own people. We do not know how much is recent. I can tell you what it is like today in ITN and in the five years since I have been there and I am absolutely convinced that there is certainly no intentional bias or discrimination. We actively seek to root out any unintentional bias or unintentional discrepancies in pay awards or anything else to do with advancement within the company.

Q23 Baroness Hanham: I am assuming that, because you have to, you all have open policies on employment and on equality as well. Are those monitored pretty regularly and are the figures made available? Between all of you, it looks as though there are two yeses or a yes and a no, so yes you have the policies, all open, all monitored and the information all made public.

Fran Unsworth: As far as I know, yes. We are all signed up, I think, to something called the Creative Diversity Network.

Baroness Hanham: It comes through that.

Fran Unsworth: Yes.

Baroness Hanham: I just want to put to one side for a moment your own staff and take you to the people who appear on television, because a lot of the complaints that we have heard have been not so much—and you have given us the figures—the people employed but simply the people who are appearing on the news programmes, on the current affairs, whatever, and that there seems to be a general lack amongst those of women. Do you have procedures that you go through when you are going to put somebody on? You were talking, Fran, about the training programmes that you have to help people come on, but when you are making the decision who to ask to come on to a current affairs programme, what matters most: that the person concerned—it does not matter what sex—happens to know the most about it or that they are a woman and can be put on because they know at least enough about it?

John Hardie: This is an area that has had much more attention in the last couple of years and credit and hats off to *Broadcast* magazine and Lis Howell for making it front and centre. We started looking at this more intently a couple of years ago. What we realise, of course, is that we are in the business of making television programmes and often the item you are covering is started that morning and you have to get some live television together later that day, so it is a little bit too late that morning to think, “We need an expert contributor. I wonder if there is a woman out there who may be able to do it”. What we have been doing is trying to build up a reservoir that we can go to, because on any given subject you need a group of people, since not all of them are available, not all of them are exactly right. We have actively done that at ITN in the last few years. What you see is, as the numbers get reported, there is great fluctuation in any given news week and we are more successful some times than others at getting a female expert on to take part. Here we are talking about those who can take part on a live television bulletin at 6.30, 7 o’clock in the evening, so they can be interrogated, so they can take part in the discussion and so forth. That is the area we have been seeking to make more progress on.

In terms of a procedure for that, it is about building up the reservoir and particularly finding female contributors in the less typical areas, finding more who can comment on business and economics matters and so forth as opposed to some of the more stereotypical matters from the past. That is what we do and we have been quite serious about it. We have not set a target or quota for that yet, because we also are mindful, on a day-to-day basis, of the importance of the freedom of journalistic expression. We want to make sure, on any given day, any editor is putting on television exactly the contributors they believe will tell the story and do the news best that day.

Baroness Hanham: Can I just interrupt you there? In fact, what you are saying is that you do not have quotas. Can I take you back to the monitoring? Do you, perhaps, over a couple of weeks go back and say, "The bias in favour of men appearing was 70% to 30%" or, "We have done very well this week and we have equality at 50/50"? Do you know that, so that you can work with that?

John Hardie: It is maybe not quite as formal or systematised as the way that you characterised it there. Frankly, no. We have been seeing *Broadcast* magazine running more reports. We take our own account of that. We compare and contrast sometimes to see if we are looking at things differently, but we have not made that a part of a built-in, rigid system.

Baroness Hanham: Would it be helpful?

John Hardie: There is a wider question about the role of quotas and measurement here. In fact, I was thinking that it will be interesting to see what the conclusions of this group are. It may be that we need to do that, but you then have to start considering common industry-wide standards and practices of doing it, because what *Broadcast* magazine might consider to be a female or a male contributor may not be what we are doing in a time and place. If we are going to move towards that kind of monitoring there has to be commonality across the industry for doing that and then we have to ask: what is the reason for doing it? We do not do it in quite that rigid fashion just now, but we are open to consider proposals on it.

Baroness Hanham: Fran, would you like to say anything?

Fran Unsworth: Yes. I prefer the carrot rather than the stick way of doing this and it is more effective to explain to our producers, who select the guests, why this is an important issue if they are going to serve the needs of their audiences. They are very alert to it already and, whilst we do not have any formal monitoring measures, they undoubtedly count on a daily basis and they look at their running orders carefully and say, "We are not necessarily being representative; what can we do about that?" Of course, in some ways, if you are the editor of the *Today* programme, some of the people you will be putting on air are self-selecting. There is not much you can do about the fact that the Governor of the Bank of England is a man or the Prime Minister or whatever.

Then you get to the bit where you can select. That is why this Expert Women programme was launched, because producers up against deadlines reach for their contacts book and they go for the tried and tested. They have a duty to get people on who are going to engage an audience and explain things clearly and properly: "Oh, we know that they are good; let us put them on". This programme was a way of widening that pool. We set up these days all over the country and in the nations to invite women in, provide them with some training, suggest how they might train themselves, what they might appear on. We have set up a YouTube channel where they can showcase themselves and it is paying dividends. I prefer that way of doing things to a more formal monitoring way, because of course, if we were to monitor, this would not be the only subject we would have to monitor on and you might have all your journalists spending all their time counting rather than producing the programmes, because there are many, many issues of importance to our audience that they would like us to make sure that we are balanced about.

Q24 Lord Horam: I understand what you are saying, but the problem is that carrots can take a long time to have an effect. We heard some evidence from Karen Ross, who is Professor of Media at Northumbria University, who said it would take 43 years at present progress for women to equal men in the media. I am just presenting you with that and it may be you are unfamiliar with it, but the fact is that, from our point of view, if you look at Parliament, undoubtedly, whether you agree or disagree with it, the biggest difference for women is women-only shortlists, straight quotas. Are you prepared to consider that?

Fran Unsworth: Not really, no. It is best if one sticks to the idea that we are going to give the audience the person who explains their point of view in the best possible way. It is a question of editorial independence to some extent.

Lord Horam: All this is very vague, is it not? I understand where you are coming from. There are a lot of complex considerations and it is not only women but other aspects of equality to consider and so forth, and programme content and quality, but it all means it is a mush, does it not? There are no real targets.

Fran Unsworth: You say Parliament and all-women shortlists. The Cabinet does not have that many women representatives in it. Plus, also, you would be looking to the broadcasters to resolve some of the societal issues. It comes back to the point that I was making.

Lord Horam: You say you want to do that. You say that you should do that.

Fran Unsworth: Well, I cannot deal with the fact that the Governor of the Bank of England is a man, which has an impact on the overall numbers of women or men who would appear on programmes.

Lord Horam: No, of course you cannot, but nonetheless you say the BBC should deal with some of these societal issues.

Jonathan Levy: I could perhaps provide some insight here, because we do set a target of 35% female guest experts.

Lord Horam: Why is it 35%?

Jonathan Levy: I will come to that in a moment. The reason why we set a target is we think it is important to focus the minds of the people booking guests, because, for reasons I will come to and as Fran has outlined, it takes a lot more time and effort sometimes to find a female guest than it takes to find a male guest. By setting the target, we feel that that focuses the minds of the people doing it and it has been successful. We monitor that weekly and we are currently running at about 37% of our contributors.

As Fran has outlined, it is very difficult. If you are doing a Budget Day, for example, there are no former female chancellors. Only 23% of MPs are women. It is difficult to get female contributors within the Westminster context to talk about Budget Day. At the last Budget we managed to have a 50-50 split amongst our contributors and we did that by going beyond Westminster to small businesses, to families, to areas where we are more likely to find female guests and experts, but it is very challenging. If you take two of the biggest news stories of the last year, they have been aviation stories, the two involving the Malaysian aircraft. There are very few female pilots. There are even fewer, if any, former pilots.

Lord Horam: At least you have targets, though. You do not like targets, Ms Unsworth.

Fran Unsworth: I query whether they are necessary. I saw some research on *Question Time*, for instance, which is a panel programme, as you know. In the snapshot that we took, 41% of the panellists were women. You could say that that should be 50%, but what is the appropriate target to set? That would be my question here. Who decides what the appropriate target to set is, given that these are editorial matters? How do we count? What are we counting?

Lord Horam: Managers do not pay any attention to targets unless they are monitored consistently, unless they have a run of data that they are measured against. If you can say to me that over a period of, say, five years you are showing a consistent line of improvement and have the data to do it and the managers are held to account for that, I would say that is a good thing. I do not think you are doing that, any of you; possibly Mr Levy is.

Jonathan Levy: We are. We have shown an improvement from 22% in 2012 to 36.6% now. The KPIs for the team that book guests and for the manager running that team are also based on hitting and maintaining that target, so I do, to an extent, concur with what you are saying and we are setting a target, we are reaching it and we are monitoring it.

Q25 Lord Razzall: I should start by declaring a non-financial interest, in that my daughter until recently was employed by ITN and my daughter is currently employed by the BBC in news and current affairs.

I have some sympathy with the point that Lord Horam was making, but let me try to see if we can get a more precise question. You have all indicated, and Sky probably has gone further than the other two, that you have voluntary measures in place to endeavour to promote gender balance. I guess my question is: how do you ensure that the measures that you have put in place, i.e. specific or vaguer, are properly implemented? We know your answer, but what about the BBC?

Fran Unsworth: Lord Horam was suggesting that we do not look at it. We actually do look at it, which is how I came up with the figure of *Question Time* panellists, but we tend to snapshot look at it, i.e. look at it at a moment in time, rather than continuously monitor it. Editors are very aware of this and very keen that it should be addressed. It is in the *Today* programme editor's objectives, for instance. It is in all our senior editors' objectives and they would have to be able to demonstrate, over time, that they were doing something about this.

Lord Razzall: What would the mechanism be for them having to demonstrate over time?

Fran Unsworth: They would snapshot for themselves and, as I said earlier, in drawing up every running order they look at their gender balance on it already. The idea that people do not do anything unless they have something formal is what I am rejecting here. They do.

Lord Razzall: How many times since you have been doing the job you are doing have you had an editor in and said, "I am not sure that you are getting the right gender balance"?

Fran Unsworth: It comes up at their appraisals if we feel there is a problem.

Lord Razzall: Can you give a rough figure as to how many editors you have had to bring that up with at their appraisal?

Fran Unsworth: I have not done those appraisals in the last year or so, but if you take *Newsnight*, which set itself a target of having more women on, I look at it and I frequently see all-women panels on discussions. I saw an array of three female economists.

Lord Razzall: I am sure that is entirely my daughter's influence.

Fran Unsworth: There is an effective mechanism already in place for delivering this; that is my argument.

Q26 Lord Sherbourne of Didsbury: I am a bit unclear on one thing. You talk about the measures, policies and procedures you have in place and I can understand what those are in relation to encouraging a supply of more women, so they come forward, they are better trained, they are more confident. You have explained this. Leaving aside the supply aspect of it, what are the procedures, measures or policies you have in place other than supply? In other words, how does it work in practice when people are running programmes and, with the supply that exists at that time, what do they have to do to implement your policy?

John Hardie: First of all, in terms of the question of policy and implementation, there is a distinction here between employment and contributors. In terms of employment, it is very, very clear. We have clear policies on all aspects, whether it is recruitment at the most junior levels, considering promotions; our HR people will sit with the department managers every time and ensure that, in every aspect of what they are doing in terms of recruitment and shortlists and so forth, we get the best match-up we can.

Lord Sherbourne of Didsbury: I understand supply.

John Hardie: No, it is not supply. This is the point that was asked about implementation of these policies. This is in the area of employment. We are very clear that, in the day-by-day working practice, we do not just have a policy and an objective; we are implementing it properly.

In the area of contributors, I have to respectfully disagree with some of the comments made. The idea of setting targets is interesting, but there are issues with it that you have to recognise.

Lord Sherbourne of Didsbury: I am sorry to interrupt. The point I am trying to get at is, there is, at any moment in time, a supply of women available and I understand absolutely all the procedures you have in place to encourage women to be available, etc. How does it work in practice when you are running these news programmes? What are the policies or what do people have to do to try to get more women to appear? Is it purely a supply problem? Do you understand the question? Am I being unclear?

Jonathan Levy: There is often a supply problem.

Lord Sherbourne of Didsbury: Is there another problem? I understand the supply.

Jonathan Levy: There is not a problem in that there is not a demand problem.

Lord Sherbourne of Didsbury: So it is purely a supply problem.

Jonathan Levy: In the case of Sky News, we have set a target, which I suppose is the demand side. There is a supply problem in certain stories because the female experts are not necessarily there, so we have had to do other work to try to increase that supply.

Lord Sherbourne of Didsbury: I understand that, but what I am getting at is that if it is more than a supply problem, what is the problem?

Jonathan Levy: I would say it is mainly a problem with supply, because in terms of attitudes within the newsroom we feel we have effected a quite fundamental shift.

Lord Sherbourne of Didsbury: Is that a general view? It is only a supply problem.

John Hardie: I am sorry. I was trying to answer a question earlier. It is about what the supply is, but the reason we have issues about quotas is, on any given day, if you simply say to your editorial staff, "You must hit this number. This is the number to hit, okay, because obviously that is then measurable", you are making a major interference with journalistic freedom and the ability to hold power to account. They have to be able to say, "Yes, we are creating a greater supply of experts and contributors we can bring on and, yes, over the course of a year on a monthly basis we are reviewing what is happening", but you cannot go further than that. To your point, Lord Horam, if you say, "You had better hit this number", you set targets and you measure, they will take them seriously and, by hook or by crook, will get to those numbers and that might mean you are compromising journalistic integrity. We have to get a balance here in making sure we do increase that supply, do make it important to people who are making those decisions, but do not straitjacket them simply to hit a certain set of numbers. That is a balance we have to do. It comes to editorial judgment and that is a key policy with our programmes. You rely upon editorial judgment to get these things right rather than have everything done by a set of rules, numbers, guidelines and specific targets to hit.

Q27 The Lord Bishop of Norwich: Each of your organisations belongs to the Creative Diversity Network, as you mentioned earlier on. I am not entirely clear whether the findings of the network and what it discovers are made public, and whether gender equality is as important to that network as ethnic diversity.

Fran Unsworth: It is, and we are in the process of producing a tool to enable us to monitor it more effectively across the whole industry. We held a pilot earlier this year. The information that was produced was shared and we are working on producing something that is an ongoing—

The Lord Bishop of Norwich: Is this shared publicly rather than just between you?

Fran Unsworth: Yes. I think it is on the website.

The Lord Bishop of Norwich: However, Project Silvermouse, which is being planned at the moment, is simply about ethnic diversity, is it not, rather than gender equality?

Fran Unsworth: The tool that we are working on is about gender equality.

The Lord Bishop of Norwich: Is that separate from Project Silvermouse?

John Hardie: ITN is a member of the network and I take part in the committee of chief executives. I hesitate to answer on behalf of the CDN, because I think they would do a better job than me, but my understanding of Silvermouse is it will measure and get a standard across the industry looking at gender, age, ethnicity, sexuality and disability; all five of those groups will be assessed. It is a very significant project to try to get, for the first time, a common standard across the industry that they can work on. I think it does include that, but I can get the CDN to give a more detailed response to the Committee on that.

The Lord Bishop of Norwich: That would be valuable.

The Chairman: Do we know when the findings are going to be published?

Jonathan Levy: In the New Year, I believe.

The Chairman: Right, so not so far away.

Q28 Baroness Deech: I have an interest to declare in that my daughter was at the BBC, in news, for 14 years, but has just left this year.

I am interested in whether a change of culture is needed in broadcasting and television to improve the representation of women, and I mean that in two senses. One is something that you share with all industries, which is making sure that there is no harassment and bullying and so on. The other is something that really strikes home with me and I think many women in this House: the culture of “lookism”, if I can call it that. You said, Ms Unsworth, that there is no difference between radio and television. In fact, on radio we hear all the time the very pleasant and well informed voices of women, but on television you do not see them. You said that you want to reflect the makeup of the country. Half of the country are women, and a huge number of them are older. In the US, they have somebody called Candy Crowley, who is in her 60s. She conducted the interview between Obama and Hillary Clinton, but I note that in your plans for the election broadcasts next year we have David Dimbleby again: white haired and 76. I have not seen a white haired woman of 76 on television ever, certainly not presenting or facilitating, so why can we not see senior women, older women on television? You hear them on radio sometimes, but you only see these model types on television, I am afraid.

Fran Unsworth: I cannot point to any women, I accept, of 76. There are not that many men either of 76, truthfully. There is David Dimbleby, John Simpson, John Humphrys and I struggle after that. However, I can point to considerable numbers of women in their 50s on television working for the BBC: Bridget Kendall, Lyse Doucet, Maxine Mawhinney, who is a presenter on the News Channel, Carole Walker, who is a presenter on the News Channel and political correspondent. There are quite significant numbers of women into their 50s, I would say.

I do not disagree with you, however, and I think this goes to the heart in terms of lookism. It would be foolish of me to say that there is not something in what you are saying. However, it goes back to what I was saying at the start, which is that this is a subject that we have only woken up to, in that respect, in the last few years. We assumed, as broadcasters, that this was an audience preference without ever properly exploring that. I do not think it is an audience preference, and we have only in the last few years taken that on board and attempted to address it. You have to wait until the existing generation, as it were, develop and see what it is that they want to do and how they want to develop their careers, because of course they have a choice in it too. If you look at what John Simpson does, there are not many people who want to run around Afghanistan in their 70s. However, I do think this is something that will improve going forward.

Baroness Deech: Being a reporter is one thing. Being in a position of authority is something else, and I think that is what we are really interested in. You mentioned Dimbleby and you mentioned Humphrys. Just think how much good it would do for women if we had older women in those positions. I may speak for many round this table when I say that we were rather disappointed, after our report into election broadcasting, to find that, yet again, a

man was going to be hosting not the ITV one but certainly the BBC and one other broadcast between the candidates, as so far announced. How much stronger does that message have to be before we see older women giving heart to women who are watching, saying, “Look, an older woman is in a position of authority on the screen and it does not matter what she looks like”?

Fran Unsworth: What I would say to that is that David Dimbleby is one of our premier political interviewers. He does *Question Time* every week, he is hugely experienced at doing elections and I think there is a natural post for him doing that particular role in terms of the debate. That does not mean to say, however, that women will be excluded from our election programming. They will be included. We have not announced our line-up yet, but there is absolutely no doubt that they will be involved in election programming.

Baroness Deech: I mean no disrespect to Dimbleby, who of course is quite wonderful, but it rather illustrates the point that has been made on my left, which is that it is so easy just to reach for the authoritative man whom you happen to know about and not go out there to look for an older woman who could do the job just as well, for all we know.

Lord Razzall: No doubt you will use the same argument in 2020.

Fran Unsworth: What, that David Dimbleby is the person to do it?

Lord Razzall: He is very experienced; he will not look any different.

Fran Unsworth: We will have to see when we get there.

The Chairman: Can I just pick up on Baroness Deech’s question about the difference between broadcasting and television? Earlier, you were saying, Fran Unsworth, that you did not really think there was much of a difference, but Baroness Deech was rather making the point that there was quite a significant difference.

Baroness Deech: You hear the lovely voices of Libby Purves, Gillian Reynolds and Jenni Murray on *Woman’s Hour*, but you do not see them.

Fran Unsworth: I think you have a point, which I have conceded. We have begun to address this as an issue—there is no doubt that the case of Miriam O’Reilly has highlighted some of this too—and are in the process of addressing whether our policies around putting older women on screen were the correct ones or not. However, we have to wait now until a generation gains in age before they will be 70 and, as I have outlined, I think there are quite a number of people who are on television in their 50s taking quite prominent roles.

Baroness Deech: It is disappointing if we have to wait a generation. I think it is really quite crucial now. We do not have time to go into it, but it would be interesting to know how certain women do manage to get to those positions and others do not. However, I do think it would be a shame if we have to wait a generation; I really do.

Fran Unsworth: Of course, the television presenter pool is quite small in terms of the highest profile, but, if you look at our gender balance on the News Channel, BBC World and *Newsnight*, there are a lot of female presenters, some of them in their 50s, Kirsty Wark being one of them.

Baroness Deech: Forgive me, but to us here 50 seems really quite young. I have made my point.

Q29 Baroness Fookes: I would like to look at a practical difficulty that faces women in many professions; that is, balancing their career progression against family commitments. That is not going to go away. What interests me is what practical steps your organisations take to provide a more flexible working environment, so perhaps you would like to outline what you do, if you do.

Jonathan Levy: As I referenced earlier, at Sky we are always open to women returning from having children to flexible working arrangements. We always entertain those requests. We always look to accommodate them and, certainly in my time at Sky—I have been there for 12 years—I cannot think of one instance where we have not found an accommodation. We have many women who have come back to work after having children and we have a flexible approach to all working parents at Sky. Also, we have a generous maternity arrangement where women who leave to have children are fully paid for six months, which encourages women to have children and, after having children, to come back into the workforce. We do not tend to lose them as much as we might and there is lots of support, with many networks within Sky that look to support working parents.

Baroness Fookes: The BBC?

Fran Unsworth: We have the same policies around flexible working options being available to people. Job shares were available before, but now we are looking at every job being a potential job share, which is something that we have introduced recently. We take our responsibilities towards all parents seriously in this matter.

John Hardie: We are somewhat similar, and this is an area where we have made a lot of progress in the last few years. Many of our female staff have availed themselves of such changes, including some of the most senior. We are a relatively small company and, therefore, it is very important that we retain our talented people, recognising that it is about not just maternity leave itself but those several years afterwards. The various arrangements have been either going part-time or job-sharing, but also looking at more flexible-working-hour arrangements: starting later, working a bit later, shorter working hours. Often people will go onto a four-day week so they have that time. Like Jonathan, I may be wrong, but I cannot think of any request that has been made in the last few years that we have not found a way to make it work. We have also introduced extended paternity leave for employees and, yes, we do have a few internal company marriages, but I think it is now a major contribution, and we are finding more and more cases where the home workload needs to be shared and so we are presenting that. Then, when people are on maternity leave, we give them paid days to come in and keep in contact, because one of the things we heard back from women who had taken maternity leave and had taken, say, longer time off is that they felt they were falling out of contact. We will give them 10 days, for which we pay, while they are not working for us full-time to come back and keep in touch and do that kind of thing. That has worked for us extremely well.

Baroness Fookes: You are trying to keep them in the workforce and that is fine, but what about progression to higher positions?

John Hardie: There is lots of self-interest involved here. Some of those women who are now in the more senior positions of editor, deputy editor, home editor and so forth are the very people who have had children, who have gone through periods of time where they have had different working arrangements, and they have not only caught up again, in any sense, but have found themselves at the top of the organisation, so I think that works.

Baroness Fookes: Is that true of the others?

Fran Unsworth: Yes, I think it is. It comes back to what I was saying at the outset. We have the policies in place, which are around exactly as John has outlined and they are very similar at the BBC, but you do have to look at whether there is nonetheless a thinning out at senior levels of women. Is it because of their caring responsibilities? Can they easily marry a very demanding job with having small children, for instance? Some of them tell me that they do find it difficult, no matter what your policies are. That is around quite a lot of what you have to do outside the office; it is around not being able to leave the home at a certain time. That is why I said at the outset it is quite a complex picture. We try to make it as easy as possible for people, for the same reasons that John outlined: we want women to progress in their careers irrespective of whether they have caring responsibilities or not, but it is not always easy.

Baroness Fookes: No, but, to return to Lady Deech's point, if you were prepared to have much older women, that would give them a wider window of opportunity, would it not?

Fran Unsworth: It would and, in fact, one of the things that we have found, particularly at the senior editorial levels, is that quite often people start to progress their career as they get older.

Jonathan Levy: I think there is evidence that it is working. I agree with Fran; it is a very complex issue. There are many factors, but there is plenty of evidence at Sky, as I am sure at other broadcasters, that it is working. As you say, there are also women at Sky who have more grown-up children, whose careers have flourished once the children have grown up. Alex Crawford, who is one of the most distinguished foreign correspondents, has four children, for example, and her career as a foreign correspondent came when the kids were older. There is plenty of evidence that the flexibility and adaptability we have shown is bearing fruit in that area.

Q30 The Chairman: Can I just ask about freelance work, because you all use freelancers now? Is that way of working particularly problematic for women? Has using freelancers had an adverse impact on your employment of women? Is it more difficult for them?

John Hardie: What we have found is that it depends on the nature of the job the freelancer is doing. It can be quite an advantage for some women. If the job is coming in and spending a day in the office and the nature of the work is something like freelance, but really you are doing almost like short-term contracts—so coming in for a couple of months; it is holiday season; you can do a lot of holiday cover and you are on the news desk—that works pretty well. That gives women and men great flexibility and they enjoy the freelancing. If the nature of the work is you get a call at 7 o'clock in the morning, you need to be in Preston, there is a big story and you get your camera and go and do that, that is harder if you have less flexibility in your household arrangements. It depends on the nature of the freelance work. For some types of work, it can be quite helpful; for others, it is not. It is as difficult for a freelancer as it is for a full-time employee to live that kind of life where it is: "Hit the road now, you are going somewhere", depending on their home life.

Lord Sherbourne of Didsbury: Can I just ask one question following up Baroness Deech? There was a word, I think, and forgive me if I misheard you; this is in relation to Fran but it probably applies to all three. You were talking about the absence of or not enough older women on television and I inferred, maybe incorrectly: do you think there is or has been a

policy not to put older women on television? In particular, I am thinking of the way in which certain men have moved from radio to television. We were talking about the various female broadcasters. Evan Davis is a very good example, who has been on television, then radio and back to television. Has there been a policy, do you think, either overt or cultural, which is: “We do not want to have older women on television”—I am talking particularly of BBC One, the main channel—“because we think it might not be what viewers want”?

Fran Unsworth: No, there has been no policy.

Lord Sherbourne of Didsbury: A cultural attitude, then.

Fran Unsworth: Possibly, although you have to remember Anna Ford, of course, read the news into her 70s, I think.

Lord Razzall: She was very upset to be forced to leave.

Fran Unsworth: She was not forced to leave. She chose to leave. She may have had her own reasons for that, but she was not forced to. There is clearly no policy.

Lord Sherbourne of Didsbury: I do not mean a formal policy, but a cultural mindset.

Fran Unsworth: I think there was somewhat, yes.

Baroness Fookes: A natural assumption.

Fran Unsworth: I think that is right, yes.

Lord Sherbourne of Didsbury: Do you think that has gone?

Fran Unsworth: I do, yes. That is what I have been trying to say.

Lord Sherbourne of Didsbury: Would you agree with that, from ITN’s point of view?

John Hardie: I do not quite have the length of experience on that, but, on reflection today, I do not think there is any sense—and I am sure it is true across all broadcasters—of a “sell by date” for either sex on presenting. There clearly is an underrepresentation of women over 60 as main anchors on national programmes and there are probably historical reasons for that. However, today, I am very confident that there is no underlying sense of that at all and I agree with Fran: there is a generation of women in their 50s who are the best in the business at what they do and will continue to be the best in the business at what they do. I do not know if that characterisation did apply, but I do not think it applies today.

Jonathan Levy: Likewise, I do not recognise any policy or prejudice.

Q31 Baroness Hanham: Putting to one side the older women and talking in general, one of the reasons why this inquiry was set up was that there was more than a perception that women were finding it difficult within the broadcasters and media to make progress and the numbers were not really working out. All of you have said today that your policies, culture and all the rest of it are now to be really encouraging. Why do you think the perception still is around, therefore, that you are not really very welcoming to women, either as contributors or people coming in on programmes? What do you think you can do to put that to one side and get that reflection out, because it is not doing you any good?

John Hardie: We keep coming back to this expression: “what we are doing today”. In terms of the perception there, if someone does a survey and a significant number of women are saying they have experienced discrimination, you have to take that at face value. With some

of the things that have been said recently and the NUJ survey, I have discussed internally at ITN: “Is this today?” What I typically hear is, over the course of a career, it is not a surprise that many women, if not most women, will say they have experienced some sense of discrimination or disadvantage. I say, “Do you think that holds today?”, and I can only tell you anecdotally from ITN they are saying that is not today but, in any industry and across broadcasting, it probably did exist. As a statement of what has happened in people’s careers, it probably is an accurate reflection of what people believe and what women believe. All that we can do in relation to today is, first of all, deal with the substance of the matter and then perhaps turn our attention to the perception. I absolutely believe that, so far as employment and opportunities within the organisations are concerned, we are dealing with the substance of the matter and it is a priority.

Again, I will say this: you have to do it in the context of total diversity. You cannot just single out gender equality and not take account of the other needs in diversity. It is a top priority for the industry to do that, and I think what we will do is deal with the substance first and then maybe catch up with broadcasting the message on perception.

Baroness Deech: Just one final, quick point: I think there is something even more serious. You will, of course, know how Mary Beard got attacked very much for her appearance and then there was the woman who wanted to have Jane Austen on the banknote. There clearly is something deeper in society about what sort of women are okay to look at on screen and who are not. You, as the most important televisers, have a duty to help there and get the country used to seeing women who look the way women look when they are older, surely.

Fran Unsworth: It is the BBC that gave Mary Beard her series, of course, but I think you raise another issue. You must all know this, but if you put yourself out in public life there is something that goes with that, it seems. There is a level of abuse sometimes that people get when they put themselves forward. Not everybody is up for this and all credit to the ones who have stood up to it, such as Mary Beard, who defended herself and raised it as an issue, but it is an important social issue about appearing in public life and what goes with that, which sometimes not everybody wants to do.

Baroness Deech: I am just saying that you, between you, may have the ability to change that, so that such things are not abnormal but everybody takes that kind of appearance for granted.

Fran Unsworth: I agree with you and I think we do have a special responsibility, because it is about portraying society properly, but I do not think you can blame us for what goes on in the Twitter sphere.

The Chairman: Did you want to have a last comment, Jonathan?

Jonathan Levy: I think we recognise the responsibility. To your point, there is a lag between perception and reality. All we can do, as John says, is concentrate on what we are doing now and, over time, both on-air and off-air, as women are sent to more senior positions and more prominent roles, the perception will change. I have no doubt it will change, but we have to do the right things now in order for them to change down the line.

The Chairman: That is an optimistic, positive note to conclude on. Can I thank all three of you very much indeed for joining us? That was really helpful. Thank you for coming.

Examination of Witnesses

Sonita Alleyne and Richard Ayre, Trustees, BBC Trust

Q32 The Chairman: This is part two of listening to our excellent witnesses. Richard Ayre and Sonita Alleyne, thank you both very much for joining us. You are going to introduce yourselves and just make a few opening remarks. We know that you are both trustees of the BBC Trust and you just need to tell us: why you? There are other trustees as well and I know there are special reasons why we are delighted to have you here today. Sonita, would you kick off, please?

Sonita Alleyne: Thank you very much, Chair. I am Sonita Alleyne. I have been a trustee since 1 November 2012. When I joined the Trust, I was asked to look at being one of the lead trustees, together with my colleague, Richard Ayre, looking at diversity. I will just say my motivation in joining the Trust has been about the representation of the licence fee payer and inclusivity, so it was a role that I was very, very pleased to take on board. I have a statement that I would like to read through later, but I will allow Richard to introduce himself.

Richard Ayre: I am Richard Ayre and I worked as a BBC journalist for more than 27 years. When I joined the television newsroom in 1973, as I recall it, there were two women, about 40 men journalists and no women correspondents. Having ended up running the BBC's editorial policy and being deputy to Tony Hall, who then ran news and current affairs, I left the BBC at the stroke of midnight when the last millennium ended. After a few years of leisure, I joined Ofcom as a non-executive, where I ended up chairing Ofcom's editorial committee. I then resigned from Ofcom to join the BBC Trust four years ago and, at the end of this week, I am about to take over the Trust's editorial committee as well.

Lord Horam: Can I just ask a question briefly following from that? You have been a long time with the BBC, Mr Ayre. Do you think it is appropriate for you to be a BBC trustee?

Richard Ayre: There was a 10-year gap between my leaving and returning. I do not think anybody would have appointed me had I come straight from the BBC, but I had done four years at Ofcom as a regulator in the meantime.

Lord Horam: It is the same sort of world, Ofcom, though, is it not?

Richard Ayre: Well, it is broadcasting. Broadcasting experience is pretty helpful if you are a trustee.

Lord Horam: BBC trustees are meant to represent the public. Do you not think they should be people who are not connected with the BBC?

Richard Ayre: Should they be people not connected with broadcasting? I think only three of the existing trustees as of today and only one as of the end of this week will have had a background in broadcasting and I am he. It is, however, a matter for Ministers whom they appoint as trustees.

The Chairman: You are telling us, helpfully, that a great majority of the trustees do not have a broadcasting background.

Richard Ayre: Absolutely, yes.

Baroness Deech: You were at Ofcom. Is it not the case that many people on the Ofcom board and committees are ex-BBC?

Richard Ayre: I do not believe that that is the case, but I am not in touch with the current membership of Ofcom, either the main board or the content board. Certainly when I was there that was not the case.

Q33 The Chairman: We are very glad to have you with us and the qualifications that you do bring to us. Sonita, you said that you wanted to make an opening statement. I will just remind you, I think you were here and have seen how we behave, but we are being broadcast, so you are on the record with that. Thank you very much.

Sonita Alleyne: Thank you very much, Chair. The representation of women in news and current affairs is an important area of inquiry and we are really grateful to the Select Committee for bringing this external focus to it and allowing us to contribute.

Let me start by saying that we are encouraged by the response we have seen from the Executive under Tony Hall's leadership. Diversity has become a headline issue for top management and it is clear that a good deal of work is being done to make more progress both on-air and off-air.

With regard to the on-air representation of women, particularly with respect to contributors and experts, content analysis suggests that women are not equally represented on the airwaves and that this inequality is worse in more serious genres, such as news, documentaries and current affairs. This is a concern for the Trust; we have said so, setting the BBC a priority to increase the number of women on air. Why does this matter? This matters because everyone pays for the BBC and it ought to, therefore, reflect and represent the population. For this reason and because the Trust represents licence fee payers' interests, our principal focus is on-air. We would like to see some progress made relatively quickly and, given the frequency of commissioning decisions and the freelance nature of some contracts, we think that this should be possible. At the very least, we know from the improvements in science reporting, which came about as a result of the BBC Trust's science impartiality review in 2011, that it is possible to improve the range and balance of experts who appear in news programmes.

In addition, we think that programmes are always going to be better if they make full use of the talent and the potential of the whole population. With regard to off-air representation, we are conscious that any lack of balance of diversity behind the camera could also compound any on-air problems. In news and current affairs, the current numbers suggest that the off-screen workforce, while not perfectly balanced, has a much better gender balance than the on-screen population.

There are also other issues, in particular around ethnic, social and regional diversity, which need to be addressed if the BBC is to remain relevant to all sections of the population outside of its heartland in the older, middle class sections of the population.

Going forward, it will be vitally important that the BBC has good information to measure and demonstrate the effectiveness of all initiatives. It is clearly for the Executive to put the right HR systems in place and to make the day-to-day editorial and creative decisions. The Trust's focus will be on continuing to set parameters based on the wider public interest, holding the Executive to account and reporting publicly on progress.

The Chairman: Thank you very much. Richard, did you want to make an opening statement?

Richard Ayre: I am happy, Chairman.

Q34 The Chairman: Fine. Then I am going to put to you a question that you, Sonita, have partly answered: the situation that faces women in news and current affairs. You made a very important point that you think things are going better off-screen than they are on-screen, and that is important for us to understand. Have you detected serious change over the last five years? Can I couple that with my question about differences in radio and television broadcasting: whether you think that these two are on the same level or whether there are differences for women between the two?

Sonita Alleyne: Richard may come in to talk about the change over the last five years. In my time as a trustee, I do think I see a change around the off-air side. The statistics for women across news and current affairs were about 45% of the workforce five years ago, in 2008; they are now running at about 47%, so there is an increase. Obviously, we need to go a bit further, because it does make a difference. I am very, very pleased with the situation that I have come into as a trustee with a real passion for this area. There is a real movement at the moment and we will come on to talk about that.

In terms of where women are positioned within television, Richard may pick up on that. I have a bit of a radio background and I think that there is a lot of crossover. There are more women who are now presenting across local radio breakfast shows. 50% of producers on local radio are women, so I do think that there is crossover and the situation is improving.

Richard Ayre: Chairman, if you look at the workforce as a whole in BBC news and current affairs, the figure has not changed very much. Sonita said it has gone up to 47%; 47 and a bit percent I think is the latest measurement, but over the last five, six, seven years it has been around 45%, 46%, 47%. These are barely significant changes. From the figures that I gather have been given in writing to the Committee from all the broadcasters, that puts the BBC a bit ahead of the other broadcasters, but frankly the BBC should be ahead of the other broadcasters in this, as in its editorial policies and its whole approach to public service broadcasting. It should be setting the standard, so I do not think the Trust thinks it is good enough to hover around 46-47%. Of course, you can say, "What is the difference between 50% and 47%?" The answer is 3%, and 3% might be rather important for iconic reasons, because if the BBC continues to hover below 50% it begins to look as though there is some sort of ceiling, and there is no ceiling and there should not be a ceiling. Therefore, we would want to see further progress off-camera and off-mic as well as on.

As to the question that you asked in the previous session about the differences between radio and television, the editorial staff in the BBC, unlike the other broadcasters, largely move between radio and television. They do not all do so, but a lot work between radio and television. The on-air correspondents and reporters almost all move between radio and television, but clearly what the BBC likes to call "talent", meaning the people who are paid principally to be front of microphone or front of camera, tend to specialise, at least for a time, in either radio or television. So I do not think there is a significant difference in the statistical breakdown for the vast majority of staff between BBC Radio and BBC Television.

Sonita Alleyne: Just to add to that, what I have noticed is that, in current affairs, which is factual, I see more women presenting, so I think that is a good shift.

The Chairman: Yes. Just to be clear on your statistics, your 47%, we did hear this number earlier, but that was across the workforce and I think the leadership figures were the troubling ones. It is 37% at the higher levels.

Richard Ayre: Absolutely. It is troubling for all the broadcasters. It clearly is not good enough. There clearly has to be significant progress made in that respect. My colleague who sat here in the last session, Fran Unsworth, was too modest to say so, but the stats may have improved a bit because last week she was also made Head of the World Service, the first woman who has led the BBC's World Service. There are not that many senior managers, so even one person makes a slight difference statistically, but there clearly needs to be significant progress. However, if you look back 15 years, frankly, to the time when I was one of those leading news and current affairs, there were so few women in even a middle-ranking position it is hardly surprising that there are still fewer today who have made it to the very top levels. The change has happened, though, to a large extent, at the lowest level; it has happened to a substantial extent at the middle level. It must now follow through to the top level, and that is a real test of the BBC's management.

Q35 Lord Dubs: Perhaps this question has almost been overtaken by what you have said, but I am going to put it anyway. Do you feel that news and current affairs has a particular responsibility to accurately reflect the gender balance of its audience and of society as a whole?

Sonita Alleyne: Yes, I do think that it does have that responsibility to do that accurately. Where we have worked as a Trust is to ensure that there is an inclusivity of contributors. I mentioned the science impartiality review in 2011, where we highlighted that the contributors who were on the news who were women experts in science was running around 17%. Through highlighting that and publicly reporting on that, we were able to talk to the Executive and get a change in behaviour. To my mind, it is about a change in behaviour, because what has happened historically is we have been in a situation of drift where numbers have been low and it is in the last couple of years that this issue has come to the fore. It is something that the Trust has engaged with since the time it looked at senior management roles, it looked at the representation. There has been a steady history of Trust engagement in this and, in setting the priorities for the Director-General over the last couple of years, it has focused on that.

Lord Dubs: You say it has come to the fore recently. What has happened to make it come to the fore?

Sonita Alleyne: In the last session, Fran was quite right to say that the Miriam O'Reilly case took it to the fore there. From my understanding, having been a trustee from 2012, the Trust was looking at this area of older women prior to that and engaging with annual reports, looking at how we published our equality and diversity. I think there is a big shift in society and we take the temperature of that via our national Audience Council members. The issues of portrayal have come through quite strongly and that has informed some of the work that we have been doing. So, whilst we can really think about the representation of the licence fee payer and, as I said, that is one of the primary focuses for me and for other trustees, getting that temperature of what our Audience Council is saying has been very important in looking at our portrayal work, which is a shift in terms of looking at the on-air side.

Richard Ayre: Would it be possible for me to add to the first answer that Sonita gave? Clearly, we all accept that the BBC, by virtue of being publicly funded by virtually the entire population, has a special responsibility to reflect the entire population, whether it is in news and current affairs or in any other genre of its output. I would draw a distinction between

the people the BBC employs to do that, who unquestionably at every level should represent the makeup of the entire population, and the people who feature in news and current affairs programmes. There, as the previous witnesses suggested, it is a rather more complex picture, because, sadly, the levers of power in this country are still pulled largely by white men and, when a white man is responsible for a controversial Government policy, he is going to be interviewed and held to account by the BBC and, indeed, by other broadcasters too. When Tesco is run by a white man and there are problems about falling profits, he is going to be featured in news and current affairs programmes. We all wish for the day when the levers of power are held indiscriminately by men, women, black, white according to their responsibilities, but the BBC's journalism does have a responsibility to portray the world as it is. Audiences overwhelmingly trust the BBC more than any other broadcaster and way ahead of any other news media organisation because, by and large, they know the BBC tries to tell them about the world truthfully, as it is. So the BBC's programmes should not artificially construct a world that does not exist. However, in finding experts to comment, to challenge, to be interviewed, to express an opinion, absolutely the BBC has an obligation to find a broader spectrum of those contributors. That is the work that Fran and her colleagues have been doing over the last two years, coming up with this database of highly talented women well equipped to comment on radio and television on all sorts of political, economic, industrial issues. I am pleased to say the BBC has made that database available to other broadcasters. With the permission of the individuals concerned, any broadcaster can access that database if they want to broaden the range of the people who take part in their programmes.

Q36 Lord Razzall: Can I move on to another topic, which is the 2013 Respect at Work Review, which was led by Dinah Rose? I suppose I ought to say, for anybody who is watching this, what it was about, which you obviously know. It looked at the policies, culture and practices of the BBC in the aftermath of the Jimmy Savile case and found that there was evidence of inappropriate behaviour and bullying at the BBC with some individuals being seen as untouchable due to their perceived value to the BBC. It found there was inappropriate behaviour, in some cases, between managers and their teams. The NUJ suggested that women were particularly victims of bullying. Could I ask you what steps have been taken to engender the change of culture recommended by that review and to implement its recommendations? Secondly, are you in a position to say how many cases of alleged gender-based bullying or alleged sexual harassment have been settled out of court in the last five years?

Richard Ayre: Of course the Dinah Rose review was set up at the behest of the BBC. It was not wished upon the BBC. It was something that both the Trust and Executive wished to do in the light of a whole series of terrible episodes, which I do not need to remind the Committee about.

Lord Razzall: Which are also subject to legal investigation at the moment.

Richard Ayre: Indeed some of them still are. As a result of that report, the Director-General, who is responsible for managing the BBC, put in place a whole series of measures to try to ensure that any continuing cases were treated swiftly, fairly, transparently and appropriately. You have asked for some figures and these are public. They are published anywhere; you can look on the BBC's website, but let me tell you that in the last year there were 75 cases of grievances brought by staff in the BBC, 72 of which were for bullying and

harassment and three of which were for sexual harassment. Two of the sexual harassment ones were not upheld. One is not yet concluded; it is still being investigated.

As to the question of figures for out-of-court settlements, we do not have them. You may ask the BBC management for those figures, if you wish. I would just say that any responsible manager of any organisation, but most of all one that is publicly funded like the BBC, has to take a view in certain circumstances about whether it is appropriate to spend money—in our case the licence fee money—going to court, an expensive process, as you know, if, on some occasions, a relatively minor issue can be settled out of court. The BBC, of course, has an obligation to be transparent, but it also has an obligation, which the Trust is responsible for, for ensuring the proper expenditure of public money. The answer is I do not have those figures, but you may ask the BBC for them.

Lord Razzall: Going back to what was my first and more general point, do you feel that the Trust is now satisfied that the management are satisfactorily implementing the recommendations of the Dinah Rose review?

Richard Ayre: Satisfactorily implementing the recommendations, yes. Do I think there is no longer any harassment or bullying in the BBC? I could not say that.

Lord Razzall: You could not say that about the House of Lords.

Richard Ayre: You may say that; I possibly could not. Do the Director-General and his senior managers now take this matter seriously? Do they report regularly to the Trust on progress? Yes, they do.

Q37 Baroness Fookes: I want to explore further the issue of the Expert Women programme, which you raised just now, Mr Ayre. You said you had a database, which is very satisfactory. Is it possible to give any numbers of those on the database and, in particular, what proportion that would be compared with men experts?

Sonita Alleyne: I would not be able to give you the direct proportion in terms of where that would align with men experts. The facts that we have are: there are 164 women on the Expert Women database; 73 of those have gone on to make about 347 appearances on radio and television, with 195 on radio and 152 on television.

Baroness Fookes: Right, so that is a good start. Can I just ask how much encouragement is given to women, bearing in mind that, as a very general tendency, men may overestimate their talents and women tend to underestimate theirs?

Sonita Alleyne: As we know and Fran Unsworth alluded in the last session, part of the Expert Women days that were held was about encouraging women to recognise their talents, be more upfront about their talents and come forward. By getting initial appearances under people's belts, so to speak, they become more experienced, more used to broadcasting and I think that will have a knock-on effect. Just demystifying the world of broadcasting has been part of the Expert Women programme.

Baroness Fookes: Are they given any—what shall I call it—training?

Sonita Alleyne: Yes, that is part of it.

Baroness Fookes: What kind of training would that be?

Sonita Alleyne: We are not across the detail at that level in terms of exactly what sort of training they will have received. Without, I hope, misquoting, I would imagine information

about how interviews operate, being at ease in terms of the broadcast environment, probably interview experience as well where you have questions fired at you.

Baroness Foakes: You could have a mock interview.

Sonita Alleyne: That is what they do, yes.

Richard Ayre: That is exactly right, and this scheme took place, I think Fran Unsworth said earlier, right across the nation. There were something like four or five locations around the UK where women were invited in to spend a day or two days, I am not quite sure which, discussing what is required of somebody who hopes to offer themselves as a commentator/contributor on matters of interest in news and current affairs programmes. More than half of those who went through that course have, as Sonita said, appeared pretty frequently since then, but of course the objective is not “that is now over and done with and those 150-whatever-it-is women will now appear from time to time”. That is not the objective at all. It is to be seen to encourage women to have the confidence to put themselves forward as experts. Your Lordships will have noticed that more than half of the BBC’s programme editors in news and current affairs are now women—more than half, fantastic. In my experience, programme editors, whether male or female, are desperate to encourage women with a voice and the confidence to express it to appear on their programmes.

Baroness Foakes: Can I ask then about the mechanism that you use to encourage women to come forward? Do you positively trawl perhaps—I do not know—universities or other institutions where there may be suitable women?

Richard Ayre: I should say we do not trawl; the BBC trawls. We are the BBC Trust. We do not manage the BBC; the Director-General manages the BBC.

Baroness Foakes: I was using “BBC” in the broadest sense.

Richard Ayre: Indeed, I realised that you were. All of those things: programme editors, programme producers look wherever they go for potential new talent, not simply because it is the right thing to do, which most of them accept that it is, but because, frankly, programmes are competitive, so finding somebody who is a fresh face and a fresh voice is a brownie point if you are editing programmes. There is really every incentive for editors to do that, not for political reasons, not even to satisfy audiences, although we know there is a demand for a better spread of representation across programming, but because it gives you a competitive advantage.

Baroness Deech: Could it be a problem for women that they may be subject to a particular interviewing style of the BBC, asking the same question 14 times or bullying or interrupting the person who is talking? Is that a problem?

Richard Ayre: You mean if a woman is the interviewee.

Baroness Deech: Yes, because it is not something the public like very much. I was trained to manage that. I had some media training, but I do think that this is something of an issue.

Richard Ayre: The public have mixed feelings about that. I am rather sad to say quite a lot of the public do like to see very aggressive interviewing. Personally, I do not think that is the most productive way of getting answers to interviews, but a lot of the public like to see a bit of a pitched battle between interviewer and interviewee, which is why there has been so much of it across all the broadcasters. I do not know many women who would say that they

are less capable of being interviewed robustly than men and, personally, I think it would be an offensive assumption that women are not just as capable of being interviewed in a robust fashion as their male equivalents.

Sonita Alleyne: Can I just add to that? I think that sort of interview is more on the political side and I do not think that is an issue in terms of the style of interviewing when you are talking about people who might be in business or contributing on different aspects of science as contributors or experts.

The Chairman: Just on the numbers, the Expert Women programme seems very good: 164 people. Are there plans to rather up that? Did we hear there were 3,000 people who were keen to go on the course? It sounds like there are lots more.

Richard Ayre: I believe it is the Executive's hope to run those again. They clearly have an expense and it is not simply a rolling programme that continues all the time, but it has been so successful that it would be disappointing if the Executive were not to run that again.

Baroness Fookes: Some of us would rather it was spent on that than some of the other things on which the BBC has chosen to spend its money.

Q38 Lord Sherbourne of Didsbury: You were in for the earlier session and I am trying to understand something and am hoping that you might be able to enlighten me. There is something I still cannot quite understand and that is what happens in practical terms. I am thinking, in particular, of television and when people are running a current affairs programme, looking at potential experts and interviewees and deciding how to run that programme with different presenters. If I were on that programme and helping to edit it, what would I be required to do in order to conform to the overall policy of the BBC? Would I know what I was supposed to be doing in order to encourage more women? I understand all the measures that are in place to encourage women to come forward. I understand that everybody seems to have policies laid out, but what I do not understand is how these policies or whatever they are work when you are putting a programme together. What do those people have to do in order to produce a better balance?

Richard Ayre: We do not, of course, make programmes and it is a fundamental principle of the Charter that the Trust does not get involved in the editorial process.

Lord Sherbourne of Didsbury: No, but do you understand how it works?

Richard Ayre: Perhaps I could draw on my knowledge of when I was a programme-maker. When you decide what item you are going to cover in a daily news programme, you go and look for the contributors who are the most pertinent. That is easy if it is a plane crash; you look for people who have seen the plane crash. However, if it is something that requires analysis, comment, interpretation, you use both your internal BBC correspondents' expertise and then you go and look for as wide a range of voices as you can find from outside, and that means hitting the phones, asking your regular contacts, but then often saying to them, "Do you know somebody else in this field with different characteristics?" and people are amazingly generous.

Lord Sherbourne of Didsbury: I do understand that. I understand how that works. What I am wondering is: is there any particular obligation, do you think, as a general policy that, in the balance of editorial decisions to be made in putting a programme together, there should be consideration about getting more women onto the programme?

Richard Ayre: There is a general consideration.

Lord Sherbourne of Didsbury: How would that work in practice?

Richard Ayre: There is a general consideration and, having spoken with programme editors, I know that most programmes have a team conference after the programme comes off air, if they are daily programmes, and they say what was good and what was bad, what worked and what did not work, what they should have done differently. Members of the team will often say, “We really did not have enough women”.

Lord Sherbourne of Didsbury: How would that work in practice? If you decide you had not had enough women, what would then be required of you to help to make sure it does not happen again?

Richard Ayre: To learn.

Lord Sherbourne of Didsbury: And to do what?

Richard Ayre: To learn that next time you approach that subject you look for a broader range of people.

Lord Sherbourne of Didsbury: So there is a specific responsibility to look for more women.

Richard Ayre: Of course. This is a question that more properly should have been addressed to the people who make programmes, but of course.

Lord Sherbourne of Didsbury: I did not get a clear answer from them.

Richard Ayre: I am sorry it was not clear, but of course. That is how you learn through the editorial process. When you do not do something well enough last time, you try to do it better next time and, if you have been deficient in casting a programme, you try to make a better fist of it next time round. What you do not try to do is make programmes by numbers. That would be the death of creative freedom of expression in broadcasting.

The Chairman: The death, yes, of freedom of speech and all the rest, but some targets, some statistics. You have not spoken about whether voluntary targets, some measurement that we can all follow and understand, would be acceptable within the BBC. Are you averse to that?

Sonita Alleyne: I am in favour of getting robust measurement across the board. To Lord Sherbourne’s point, I think he was maybe alluding to the ability for programme-makers to know: “Have we served the licence fee payer?” That is crucially important and, with that, it brings many, many benefits. Over my time on the Trust, there have been different initiatives around. There is a growing momentum around this, with different initiatives and different programming teams doing things across different genres. I know that today we are talking about news and current affairs, but this is an issue that runs across the BBC in terms of representing the licence fee payer. To my mind—and we expressed it as a Trust in our set of priorities for the Director-General two years ago and reinforced this year that we wanted to have proper monitoring in place—this is a gap, because what we want to do is get a sustained change. We would like to be in a position where we do not have to have this conversation in 10 years’ time. That is where we would like to get to, and this is all about leadership. As I said in my opening statement, we are very, very supportive indeed of the steps that the Director-General is making and the embracing of this by the top management team at the BBC. They see very much as a priority the idea of embedding this as part of the

service, as part of the satisfaction programmers and programme-makers can have on a quarterly basis, end of the year, that yes, for our genre we did serve the licence fee payer; we reflected our audience. That does not mean it is done in a way that is too heavy handed so that it stops programme-makers from being able to have editorial freedom, particularly in news, but it is so there is that tracking and you can look back and say, "We did a good job."

Q39 Lord Horam: Can I just follow that up for a moment, if you would not mind? What you are saying now, Ms Alleyne, seems to be different from what Fran Unsworth was saying previously. You seem to be agreeing with Mr Levy from Sky, who was saying, "Yes, we have explicit targets: 35%".

Sonita Alleyne: No, I am not. I think I can get where you are moving to. I am not saying specific targets. What I am saying is that we need to have monitoring. As a Trust, we do not run the BBC on a day-to-day basis, but it is our job, on behalf of the licence fee payer, to say, "Is there a proper process in place?" As the on-air portrayal is something that our Audience Councils, our news and current affairs service review and our science impartiality review have shown to be more and more important and pertinent, we would like to see a proper process in place. It is very important to realise that some genres are doing very, very well across the BBC.

I like firm statistics. We want to be able to report to the public, knowing what the baseline is. There have been very, very good initiatives. To answer part of Baroness Fookes's question about the impact of the Expert Women programme, let us find what the baseline is and then we will be able to properly say what the impact is. That is our job as the Trust, to make sure that the process is in place. The Creative Diversity Network was mentioned earlier and that toolkit, which is going to be across the different broadcasters, is coming into play in April. Richard and I are in discussion with the Executive on that and that is a real step forward. We have to be able to benchmark across the industry, but the BBC has a special onus on it to really reflect the licence fee payer. Therefore, if there is a hold-up in that, as a Trust, we will be very much in favour of saying, "What do we have in place there?" At the end of 2015, I would like to be able to have a set of data that we can properly look at.

Richard Ayre: On the question of targets, this is an eternal debate, not just in broadcasting but across all industries that care about these matters. What is the role of quotas, where they are legal? What is the role of targets? It seems to me the question for the Trust from a governance point of view is: what is effective? What is the most effective way of bringing about change? Frankly, I have seen a BBC, both when I was inside it and back at the Trust, which for years has had a lot of initiatives and, if you measure the organisation by initiatives, it has done very well, year after year after year. However, the question is: what has it achieved?

What the Trust has done, uniquely, I think, in the last year is to say, of the four objectives we set the Director-General, the only four major objectives we publish for the Director-General, one of them now is to increase diversity, with special reference to women on air. Our strongest lever is to set that objective publicly. We have said that it must be a measureable improvement. We will measure it, we will publish the results and we will say what we think about that in next year's annual report.

Now, if the Director-General chooses to set targets for part of achieving that, that is a managerial tool. That is what targets are effective at: being a managerial tool. We do not

manage the BBC, but we will require significant measurable improvement. If we were to set targets tomorrow when the workforce is 47.1% or 47.2% female, what target would you set? Would you say 48% or 47.5% or 50%?

If you set the wrong target, even as a manager, you either encourage complacency when that target is reached or you make it so far a stretch that you do not get the buy-in from the people who have to deliver the target. The use of targets is fine as a managerial tool, but, as a governance tool, what we want to see is measurable progress and then say to the world whether we think it is good enough.

Q40 The Lord Bishop of Norwich: Can I take us into the BBC and the Equality Act? Section 149, as we know, says that a public body must eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, advance equality of opportunity, and you would have thought that the BBC would not be exempt in any part of its life from the Equality Act. Yet, in terms of the provision of content services, it is exempt; it is written into Schedule 19. How does the BBC Trust defend that exemption?

Richard Ayre: Clearly, that was a decision by Parliament, but for profoundly good reasons, in my view. Let us be clear; the Equality Act applies absolutely to all the public duties of the BBC. It does not apply to the private duties of the BBC, and that is a Parliamentary way of saying “to the programme-making editorial decisions of the BBC”. I think you just need to rest assured that, as far as the BBC Trust is concerned, it expects the provisions of the Act to be implemented by the BBC across the board with one exception, which I will refer to in a moment, if I may. The fact that the Act does not apply in full to the private, programme-making functions of the BBC is simply a respect that Parliament has shown to the critical importance of freedom of expression and freedom of speech. With respect, I doubt if licence fee payers want Parliament to write a law that tells programme-makers what has to be in programmes. That is so inimical to what Parliament has always defended for freedom of expression and freedom of speech in this country that I can well understand why Parliament excluded the programme-making activities of the BBC from the Act.

The Trust expects the Act to be observed by the BBC across the board with one exception: the Act requires public bodies to foster good relations between communities. The way the BBC fosters good relations between communities is to tell them the truth, even if the truth is uncomfortable. Now, if the BBC were to engineer its programmes to try to foster good relations between communities in some artificial way in its news and current affairs programmes, not telling the truth of the world as it is but as it should be, that is not only a slippery slope; it is a precipice. Audiences have to know that, when the BBC tells them what is happening in the world, even it is really bad news about their own communities and the tension between communities, they can trust that the BBC is doing its best to tell them the truth. That is why that one section of the Act I do not think would be applicable in a democracy that believes in freedom of expression.

Sonita Alleyne: Can I just add to that that the BBC’s prime remit to represent the licence fee payer is something that is immutable; it is there? That does have an effect in terms of looking at the plurality of the voices. The Trust has done some research around that, looking at the plurality of the voices across news and current affairs and the onus to swap stories around the regions and around the nations to inform people about what our neighbours in the next town are doing. That is something that is very, very key that the BBC should do.

The Lord Bishop of Norwich: I am still trying to understand what it is that the BBC would want to do that would not promote equality of opportunity or diminish harassment. I understand all that you say, but, if we did not have this exemption, how would what you are suggesting would happen fall foul of the Equality Act as it stands?

Richard Ayre: I did not say that the BBC would wish to broadcast anything that would have the opposite effect. It wants to tell the truth, even if the truth were to have the effect of not fostering better relations between communities.

The Lord Bishop of Norwich: Can you give a concrete and practical example of that? Can you give us an example of how that has been useful?

Richard Ayre: Reporting a race riot might well have the at least short-term effect of not fostering good relations between the communities involved. It is nonetheless right for the BBC and other broadcasters to report it without fear or favour and without direction from Parliament.

Q41 Lord Horam: Just carrying on with the Equality Act, one of the elements within the 2010 Act is the idea of positive action, and there are various routes towards positive action. Is this something that the BBC should have in its objectives or whatever? As a Trust, what do you think of that as an idea?

Sonita Alleyne: There are varying degrees of positive action. In the last session, you talked about all-women shortlists, which is quite political in its context. I do not think I am in favour of that in terms of looking at the two different things, on-air and off-air. The positive actions, which I think are absolutely laudable and things that the BBC is currently doing, are things like the Expert Women, looking at how women are supported to stay and progress in the workforce.

Lord Horam: As far as you are concerned, they are more or less doing what they should be doing under positive action. That is your position.

Sonita Alleyne: Yes, I think so.

Richard Ayre: There are all sorts of things that you can call “positive action”. It depends how you define the term. Clearly, some of the things we have talked about, the initiatives to develop women to make them more likely to be used as contributors to news programmes, are positive action. The specific positive action that is very controversial about all-women shortlists is clearly a rather different context in putting candidates before the electorate to choose from making an appointment that is subject, quite properly, to all the laws that apply. The truth is, I have never met a BBC female journalist or a female journalist in any organisation, print or broadcasting, who would wish to have been appointed as a result of a process whereby only women were allowed to apply. We have to believe as a Trust, and the BBC has to believe as an organisation, that women are as capable of doing every single job in journalism as men. Look at some of the amazing, wonderful appointments the BBC has made as foreign correspondents over the last 18 months where, in some of the most difficult, dangerous parts of the world, we now have women correspondents performing across radio, television, domestic and World Service. Across the Middle East, in Afghanistan, in every part of the world that, frankly, folk like me would be pretty frightened to go to, there are women there reporting for the BBC. Could you look any of them in the eye and say, “Well, we wanted to put you there so we put you on an all-women shortlist”? I think it

would be inimical to everything that professionals stand for. That is a personal view rather than, as it were, a Trust view, but we certainly do not urge all-women shortlists.

Sonita Alleyne: One of your follow-on questions was whether we have done enough in terms of positive actions. Until we have put in the measurement across the board, can see where the baseline is and have a really thorough, robust and very defensible picture of the trends, how we are moving and how we are changing, until we have changed behaviours so that, as I said, in 10 years' time, we do not have this conversation, until we feel that the job has been done, absolutely the Executive needs to be innovating, coming up with new ideas and putting the effort in. As I said at the beginning, I am very encouraged that the entire Trust is very focused on this and that the Executive is very behind this. It feels like there is some momentum here.

The Chairman: Just one quick one that follows through on this: does the BBC employ a policy, which I think is possible under Section 149 of the Equality Act, of, where there is a tie-breaker, two candidates are equal, choosing the woman?

Richard Ayre: Chairman, with respect, it is a question for the Executive. The BBC Trust does not get involved in the appointment of any individual in the BBC except the Director-General. We appoint him and that is enough, frankly.

The Chairman: That is enough. Well, we have heard a lot and learned a lot about the BBC Trust. Thank you very much, both of you, for that; it is extremely helpful. We are much the wiser as a result. Thank you for coming.