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29 January 2016

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# BBC restructure: the fallout

Fears emerge that BBC2 could be neglected or lose identity amid radical management changes

BY HANNAH GANNAGÉ-STEWART

Fears over the future of BBC2 and radical future-proofing proposals across BBC television have emerged in the wake of last week's seismic commissioning restructure.

The shock reorganisation closed Kim Shillinglaw's BBC2 controller role and put BBC1 boss Charlotte Moore in control of all linear channels and iPlayer.

Part of a wider simplification drive at the BBC, acting director of television Mark Linsey said it would lead to swifter, more efficient commissioning procedures.

But it emerged this week that the changes are just the tip of the iceberg as senior executives wrangle over ways to slash costs and safeguard the corporation against changing viewing habits. Television must contribute £12m of savings to closing the £150m iPlayer loophole, while its commitment to the £550m of cuts required under the BBC's new funding deal is yet to be decided.

As the dust settles, concerns are being raised across the industry about what the restructure might mean for BBC2, which is now without a TV board-level champion.

Multiple industry sources said they were shocked by the thinking behind the decision, and suggested that not having distinctive heads for BBC1 and BBC2 could backfire.

A number of insiders also suggested that Moore could inadvertently neglect the channel because



Wolf Hall: drama and factual are in the spotlight as the BBC looks to cut costs and future-proof itself

BBC1 is such a strategic priority for director general Tony Hall. It was a sentiment shared by former BBC

Productions chief creative officer Pat Young, who said the distinctiveness of BBC2 could be lost.

"The challenge for Charlotte will be to show that BBC2 has a distinct character and personality of its own. She's built up a fantastic BBC1 in her

image – open, accessible, popular and challenging – but if BBC2 is just the same, we've probably lost something," he said.

BBC insiders also said radical content changes are dominating dis-

**The challenge is to show that BBC2 has a distinct character and personality**

Pat Young

cussion internally as savings become an increasing priority and the broadcaster looks to supercharge iPlayer and launch new digital products.

*Broadcast* understands that one proposal being discussed to re-energise iPlayer viewing is to hand the VoD service BBC2's drama budget.

This was strongly denied by a BBC spokeswoman, who said it is "not the plan". Nonetheless, one

source said the decision to safeguard drama from cuts has sparked "fierce debate" internally and is a strategy being pushed through without rigorous scrutiny.

Factual could be where the bulk of savings are made and several proposals are being considered. One idea is to scale back flagship factual brands, such as *Horizon*, *Watchdog* and *Crimewatch*. This would mean cutting the length of series so that the brands remain intact and there is little impact on viewers.

➤ For more on the BBC changes, see page 3



Charlotte Moore

