

# RTÉ Audience Council

Meeting - 12 February 2024

## Attendance

(in person):

Mehrdad Lashgari  
Amber Rose Penders  
Diarmuid Breachnach  
Claire Millane  
Aoife Thomas  
Amy Whelan  
Ceithlinn Ní Dhuibhir Ní Dhúlachain  
Niamh Madden  
Richard Lynch  
Mark Quinn  
Tony Bond  
Mary Brophy  
Susan Ahern

In Attendance:

(via Teams)

Rachel Lysaght  
Mehandra Varma

Apologies:

Martin Byrnes

In Attendance:

Barbara Clarke, Secretary RTÉ Audience Council,  
Rachel Lysaght, Project Manager for the Audience Council,

Invitees:

Deirdre McCarthy (Director of News)  
Hazel Hughes (News Director)  
Paul Maguire (Managing Editor, Current Affairs)  
David Doran (Editor, Prime Time Investigates)  
Jennifer Legge (Audience Insights)

## 1. **Welcome**

The Chair welcomed the Audience Council. The minutes of the January meeting were approved. The Council proceeded to the Newsroom.

## 2. **Tour of Newsroom Studios and Current Affairs**

Deirdre McCarthy brought Audience Council members on a tour of the News room and studios. The tour gave great insight into the internal workings of the RTÉ News Room. Paul Maguire introduced Audience Council members to the RTÉ Current Affairs team.

## 2. **Audience Insights - Jennifer Legge**

*(Rachel Lysaght and Mehandra Varma joined on Teams)*

Jennifer presented to the Audience Council on viewing habits, video hours on social platforms, SVODs & Linear TV and Audio content. Jennifer provided

information on an Audience Insights weekly focus group to engage with audiences and which gathers groups of target audiences. Stakeholders observe the group. Jennifer also outlined a brand tracker conducted every month. Q&A followed. The Chair invited Audience Insights to return to address the Council on another occasion.

**3. Next Steps - Rachel Lysaght, Project Manager**

Rachel outlined the results of the survey conducted in order to choose the research topic(s) which the Audience Council wish to focus on. Rachel confirmed that all Audience Council members participated in the survey and that there was a clear winner – public service broadcasting (PSB) and trustworthiness. Rachel proposed that the Council think about having one subject for presentation under the public service broadcasting trust and truth umbrella. She asked the Council to think about whether there would be one question everyone worked on together or 2 questions splitting into two groups. Rachel suggested that the Council could liaise before next meeting to come up with ideas of what would be the specific focus. The Chair asked if all are in agreement that the subject be public service broadcasting and trustworthiness and all Audience Council members in attendance agreed. Rachel stated that she will a further poll to see which questions should be worked on.

**4. Audience Council Discussion**

There followed a short discussion of ideas.

**5. AOB**

There being no further business the meeting concluded.



---

**Chair**

**Dated: 14 March 2024**