

Tony Hall: The BBC is perfectly set up for future challenges

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Tony Hall
BBC Director- General

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COMMENTS

*In yesterday's **Observer**, Director-General Tony Hall explained how the BBC will still be a hub of creativity and innovation after last week's Licence Fee negotiations with the Government. The article appears in full below.*

As the dust settles after a challenging week of negotiation over funding and debate about the future of the BBC, three things are clear.

First, the BBC has negotiated a strong financial settlement from the government that gives us stability and clarity, but we should be in no doubt that the charter process will be tough.

Second, despite noises to the contrary, the BBC is as independent today as it has ever been. There has been no fundamental change in the relationship between government and corporation. Nor will there be under my watch.

Third, although the BBC used the pre-budget window of opportunity to reach a fair deal, it is not a process we would have chosen and it is not a process that should be repeated.

So how did we get here? Nearly two weeks ago, the government approached us about taking on the cost of funding free licences for the over-75s. If this had been imposed on us without compensation, we would have lost nearly a quarter of our funding.

So we went into intense negotiations with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Treasury.

Our objective was a strong deal for our audiences – the millions of people who use the BBC every day. I made it clear that I was not prepared to do the wrong deal or a deal on any terms.

But recognising the financial priorities of the government, I saw this as the chance to agree some important changes that have helped secure the BBC's future for the next charter period. As a result of this, the BBC will be funded by the licence fee for the next charter and the government

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