

**MINUTES OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIFTH MEETING OF  
THE OFCOM BOARD HELD ON 15 MARCH 2016 IN LONDON**

**Present**

Patricia Hodgson	Chairman
Sheila Noakes	Deputy Chairman
Sharon White	Chief Executive
Lynne Brindley	Member
Graham Mather	Member
Bill Emmott	Member*
Ben Verwaayen	Member
Jonathan Oxley	Executive Member and Group Director, Competition*
Steve Unger	Executive Member and Group Director, Strategy, International, Technology and Economists

\*Attended via telephone, minutes 1-11

**In attendance**

Polly Weitzman	General Counsel
Graham Howell	Corporation Secretary
Jenny Leyland	Assistant Secretary to the Corporation

Other Ofcom Colleagues

**By invitation**

Sir David Clementi, minute 11

**Observer**

Steve Gettings

**Corporation Secretary**

1. This was Graham Howell's last Board meeting before leaving Ofcom. The Chairman recorded the Board's appreciation of Graham's professionalism and his significant contribution to Ofcom since the start of the organisation. Steve Gettings would take over as Acting Corporation Secretary for six months following Graham's departure.

**Minutes of the Board Meetings held on 16 and 26 February 2016 – Minutes 223(16) and 224(16) - and Matters Arising**

2. The minutes of the Ofcom Board meetings held on 16 and 26 February 2016 were **APPROVED** for signature as a correct record. There were no matters arising which were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

**Chairman's Report – oral**

3. The Chairman provided her report to the Board which included an update on forthcoming recruitment to the Board of the Channel 4 Corporation. The Board was also updated on the Chairman and Chief Executive's attendance at a session held on 7 March 2016 as part of the Government's review of economic regulators.

4. The Chairman noted that the Freedom of Information Commission (FOI) report had been published on 1 March 2016 and her involvement with the Commission had concluded.

**Report from the Chairman of the Content Board – oral**

5. Bill Emmott reported on matters discussed at the Content Board meeting held on 23 February 2016. This had been his first meeting as Chairman of the Content Board. Other new Content Board members attending their first meeting were Aled Eirug, Zahera Harb and Robin Foster (all as non-executive members) and Tony Close (as an executive member). Bill Emmott also noted that Nick Pollard had been appointed as a non-executive member to the Content Board and his first meeting would be on 5 April 2016. The Board noted his appointment.

**Report from the Chairman of the Nations Committee – oral**

6. Lynne Brindley reported on matters discussed at the Nations Committee meeting held on 8 March 2016.

**Report from the Chairman of the Risk and Audit Committee – oral**

7. Sheila Noakes reported on matters discussed at the Risk and Audit Committee meeting held on 14 March 2016.

8. Following a competitive tender process in which the Deputy Chairman had been involved a decision had been taken to appoint KPMG as Ofcom's internal auditors. (The current contract with KPMG expires on 31 July 2016. The new contract will commence on 1 August 2016.)

**Reports from other Non-Executive Board Members – oral**

9. Graham Mather reported on the key themes discussed during a recent meeting with the Chairman of the Communications Consumer Panel (CCP), Jo Connell. The Chairman referred to the CCPs helpful submission in response to the consultation on Ofcom's Annual Plan 2016/17 and recorded the Board's appreciation for the work done by the Panel.

**Chief Executive's Report - Board Paper 24(16)**

10. Sharon White presented her report to the Board including an oral update on current issues. Jonathan Oxley provided an update on the Business Communications Market Review and Leased Lines Charge Controls.

**Broadcasting Institutional Update: Engaging with Charter Review post Clementi – Board Papers 25(16) and 27(16)**

11. On 1 March 2016 Sir David Clementi had published his report "A Review of the Governance and Regulation of the BBC". Sir David joined the Board to present and discuss the key recommendations from his report.

12. Following Sir David's departure the Board discussed the proposed response to Government, as set out in Board Paper 27(16). Subject to comments noted during discussion the Board **APPROVED** the proposals.

**Review of the Regulation of Royal Mail – Board Paper 26(16)**

13. Following discussion of the findings from the review of the regulation of Royal Mail the Board **AGREED** that we should issue a consultation on the proposals as set out in Board Paper 26(16).

**Ofcom 2016/2017 Budget – Board Paper 28(16)**

14. Following discussion the Board **APPROVED** the Ofcom budget for 2016/2017 as set out in Board Paper 28(16). The Board noted that the tariffs for 2016/2017 would be set on the basis of the budget and approved by the Policy and Management Board ahead of publication on 31 March 2016.

**Ofcom Annual Plan 2016/2017 – Board Paper 31(16)**

15. Subject to comments noted during discussion the Board **APPROVED** the Ofcom Annual Plan 2016/2017 as set out in Board Paper 31(16).

**Ofcom Board Forward Plan 2016 – Board Paper 29(16)**

16. The Board discussed the Board forward plan and comments were noted.

**Governance: Broadcast Licensing Decisions – Board Paper 30(16)**

17. The Board **APPROVED** the proposals set out in Board Paper 30(16) for a revised approach to decision-makers for broadcast licensing decisions, subject to including provision that where a licensing decision is complicated or raises significant issues and therefore is to be considered by a decision-making panel, the executive can if it considers it would be helpful include a member of the Content Board on that panel.

18. The new arrangements would mean that the Broadcast Licensing Committee would cease to exist with immediate effect. The Board **AGREED** to delegate power to make broadcast licensing decisions previously delegated to the Broadcast Licensing Committee to each of Tony Close, Alison Marsden and Neil Stock.

**Appointment of Members to MG Alba – Board Paper 38(16)**

19. The Board **APPROVED** the appointment of two new members to the Board of MG Alba and the reappointment of four existing members, as recommended in Board Paper 38(16).

**Information Papers**

20. The Board noted the following information papers.
- New Spectrum for Programme Making and Special Events – Board Paper 32(16)
  - Network Security: Ofcom's responsibilities – Board Paper 33(16)
  - Management Information Report – Board Paper 34(16)
  - Strategic Risk Register – Board Paper 35(16)
  - Annual Report on the Health and Safety Management Framework – Board Paper 36(16)
  - Channel 4 Statement of Media Content Policy – Board Paper 37(16).

**Minutes of other Boards/Panels/Committees**

21. The Board noted without comment the minutes of the following meetings:

- Content Board (3 November 2015)
- Communications Consumer Panel (21 January 2016)
- Advisory Committee for England (11 November 2015)
- Advisory Committee for Northern Ireland (4 November 2015)
- Advisory Committee for Scotland (15 November 2015)
- Advisory Committee for Wales (12 November 2015).

**Any other business**

22. There was none.

**Date of the next meeting**

The next Board meeting will be held on 19 April 2016.