

Your Ref: 01102407
Our Ref: CMS 148401/SE/05

Rt Hon Tessa Jowell MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA



*host government
department*

28 July 2010

Dear Tessa

Thank you for your letter of 19 July expressing the concerns of a number of your constituents about the BBC and the television licence fee.

I should first point out that we are committed to an independent, strong and successful BBC that is the cornerstone of British broadcasting. The BBC's current funding settlement remains in force until the financial year 2012-13 and I have no intention at present of changing the settlement. There have been no discussions yet with the BBC about the level of the licence fee.

I will begin discussions in 2011 about the next funding settlement for the BBC and will take all relevant factors into account, including the views of the BBC's competitors.

Under the terms of the BBC's Charter, it is the responsibility of the BBC Trust to ensure that the Executive Board delivers financial efficiency and value for money. I have made clear that the BBC should be prepared to defend all expenditure decisions it makes and deliver value for money to licence fee payers.

As you may be aware, the Coalition Government is committed to providing the National Audit Office with full access to the BBC's accounts in order to improve transparency and accountability. However, nothing that this Government does will compromise either the independence of the BBC or the quality of its output.

Department for Culture, Media and Sport

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeremy', written in a cursive style.

Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP
Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport