

Corporate governance

The Board is committed to high standards of corporate governance. The Members voluntarily prepare a Corporate Governance Statement to demonstrate that they apply the principles, where relevant, of the UK Corporate Governance Code issued by the Financial Reporting Council ("FRC") in 2018, and the Disclosure and Transparency Rules and Listing Rules of the Financial Conduct Authority. Channel 4's status as a statutory corporation without shareholders means those provisions concerning shareholders' interests are not directly applicable. Information required under LR9.8.4R of the Listing Rules, where relevant to Channel 4, is disclosed in the Report of the Members (page 160) and in the Members' Remuneration report (pages 176 to 185). The Board considers that it was compliant with the relevant provisions of the UK Corporate Governance Code throughout 2023. The Code can be accessed at www.frc.org.uk.

The Board

Channel Four Television Corporation is controlled through its Board of Members. The Board's main role is to discharge Channel 4's statutory functions and ensure the fulfilment of the public service remit in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.

The Board meets six to eight times a year as required, and has a schedule of matters reserved for its approval as noted in the table on the following page. In addition, as part of its overall responsibility to ensure the fulfilment of Channel 4's statutory duties and functions, the Board continues to focus on ensuring the successful delivery of Channel 4's remit and other public service responsibilities. Content output and plans for future investment of the content budget are regularly discussed as part of the overall Board agenda, as are regular updates on audience reactions to Channel 4's content. The Board also approves Channel 4's proposed Statement of Media Content Policy (incorporating the Statement of Programme Policy and Review) prior to publication.

Board sub-committees

The Board has an established Audit and Risk Committee, Remuneration Committee and Ethics Committee to assist with the discharge of its functions and has delegated each certain responsibilities, as set out below.

Board nominations

Given its constitution and specific statutory provisions regarding the appointment of Members, Channel 4 does not have a formal Nominations Committee. Instead, there are formal nominations procedures which are described below.

The following formal nomination procedures are in place:

- Non-Executive Members are appointed for fixed terms by Ofcom following consultation with Channel 4's Chair and the approval of the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport
- The Chair is appointed by Ofcom for a fixed term with the approval of the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport
- The Deputy Chair is appointed by Ofcom
- The Chief Executive is appointed by the Board
- Other Executive Members are appointed to the Board after nomination by the Chief Executive and the Chair acting jointly

We work with Ofcom to ensure that each Board appointment brings to the Board the skills and experience that are required to meet Channel 4's needs and contribute to its long-term success.

The division of responsibilities between the Chair of the Board and the Chief Executive is clearly defined as described on the following page.

The Board

The following matters must be referred to the full Board:

- Channel 4's annual budget and three-year financial plan and strategy
- The appointment of the Chief Executive
- Confirmation of the appointment of the other Executive Members nominated by the Chief Executive and the Chair acting jointly
- Banking arrangements and loan facilities
- Any significant proposal outside the ordinary course of Channel 4's business
- The appointment and reappointment of the statutory auditor

- The audited Annual Report and financial statements
- The establishment, purchase, or acquisition of any qualifying company and the approval or variation of terms of reference for any subsidiary
- Approval of any significant new business investment or programme investment
- Significant proposed changes to Channel 4's headcount
- Such other matters as the Board may from time to time resolve to review or decide upon

The Board has delegated certain responsibilities to the sub-committees below.



Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee is responsible for monitoring the integrity of the Corporation's financial statements, reviewing the Corporation's internal control and risk management systems and making recommendations to the Board in respect of the external auditor. The Audit and Risk Committee Report is set out on pages 172 to 175.



Remuneration Committee

The Remuneration Committee oversees all aspects of pay for Channel 4, reviewing proposals for the annual pay awards and variable pay schemes applicable to all staff. It recommends to the Board remuneration for the Chief Executive and sets remuneration for the rest of the Executive team. The Members' Remuneration report is set out on pages 176 to 185.



Ethics Committee

The Ethics Committee reviews any conflicts of interest that may arise for Channel 4's Board and matters relating to the Code of Conduct as may be referred to it by the Chair or otherwise and offers advice to the Chair on conflicts of interest relating to Non-Executive and/or Executive Members. The Ethics Committee meets by exception only.

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The role of the Chair

The Chair is responsible for:

- Leading the Board in setting the values and standards of Channel 4
- Maintaining a relationship of trust with and between the Executive and Non-Executive Members
- Leadership of the Board, ensuring its effectiveness on all aspects of its role, including the setting of the agenda
- Ensuring that all Members receive accurate, timely, and clear information
- Ensuring that all Members continually update their skills and the knowledge and familiarity with Channel 4 required to fulfil their role both on the Board and on committees
- Facilitating the effective contribution of Non-Executive Members and ensuring constructive relations between Executive and Non-Executive Members
- Undertaking an annual evaluation of Board and committee performance

Sir Ian Cheshire was appointed as Chair of the Channel 4 Board for a three-year term from 11 April 2022.

The role of the Chief Executive

The role of the Chief Executive is to run the business of Channel 4 under the delegated authority from the Board, to implement the policies and strategy agreed by the Board, and to communicate with Ofcom and other key stakeholders.

During 2023, Alex Mahon continued as Chief Executive.

Members and Members' independence

The 2023 Board Members and their skills, experience, and responsibilities are set out on pages 154 to 159.

The Non-Executive Members constructively challenge and help develop proposals on strategy, and bring strong, independent judgement, knowledge, and experience to the Board's deliberations. The Non-Executive Members are of sufficient calibre and number that their views carry significant weight in the Board's decision making. Lord Chris Holmes acts as Senior Independent Director, providing a sounding board for the Chair and serving as an intermediary for the other Members. The Members are given access to independent professional advice at the Group's expense when the Members deem it is necessary in order for them to carry out their responsibilities.

Details of the current Chair's professional commitments are included in his biography. These do not adversely affect his role with Channel 4.

The Board considers all its Non-Executive Members to be independent in character and judgement. At the time of this report, no Non-Executive Member:

- Has been an employee of the Group within the past five years
- Has, or has had within the past three years, a material business relationship with the Group (although attention is drawn to the related party transactions on page 161)
- Receives remuneration from Channel 4 other than their Member's fee
- Has close family ties with any of the Group's advisers, Members, or senior employees
- Holds cross-directorships or has significant links with other Members through involvement in other companies or bodies
- Has served on the Board for more than nine years from the date of their first election

Professional development

On appointment, the Members take part in an induction programme when they receive information about the Group, the role of the Board and the matters reserved for its decision, the terms of reference and membership of the principal Board and Executive Committees and the powers delegated to those committees, the Group's corporate governance practices and procedures including the powers reserved to the Group's most senior executives, and the latest financial information about the Group. This is supplemented by meetings with members of the senior management team. On appointment, all Members are advised that they have access to advice and the services of the Head of Corporate Governance. Throughout their period in office the Members are continually updated on the Group's business and environment and other changes affecting the Group and the industry it operates in as a whole, by written briefings and meetings with senior executives.

A formal Board Effectiveness Review that uses a detailed questionnaire to allow Board Members to express both qualitative and quantitative views on Board performance is undertaken annually. In 2023, the Head of Corporate Governance oversaw a review of the Board and of the Audit and Risk and Remuneration Committees, which was conducted by Boardclix, an external Board evaluator. Findings and analysis were presented to the Board by the Head of Corporate Governance and discussed at the March 2024 Board meeting. Committees also held their own discussions on the findings. The Board and committees were found to be performing well, with particular strengths noted around the level of challenge presented by the Board to management, and strategic consideration of the Corporation's long-term sustainability. Proposals for actions remained focused on developing structures and space to enable a longer-term focus in discussions and decision making, particularly given the challenges presented by the evolving viewing landscape and potential developments to Channel 4's business model.

Board information

Regular reports and papers are circulated to the Members before Board and committee meetings. These papers are supplemented by information specifically requested by the Members from time to time. A monthly performance pack is prepared by the Chief Operating Officer providing a month-by-month report on progress against the main performance indicators set by the Board.

The Head of Corporate Governance's responsibilities include ensuring an effective flow of information within the Board and its committees, induction of new Members, assisting with professional development as required, and advising the Board through the Chair on all governance matters.

Board meetings

The number of full Board meetings and committee meetings attended by each Member during the year is shown in the table below:

Name	Board meetings attended (invited)	Audit and Risk Committee meetings attended (invited)	Remuneration Committee meetings attended (invited)	Ethics Committee meetings attended (invited)
Sir Ian Cheshire	8 (8)	4 (4) ¹	4 (4) ¹	1 (1)
Lord Chris Holmes	7 (8)	-	4 (4)	-
Andrew Miller	8 (8)	4 (4)	-	-
Dawn Airey	8 (8)	-	3 (4)	1 (1)
Tess Alps	8 (8)	-	4 (4)	-
Paul Geddes	4 (6)	3 (3)	-	-
Sir Roly Keating	6 (6)	-	3 (3)	-
David Kogan	8 (8)	3 (4)	-	-
Michael Lynton	5 (8)	-	-	-
Sarah Sands	8 (8)	-	-	1 (1)
Alex Mahon	8 (8)	4 (4) ¹	4 (4) ¹	1 (1)
Jonathan Allan	8 (8)	4 (4) ¹	4 (4) ¹	-
Ian Katz	8 (8)	-	-	-

¹ The Chair, Interim Chair, Chief Executive, and Chief Operating Officer attended Audit and Risk Committee and Remuneration Committee meetings but were not members of those committees.

The Board meets six to eight times a year as required. The Non-Executives meet without management twice a year, and meet with just the Chief Executive present once a year.

Board diversity

As shown on pages 42 to 55, diversity is at the heart of Channel 4 and this is equally important at the most senior levels of the organisation as at entry-level positions. At May 2024, the Channel 4 Board comprised three Executive Members and 13 Non-Executive Members. As stated on page 166, Non-Executive Members are appointed by Ofcom, and Executive Members by the Chief Executive and the Chair.

At 31 December 2023, one of the three Executive Members was a woman (December 2022: one of three). At 31 December 2023, the Board comprised four women and seven men, with the four women making up 36% of the Board membership (December 2022: 31%). At 31 December 2023, none of the Members of the Board were from an ethnically diverse background (December 2022: none).

Channel 4 has welcomed the appointment of five new Non-Executive Members in early 2024; its ambition remains to ensure that Board composition fully reflects the diversity of the UK in support of our commitments to inclusion.

Section 172 statement

The UK Corporate Governance Code (revised in 2018) sets out principles emphasising the value of good corporate governance to long-term sustainable success. As stated on page 164, as a statutory corporation without shareholders, Channel 4 voluntarily applies the principles of the Code, where relevant.

The Code requires the Board to assess the basis on which Channel 4 generates and preserves value over the long term. The Board believes that the annual review of Channel 4's performance in relation to its Statement of Media Content Policy (presented on pages 28 to 113 of this Annual Report) represents a strong statement of the value generated by the Group. Our corporate Fast Forward strategy and its predecessor Future4 (set out on page 119) are both aimed at ensuring we can continue to generate and develop this value over the long term as the broadcasting environment evolves. As a not-for-profit public service media organisation, our aim is to remain commercially self-sustainable with a strong supporting balance sheet over the long term. A key element of our financial strategy is the way we cross-fund commercially challenging genres with profitable programming. We believe surpluses built up over time should be prudently reinvested back into original content and digital innovation through our corporate strategy, to enhance our commercial business model, and to ensure the continuing relevance and reach of our remit.

Some of the ways in which Channel 4's value is measured externally have remained rooted in a traditional, linear PSM paradigm which does not fully reflect structural and strategic changes. The number of measures reviewed in relation to our Statement of Media Content Policy also makes our focus and decision making complex. As a result, the Board continues to review how we articulate and measure Channel 4's long-term impact in a changing landscape. New measures have been incorporated throughout our review of our Statement of Media Content Policy in recent years, including measures to reflect our strategic shift away from a focus on linear viewing.

The Code also requires boards of directors to understand the views of their companies' key stakeholders and describe in the Annual Report how their interests, and the matters set out in section 172 of the Companies Act 2006, have been considered in Board discussions and decision making. Section 172 deals with the directors' duty to promote the success of the company for the benefit of its shareholders as a whole, having regard to a number of broader matters including the likely consequence of decisions for the long term and the entity's wider relationships.

Although provisions around shareholders' interests are not directly applicable to Channel 4, our Board seeks to make decisions remaining mindful of our remit, values, and strategy, and taking into account their impact on our key stakeholders. Engagement with these stakeholders is key to maintaining the Corporation's reputation. The following table identifies these stakeholders, outlines how we engage with them, and provides examples of how these relationships have shaped Board decision making during the year. For the first time in 2023 we have also used key metrics to track how successfully we are engaging with stakeholders, further aligning our decision making with stakeholder impact.

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Our stakeholders

Stakeholder	Engagement	Impact on Board agenda and decision making
Viewers (those who watch Channel 4, but also the wider UK population)	<p>We monitor audience engagement via both proprietary trackers and third-party trackers, bespoke audience studies (pilot testing, focus groups, genre and trend studies, behavioural studies), and quarterly remit and VoD landscape studies.</p>	<p>During 2023, the Board oversaw work to keep viewers (and particularly younger audiences) at the heart of our decision making while we articulated the ambitions of our new Fast Forward strategy, aimed at ensuring that the channel seizes the opportunities presented by a generational shift in viewing behaviour.</p> <p>The Board receives regular updates on viewing performance to inform its decision making. It continued to review the viewing metrics used to support our Statement of Media Content Policy and other audience measures used to track our distinctiveness. Consideration was given to strategies to optimise our reach with young audiences (including the role of third-party platforms and social media), while ensuring continued delivery of our linear remit.</p> <p>Reviews of viewing performance inform Board approvals for commissioning of new and returning content when required under Channel 4's delegation of authority.</p>
Creative partners (primarily producers)	<p>We engage with creative partners via direct meetings, industry events, talent outreach programmes, partnerships, qualitative and quantitative research (including direct feedback), and third-party industry data.</p> <p>Channel 4's Creative Contract sets out our commitments to the independent production community to foster creative partnerships, and maintain our reputation as the best partner for producers.</p>	<p>Regular updates on creative performance helped to inform Board decision making around commissioning. The Board also emphasises the importance of Channel 4's relationships with the independent production sector and oversees actions to reinforce our creative partnerships.</p> <p>Given the challenging climate for the independent production sector, the Board carefully considered the impact of the advertising downturn on commissioning activity, the level of expectation on Channel 4, support provided to the commissioning sector, and the importance of transparency and relationship building by the organisation's senior team in supporting engagement with Channel 4's creative partners.</p> <p>Relationships with our creative stakeholders have also been a key consideration in exploring planned changes under the Media Bill allowing for a level of in-house production at Channel 4 (see right). The Board has publicly affirmed the importance of ensuring that any gradual moves into in-house production enhance the Corporation's public service role and that negative impacts on the independent production sector are carefully mitigated, as well as restating its commitment to Channel 4's presence, programme-making, and impact in the Nations and Regions.</p> <p>The Board oversaw the response to the allegations raised by the channel's own on-screen investigation, <i>Russell Brand: In Plain Sight</i> and scrutinised the internal reviews triggered by this programme. Work by the Audit and Risk Committee to oversee engagement with any concerns raised through our Speak Up whistleblowing facility by third parties within the Group's supply chain also received further focus during 2023 in light of these developments.</p>
Commercial partners (primarily advertisers)	<p>Engagement to grow long-term strategic relationships with our commercial partners comes in the form of regular meetings, bespoke events, and industry research, plus collaboration and innovation through ad-break takeovers, and sponsorship of industry platforms and projects including continuing support for diversity in advertising. We also gather qualitative feedback from a range of commercial stakeholders.</p>	<p>The Board receives regular updates on key drivers in the TV advertising market, and was kept informed of both the steep market declines experienced during 2023 and the broader macroeconomic context underlying these challenges.</p> <p>With diversification of Channel 4's business model as a key pillar of the new Fast Forward strategy, the Board has continued to scrutinise proposals for new commercial partnerships outside of traditional platforms. It also reviews the success of previous commercial ventures and the stakeholder relationships built, to ensure that lessons learned appropriately inform our Fast Forward ambitions.</p> <p>The Board have also provided their expertise on the importance of technological innovation in pursuing revenue diversification and in ensuring that Channel 4 remains competitive in how we do business.</p> <p>Key stakeholder relationships are carefully considered by the Board when approving major commercial agreements, and they are regularly briefed on the development of existing partnerships as well as new ventures in the pipeline.</p>

Stakeholder	Engagement	Impact on Board agenda and decision making
Employees	<p>Engagement with Channel 4 employees comes in many forms, including all-staff sessions, staff forums, regular internal communications, and staff surveys (considered in more detail on page 124).</p>	<p>The Board continued to oversee Channel 4's progress against its commitments on equity and inclusion, and welcomed news that all of the organisation's 2023 targets for representation of diverse groups among its workforce had been met during the year. It reviewed plans to carry this work forward and ensure that Channel 4's ambitions were mirrored in its creative output.</p> <p>The Board received updates on progress to foster a high-performing and inclusive culture within the business, enabling Channel 4's people to do their best work.</p> <p>The Board and Remuneration Committee both reviewed regular updates on staff wellbeing throughout the year, taking into account the impact of economic uncertainty and the ongoing cost of living crisis, and moves to further embed hybrid working practices. This oversight was assisted by results from regular and detailed staff surveys. The non-executive Board champion for employee engagement also highlighted the important contribution of the channel's Employee Resource Groups in supporting employees and fostering inclusive culture.</p> <p>Ahead of the launch of the Fast Forward strategy in early 2024, the Board scrutinised the impact of these proposals on employees, the importance of getting the business in the right shape to deliver the broader aims of the strategy, and the need for clear communication during this transition.</p>
Political and regulatory (those we are accountable to, e.g. parliamentarians, Government and Ofcom)	<p>We ensure engagement to maintain our strong relationship with our political and regulatory stakeholders via one-to-one meetings as well as events, briefings, and quarterly stakeholder meetings.</p> <p>We are in regular contact with our key regulator Ofcom through meetings and reporting. We engage proactively with consultations by our political and regulatory stakeholders as and when these are launched.</p> <p>We also report to regulatory stakeholders via our pay gap and diversity reporting, and carry out an annual reputational survey.</p>	<p>Having welcomed the decision reached in early 2023 that Channel 4 will remain in public ownership, responding to the reforms put forward by the Government in its Media Bill was a vital area of engagement for the Channel 4 Board during the year. This included detailed consideration of the proposed obligations on the Members to ensure the corporation's long-term financial sustainability, as well as scrutinising proposed moves to allow Channel 4 to explore in-house production in future.</p> <p>The Board also oversaw work with Channel 4's regulator Ofcom to renew the channel's broadcast licence, expiring in December 2024, and how any new obligations would interact with the Media Bill.</p> <p>The Board performs an annual review of the effectiveness of the Corporation's compliance activities and agrees action points where necessary.</p>
Financial (governmental stakeholders, banks)	<p>During 2023, Channel 4 entered into a revised Memorandum of Understanding ('MoU') with DCMS. This clarified the requirements for Channel 4's financial engagement with DCMS – to provide information to DCMS and to secure DCMS approval for certain limited transactions outside the normal course of Channel 4's business. The Channel 4 Annual Report is laid before Parliament, and Members of the Channel 4 Board attend an annual Select Committee session to discuss the report and the channel's current activities. Channel 4 also provides regular reporting to its financial stakeholders on its performance and covenants.</p>	<p>The Board reviews and approves the Group's Annual Report ahead of it being laid before Parliament. It also scrutinises and approves the Group's annual long-term plan and Budget ahead of these being reported to financial stakeholders.</p> <p>The Board received regular updates during 2023 on declines in the advertising market, and mitigations proposed by management to respond to the resulting impact on the Corporation's revenues.</p> <p>The Board and Audit and Risk Committee have overseen negotiations with banking partners to extend the Group's existing revolving credit facility to £150 million, finalised in early 2024. The Board considered the rationale for extending the facility and the importance of securing the Group's resilience if exceptional circumstances were to arise. Final approval for the extension was given by the Board in February 2024; the Board has also overseen engagement with DCMS to obtain approval for this extension in line with the terms of the MoU.</p>

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Internal control

In accordance with good corporate governance practice, the Board:

- Is responsible for maintaining sound risk management and internal control systems, ensuring they are effective in identifying key risks and reporting on the adequacy of actions to respond to and manage those risks
- Seeks regular assurance and receives regular reports that enable it to satisfy itself that the system is functioning effectively
- Is responsible for the Group's process for the preparation of the consolidated financial statements

As outlined on page 165, the Board delegates oversight of risk management and internal control to the Audit and Risk Committee. Further information on activity in these areas during 2023 is provided in the Audit and Risk Committee Report on pages 172 to 175. The Board is not responsible for the internal control environment or corporate governance for any of the Group's joint ventures or associates; however, none of the Group's joint ventures or associates are material to the consolidated financial statements.

Clear management responsibilities are established for the Executive Members. The Corporation has a Code of Conduct and a suite of policies and procedures which encompass ethical behaviour, conduct, and internal controls.

The Audit and Risk Committee satisfies itself that internal controls are operating throughout the year based on a programme of reviews by the Group's Business Assurance and Finance functions, which are reported to the Committee at its quarterly meetings – further detail is provided in the Audit and Risk Committee Report on pages 172 to 175.

All expenditure is authorised in line with a delegated authorities framework. An electronic invoice authorisation system is used to further enhance the control environment. Authorisation and payment duties are strictly segregated, and bank signatory limits are clearly defined by bank mandate.

Risk management

In addition to its requirements under Schedule 9 of the Communications Act 2003 set out below, the Board and management have a clear responsibility for the identification of risks facing the Group and for putting in place procedures to monitor and mitigate such risks. Channel 4 has a high appetite for creative risk-taking, which could potentially give rise to controversial content. The Group has a low appetite for operational risks. The Board and Executive team operate a risk management framework for identifying, evaluating, and managing (rather than eliminating) significant risks faced by Channel 4. Material controls, including financial, operational, and compliance controls, are monitored and reviewed by senior management, Business Assurance and the Audit and Risk Committee. Remedial plans are put in place where internal reviews identify control weaknesses or opportunities for improvement. Serious control weaknesses (if any) are reported to the Board and appropriate actions taken. This framework has been developed in accordance with relevant good practice guidance on internal controls and risk management, and articulated to align with our new Fast Forward strategy. A summary of the key risks that the Group faces, together with how those risks are mitigated, is presented in the Strategic report on pages 150 to 159.

Reporting to the Board

Information is provided to the Members in advance of each Board or Committee meeting. The information provided over the course of the year includes strategic plans, detailed annual budgets, quarterly reforecasts, and key projects and initiatives, as well as monthly performance packs. Among other things, the monthly performance packs monitor progress against the agreed objectives for the year, and compare actual performance metrics, income, and expenditure to date with budget and prior year. Explanations are provided for significant variances to facilitate discussion and review at the Board meetings.

The Members also receive information in between Board meetings as appropriate, including weekly risk and viewing updates. The Corporation Secretary is responsible for the provision of information to the Members.

Editorial and compliance

Channel 4 has a long-established compliance culture, which is fully integrated into its commissioning process and provides clear editorial 'reference-up' to senior executives and appropriate Board oversight. Its importance is widely recognised and understood by independent production companies we work with and they share responsibility for ensuring that programmes and online content conform to the compliance culture we work within. The Commissioning team works in close collaboration with the Legal and Compliance department on all significant commissions. There are strong editorial, legal, and compliance systems and controls in place over the content commissioned by Channel 4.

These include Channel 4's '4Compliance' guidance and protocols, which encompasses the Ofcom Broadcasting Code, other relevant regulations, media law, and best practice guidelines. This is supported by extensive training for both staff and independent producers. The Members are satisfied that Channel 4 has in place suitable procedures to fulfil the requirements of paragraph 3b of the Ofcom licence, which exists to ensure that difficult or fine-cut decisions on editorial and compliance issues are properly considered by the most appropriately experienced and senior editorial executives and programme lawyers within Channel 4.

Due impartiality in Channel 4's news output

UK broadcasters have a statutory duty to ensure that their news output is reported with due accuracy and presented with due impartiality. This means giving adequate or appropriate weight to a range of views without favouring one over another.

These requirements are reflected within section five of the Ofcom Broadcasting Code and potential breaches of the Code are investigated by Ofcom, which can take action against non-compliant broadcasters.

Channel 4 takes these obligations extremely seriously and has robust processes and oversight in place to ensure its news content continues to meet the highest standards of fairness and to align with best practices and regulatory expectations on due impartiality.

The Channel 4 Board plays a central role in the oversight of Channel 4's delivery against its editorial obligations, including due impartiality. Every Board meeting begins with an update from the CEO, and a programming update from the Chief Content Officer, providing a regular opportunity for Board scrutiny and robust debate around how Channel 4 is meeting its editorial obligations. Commissioning Heads of Department also attend Board at various points throughout the year, providing further opportunities for Board scrutiny across the Commissioning leadership team.

In addition, the Channel 4 Board is updated on impartiality on an annual basis, along with a wider update on Channel 4's compliance with its statutory obligations. Additional reporting has strengthened Board oversight, ensuring they can have detailed discussion and interrogation of how editorial standards, including due impartiality, are being delivered within Channel 4's news output.

The Board reviewed news impartiality across 2023 at the March 2024 Board meeting. Discussions were particularly focused on perspectives around stories on Israel/Gaza, Channel 4's decision to apply broadcast standards to online new content, and preparation for forthcoming elections. Election preparations included: additional resources for Channel 4 News' Fact Check service; the launch of a new service, called 'AI Watch', to identify and scrutinise deepfakes; and plans to ensure that Channel 4 News' election coverage is delivered from and represents different regions right across the UK. The Board also discussed independent data on how different voters viewed Channel 4 News' independence and impartiality, as well as studies that show that Channel 4 News is the second most trusted news brand in the UK and is the least distrusted.

The Board is kept abreast of the robust compliance framework in place between ITN (which produces Channel 4 News) and Channel 4. The framework includes close liaison between the Editor of Channel 4 News and Channel 4's Head of News & Current Affairs, Specialist Factual and Sport; a daily summary of stories; regular conversations about the application of due impartiality; and a quarterly due impartiality review in which senior editorial figures at Channel 4 News and Channel 4's Head of Department take a deep dive into how stories have been covered. Particularly complex or contentious stories are flagged and discussed in advance and scripting can be reviewed pre-broadcast.

In addition, ITN and Channel 4's social media guidelines lay out clear expectations of staff with regard to due impartiality and employees are regularly reminded of their importance.

In order to further inform and supplement these processes, Channel 4 commissions independent external audience research to monitor viewer perceptions of due impartiality in relation to Channel 4 News, the findings of which are reviewed annually.

The Channel 4 Board is also updated on Ofcom complaints and/or investigations regarding due impartiality in Channel 4's news output. In 2023, Ofcom did not commence any formal investigations concerning Channel 4 News content and due impartiality. Ofcom assessed 114 complaints (in relation to 61 Channel 4 News programmes) all of which it assessed as not warranting further investigation.

Pension plan

There were six Trustees of the Channel Four Television Staff Pension Plan at 31 December 2023. The Trustees, who meet several times each year, also meet the Plan's investment managers from time to time; during the year these investment managers were Legal & General Assurance (Pensions Management) Limited, Veritas Asset Management LLP, BMO Global Asset Management, JP Morgan Asset Management, Ruffer LLP, IFM Investors, and Just Retirement Limited.

During the year, the Trustees were as follows:

Channel 4 Executives

Martin Baker	Chief Commercial Affairs Officer
Vince Russell	Finance Director

Channel 4 Non-Executive Trustees

Lord Chris Holmes MBE	Non-Executive Member
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Member-nominated Trustees

Sarah Honeyball	Client Sales Lead
Gill Monk	Pensioner Member Nominated Trustee

Corporation-appointed Trustee

Dinesh Visavadia, Independent Trustee Services Limited	Independent Corporate Trustee
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Further details of the Channel Four Television Staff Pension Plan are provided in note 19 to the financial statements.

Requirements of Schedule 9 of the Communications Act 2003 (the 'Act')

The Act requires Channel 4 to submit proposals to Ofcom detailing the arrangements under which it proposes to secure, so far as reasonably practicable, that all significant risks to the primary function are identified, evaluated, and properly managed. These proposals are referred to as 'the Arrangements'.

In addition, the Arrangements must include proposals which Channel 4 considers appropriate for securing the transparency objectives as set out in the Act, namely:

- an appropriate financial and organisational separation between the activities of Channel 4 that relate to the carrying out of their primary functions and their other activities; and
- an appropriate degree of transparency in financial and other reporting where resources are shared between separated activities or where there is some other financial or practical connection between otherwise separated activities.

The Act sets out the matters to which the submitted Arrangements may relate. These include the procedures and other practices to be followed by Channel 4 in the case of the initiation and management of new ventures, the exercise of particular powers, the assessment of risks, the imposition of charges, and the keeping of records.

The Act requires Channel 4 to put in place regular checks to confirm that Channel 4 is complying with the Arrangements. The Arrangements proposed by Channel 4 must contain provision for compliance, with the Arrangements to be checked regularly by a person (other than Channel 4's auditor) appointed in accordance with that provision. Revised Arrangements came into force on 15 September 2016.

Channel 4 has undertaken independent verification through an agreed-upon procedures engagement (performed by BDO LLP) reporting factual findings in respect of the Arrangements during 2023. Copies of the Arrangements are available from the Head of Corporate Governance & Trading.