

RTÉ Audience Council

Inaugural Meeting, 18 January 2024

Attendance

(in person): Susan Ahern (Chair), Amber Rose Penders, Diarmuid Breathnach, Claire Millane, Amy Whelan, Ceithlín Ní Dhuibhir Ní Dhúlachain, Tony Bond, Niamh Madden, Richard Lynch, Mark Quinn, Mehrdad Lashgari, Mehandra Varma, Mary Brophy.

Attendance:

(via Teams): Aoife Thomas, Martin Byrnes.

In Attendance: Barbara Clarke, Secretary RTÉ Audience Council,
Rachel Lysaght, Project Manager for the Audience Council,
Anne McManus, Solicitor, RTÉ Solicitors' Office.

Invitees: Siún Ní Raghallaigh, Chair RTÉ,
Adrian Lynch, Deputy DG and MD Audience, Marketing & Channels,
Deirdre McCarthy, MD RTÉ News & Current Affairs.

Chair(s) Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed the new members of the Audience Council to their first meeting of what is a 2.5 year term. Introductions were made by the Chair, RTÉ staff and Project Manager.

The Chair of RTÉ, Siún Ní Raghallaigh welcomed the Audience Council members, noted the importance of the work that they do and indicated that she was looking forward working with the Audience Council.

Audience Council Introductions

Then each member of the Audience Council introduced themselves and gave their insights into why they were motivated to become a member.

Responsibilities of the RTÉ Audience Council

The Chair set out the responsibilities of the Council in accordance with Section 96 of the Broadcasting Act 2009. The Audience Council is a real opportunity for RTÉ to use this group to test out ideas, strategy etc.

Confidentiality

The importance of confidentiality to the work of the Council was expressed by the Chair including the rationale for same. Each Member had before them a confidentiality agreement which they were asked to sign at the end of the meeting.

RTÉ Personnel – welcome and introductions

Adrian Lynch and Deirdre McCarthy joined the meeting. They gave background detail and provided insight into their departments and the work carried out including issues that are at the forefront of their work presently. A questions and answers session followed.

The Chair noted that the Council is available to be used as a sounding board for ideas or Apps that might benefit form audience engagement.

- An invitation for the Council to visit the newsroom and studios was offered (DMC).
- A presentation by Bernard Cohen on distribution was also offered (AL).

Audience Council Discussion on Areas of Interest

The remainder of the meeting was given over to a discussion of the areas of interest that the individual Members had. It was noted that such discussions were vital in the process to enabling the Council to come to a consensus on the theme or topic(s) they wish to cover in their first Presentation to the Board which was due in May/June 2024.

Rachel Lysaght moderated a free flowing discussion of ideas of the Members.

2024 Meeting Schedule

All meetings will be hybrid, some will be only virtual.

A schedule of meetings was provided.

Next Steps / Action Items:

- Members were offered the opportunity to put any further ideas or thoughts they had into writing in advance of the next meeting
- Members to provide input on the scheduling time of the meetings
- Schedule a visit to the Newsroom or Radio Centre
- Audience Insights to be invited to present at February meeting
- Get clarification on RTÉ broadcast obligations under statute to NI and for AI.



Chair

12 February 2024