



Age Ratings You Trust

201st BBFC Board of Classification Meeting

Wednesday 16 April 2018

Present:

Patrick Swaffer	President
Kamlesh Patel	Vice President
David Austin	Chief Executive
Dave Miles	Director of Outreach and Business Development
Craig Lapper (minutes)	Head of Compliance
Sarah Peacock (for item 4)	Compliance Manager
Murray Perkins (for item 5)	Head of DEA
Amelia Erratt (for item 5)	DEA Officer

Apologies

1. Alison Hastings (Vice President) sent her apologies.

Minutes of the previous meeting

2. The minutes were agreed.

Matters Arising

3. The meeting welcomed new Vice President, Kamlesh Patel.

Recent classification decisions

4. Compliance Manager, Sarah Peacock, joined the meeting to present two clips from episodes of recent US series that raise issues regarding the presentation of marijuana use. She noted that since the decriminalisation of marijuana use in parts of the US this has become a more common feature in various US series, both fiction and non-fiction. A scene was shown from the sitcom *Disjointed* (Season 2, Episode 4) in which Kathy Bates' character introduces viewers to her legal medical marijuana dispensary in LA. A scene was then shown from Chelsea Handler's Netflix talk-show *Chelsea* [Season 2, Episode 27] in which Chelsea and her guests take drugs and then compete in a 'stoned' spelling bee in a swimming pool. The Board agreed that the episode of *Disjointed* is appropriately placed at 15. While the presentation of marijuana is essentially light-hearted, it occurs within a context in which its use is both legal and acceptable (a licensed California dispensary). Drug taking is not overtly promoted or encouraged and there is no 'instructional detail' in a manner that contravenes the 15 Guidelines. By contrast, the Board agreed that the episode of *Chelsea* is appropriately placed at 18 because the use of marijuana is real rather than simulated and there is a strong emphasis on the pleasures of the drug.

Digital Economy Act

5. Mr Perkins and Ms Erratt updated the meeting on progress relating to the Digital Economy Act. Ms Erratt reported that the public consultation on the draft Guidance on Age Verification Arrangements and the draft Guidance on Ancillary Service Providers closed on 23 April. The BBFC received 620 responses, 40 from organisations and 580 from individuals. Many of the individual responses were encouraged by a campaign organised by the Open Rights Group. Mr Perkins said that our proposed response to the consultation will be circulated to the Board before being sent to DCMS on 21 May.

ACTION: AE to send draft consultation response to Board.

Guidelines consultation

6. Mr Lapper updated the meeting about the ongoing public consultation regarding the BBFC's Classification Guidelines. The main elements of the qualitative (focus groups) stage will end next week and we will be briefed by the researchers on the headlines on 23 May. After that we will consider any changes that need to be made to the questionnaires that will be used during the quantitative stage. This is expected to begin in June and produce final results in September. As soon as we have the full results from the qualitative stage the internal Guidelines Review Team will begin work on identifying areas of the Classification Guidelines that may require changes.

AOB

7. Mr Austin noted that a draft version of the BBFC handbook for staff on how to communicate with different stakeholders will be distributed to Board members for comment.

Date of next meeting: 19 June 2018