



4 August 2023

Dame Caroline Dinenage DBE MP
Chair, Culture, Media and Sport Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Sent by email

Dear Dame Caroline,

Thank you for your letter of 24 July. As I said in my earlier correspondence, it is essential that the BBC is able to maintain public trust during times of scrutiny; as such, I am very happy to set out more detail about the reviews that are being undertaken in response to the recent allegations against the BBC presenter Huw Edwards.

On the substantive complaints, the BBC is currently undertaking a fact-finding investigation. As you point out, it is important that this is a confidential process and undertaken with due process and diligence.

With regard to the other pieces of work, focused on reviewing the process and procedures in place to make a non-editorial complaint to the BBC, I am happy to provide more detail.

This work is in two parts. Firstly, the executive have already undertaken an immediate assessment of the so-called 'red flagging' process around non-editorial complaints, looking at how the BBC identifies and escalates sensitive or high-priority non-editorial complaints or allegations. This will ensure that any major issues are flagged while the full review outlined below is undertaken. The Executive reported to the Board on 20 July on this matter and has subsequently confirmed the work that has already been completed to tighten current working practices and ensure that serious complaints are dealt with consistently and appropriately across the BBC, including greater executive oversight.

Secondly, there is the formal review of the non-editorial complaints system. This review will be led by BBC Group Chief Operating Officer, Leigh Tavaziva, and will be undertaken by Deloitte, in order to provide an objective assessment. I have asked our Senior Independent Director, Sir Nicholas Serota, to oversee this review on behalf of the Board.

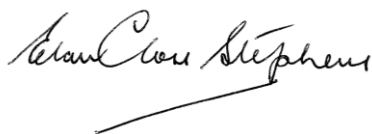
The BBC published the terms of reference for this Review on 21 July at this link:
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/2023/review-non-editorial-complaints-process>

This Review will cover different types of non-editorial complaints, both from the public and staff, and will be completed by late autumn. The aim is to identify any weaknesses in our processes and make recommendations for improvement. I can confirm that the outcomes of the Review will be published, following scrutiny from the BBC Board.

I am committed to ensuring this work is undertaken in a transparent and timely manner. Further, I want to assure you that the BBC Board understands how serious these matters are, and we will continue to prioritise our duty of care to both staff and members of the public who raise complaints.

I look forward to seeing you on 6 September and am happy to discuss this in more detail then.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Elan Closs Stephens', with a long horizontal flourish extending from the end of the name.

Dame Elan Closs Stephens
Acting BBC Chair