



Sir Michael Lyons
Chairman
BBC Trust Unit
Room 211
35 Marylebone High Street
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16th October, 2008

Dear Sir Michael -

Thank you for your letter of 16th September, and for suggesting a meeting with Fran O'Brien and Penny Young. This has been fixed for the 26th November, in order to give the BBC time for adequate consideration of Newswatch's latest survey, covering March - June 2008, which makes depressing reading (enclosed).

Thank you also for sending me the new Complaints Framework. I am not quite sure what the differences are from previous practice, and would be most grateful if you could point them out. For instance, there still does not seem to be a genuinely independent external complaints ombudsman?

And the BBC still has not explained to the British people the basic facts of our EU relationship; how a large majority of our national law is now imposed by Brussels, with our Parliament powerless to resist or change it (has the BBC ever explained that system, with the legislation proposed in secret by the unelected Commission, negotiated in secret in COREPER, and passed in secret in the Council of Ministers?); and how our EU membership may be costing us at least 10% of GDP per annum, surely an even more relevant question nowadays?

The latest survey also shows that the BBC studiously avoids telling its audience how many very unpopular policies are actually inspired by the EU: post office closures; fewer waste collections; home information packs; soaring energy and water bills; the Basle Agreement's effect on the capital markets and the present financial crisis. And so on. I could give many more examples, but hope that's enough to make the point.

As I understand it, this is the sort of general editorial failure which the Trust should instruct the Executive to rectify. It should not just be left to editors to bury their heads in the sand and carry on as they have done so far, especially with European elections looming next June, when the subject will be back on the agenda.

I look forward to hearing from you, and repeat my thanks for the meeting you have set up.

And forgive me if I repeat: the BBC has an even greater duty to air all this precisely because the main political parties don't. Anyway - with best personal wishes. Y.

Malcolm P.