

# Panorama Fallout Risks Being Buried — Campaign Demands Independent BBC Accountability

*Restore Trust at the BBC Through Independent Review*

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, January 12, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A public [campaign](#) has been launched demanding an independent review of BBC editorial governance following the fallout from the broadcaster's Panorama programme and its handling of material relating to former U.S. President Donald Trump.

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*Luke Tobin*

While the controversy triggered a rare apology from the BBC Chair and led to senior resignations, campaigners now warn that the deeper issues raised by the episode are being quietly buried as attention moves on.

Luke [Tobin](#), CEO of Unusual Group and founder of the campaign, says this is exactly the problem.

“The danger is not that nothing happened, it’s that people think enough happened,” Tobin said. “Resignations create the impression of accountability without delivering it. If we let this fade, the system that allowed it remains intact.”

The controversy exposed how much power is concentrated inside public institutions and how little visibility the public has into how major decisions are made.

“The BBC is funded by the public, but the public has almost no insight into how editorial power is exercised,” Tobin said. “That imbalance is no longer sustainable in a low-trust, high-polarisation environment.”

What the campaign is demanding:

The campaign is calling for an independent, public-facing review of BBC editorial governance that is:

Free from political, commercial, and internal BBC influence

Transparent in its process and findings

Able to examine how major editorial decisions are made

Able to assess complaints handling and accountability mechanisms

Focused on protecting impartial, factual journalism

Designed to give the public a formal role in oversight

Structured to feed directly into the upcoming BBC Charter Review

"This is not about left versus right, or about one programme or one figure," Tobin said. "It's about whether a publicly funded institution can still justify operating behind closed doors."

Why this cannot wait

Public trust in media and institutions is already weak. Interest in news is falling. Political pressure is rising. And tolerance for opaque decision-making is collapsing.

The Panorama episode did not cause this crisis — it revealed it.

"If this moment passes without independent scrutiny, the message is clear: institutions can absorb public criticism, sacrifice a few individuals, and then carry on unchanged," Tobin said. "That is not accountability. That is damage control."

Independent research shows:

UK interest in news has nearly halved since 2015.

Confidence in UK media remains low by international standards.

Licence fee resistance is rising alongside perceived loss of relevance and impartiality.



Luke Tobin

The [Media Reform Coalition](#) has warned that the BBC's governance structure remains vulnerable to political pressure and vested interests.

Professor Lee Edwards, Chair of the Media Reform Coalition, said:

"Democratic accountability means accountability to the public — not to politicians and not to internal hierarchies."

A line in the sand

In response, Tobin has launched a Change.org campaign calling for:

A truly independent review panel

Radical transparency in editorial and complaints processes

Formal public representation in governance and oversight

Reforms aligned with the BBC's upcoming Royal Charter Review

The BBC belongs to the public, that means the public must not be ignored when trust is shaken — and must not be forgotten when the news cycle moves on.

The question now is whether this episode becomes a footnote or a turning point.

If it becomes a footnote, nothing changes.

If it becomes a turning point, public accountability finally does.

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