

C02/00877/mk

Lord Pearson of Rannoch  
House of Lords  
LONDON  
SW1A 0PW

7 May 2002



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lord Pearson".

During the debate on this year's television licence fee increase regulations on 22 April, I undertook to write to you about changes to the BBC's governance arrangements, which you had raised in correspondence with Tessa Jowell.

In your letter of 23 March to Tessa Jowell, you referred to a letter you had written to the BBC Chairman, Gavyn Davies, suggesting that the staff in the BBC's new Governance and Accountability Department should be employed by a separate trust funded by the licence fee and that the latest Minotaur report on the BBC's political coverage of the "European issue" should be referred to an independent arbiter.

I understand that Gavyn Davies has replied to your letter and does not accept that your suggestion of establishing a separate licence fee funded trust would add value to the new department. In response to your second suggestion, I can only reiterate what Tessa Jowell said in her letter of 28 February, namely that it is the responsibility of the BBC Governors to ensure that the Corporation meets its obligation to treat controversial subjects with due accuracy and impartiality. The Government sees no reason to object to the arrangements which the Governors have put in place to fulfil their responsibility.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tessa".

TESSA BLACKSTONE



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE