

**RTÉ Audience Council Meeting on 24 September 2025  
at 3pm via Teams**

Council Attendance: Susan Ahern (Chair)  
Claire Millane  
Ceithleann Ní Dhuibhir Ní Dhúlacháin  
Diarmaid Breathnach  
Niamh Madden  
Aoife Thomas  
Tony Bond  
Amber Rose Penders  
Roisin Pryce  
Dolapo Agunbiade  
Amy Whelan  
Mehandra Varma  
Richard Lynch  
Mehrddad Lashgari

Apologies: Mark Quinn

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

**1. Welcome**

The Chair greeted the Audience Council and noted the apology.

**2. Minutes of 9 & 23 June 2025**

The Audience Council approved the Minute of the joint meeting of the Audience Council and the RTÉ Board of 9 June 2025 and the Minute of the Meeting of the Audience Council of 23 June 2025.

**3. Matters arising**

None.

**5. Presentation: David Crean, RTÉ Head of Drama**

David gave an insightful presentation regarding new and returning drama to RTÉ.

He gave details of the future plans for drama programming and the process of developing new ideas and creative talent in Ireland together with co-production with international partners. David outlined RTÉ's significant level of original drama production which represents a sizable investment in Irish talent, culture and the broader creative economy. A Q&A followed.

**6. Presentation: Declan McBennett, RTÉ Head of Sport**

Declan gave an in-depth presentation on RTÉ's sport coverage outlining the high viewership achieved. Major sporting events in 2024 such as the Paris Olympics and UEFA Euros were discussed together with RTE Sport's focus on women's sport. Declan gave a summary of plans for 2026 including the coverage of the FIFA World Cup 2026,

the European Athletics Championships and the Winter Olympics. Declan gave insight into the acquisition of sports rights. A Q&A followed.

**7. Discussion on areas of interest for Term 3**

Members of the Audience Council discussed their topics of interest for term 3.

The Chair requested that members share their further ideas and proposals with Rachel Lysaght. Rachel will then provide a shortlist at the next meeting.

**8. Feedback Matters from AC**

Standing section for the Council Members to provide direct feedback to RTÉ.

<b>Audience Council Feedback</b>	
Amy Whelan	
Sport	“I am delighted to see greater importance placed on female sports (well done RTÉ and everyone involved in making this positive change)!”
Podcasting	As a side note on podcasts, I know people like David McCullough has a PhD / background in history and wondered if there was any plans / appetite to do a history podcast / political history podcast? Might be good considering the lead up to a presidential election this year - I know Iain Dale on LBC wrote books on the U.K. prime ministers and did a podcast on Irish Taoiseach history. Very interesting!

**9. AOB**

There being no further business the meeting concluded.



Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair