



Note of the 308th Meeting of the Ofcom Board, held on 18 October 2023

Members were welcomed to the 308th meeting of the Ofcom Board. Martin Ballantyne (General Counsel), Veronica Branton (Corporation Secretary) and Sharon Malley (Governance Manager) attended throughout.

Declaration of members' interests

1. A member updated the Board on a new interest.

Minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2023 and matters arising

2. The minutes of the Ofcom Board meeting held on 20 September 2023 were approved for signature as an accurate record. It was noted that a Board member had asked whether reasons for switching telecom providers included quality of coverage in their area in addition to tariff and this would be picked up offline.
3. A summary of progress against action points was noted.

Chair's report

4. The Chair updated the Board on his activities. He said that recommendations for non-executive appointments to the Board of Channel 4 Corporation had been passed to the Government and Ofcom was awaiting approval. He said he was also in discussion with the Government over the use of a recruitment agency for vacancies on the Ofcom Board.
5. The Chair said he had had a constructive discussion with the Chair of the Board of the BBC covering a range of matters.
6. The Board noted the report.

Chief Executive's report

7. Melanie Dawes presented her report updating the Board on her activities and key developments since the last Board meeting. She said Ofcom was facing a period of significantly high workloads, including in online safety, broadcasting standards, telecoms mid-contract price rises, Royal Mail and the World Radio Conference. She would be giving evidence at two select committees in the following week and a Group Director would be giving evidence at one the week after. Notwithstanding the volume of work, Ofcom was well prepared in these areas and confident about delivery.

8. The Board noted the report.

Report from the Chair of the Risk and Audit Committee

9. The Chair of the Risk and Audit Committee updated the Board on the meeting of the Risk and Audit Committee held on 26 September 2023. She said the committee had reviewed the findings of two internal audits, on market research and enforcement regulation requirements, and both had received ratings of moderate assurance. However, both had revealed issues around data retention and the executive were taking steps to respond to this. In addition, the market research audit had identified stages where value for money could be evaluated and this was also being taken forward.
10. The Committee had supported the proposed new approach to the strategic risk register and would review it again at the December meeting before submitting it to the Board for approval. The Committee had received a comprehensive paper on the position on pensions with no issues of concern raised.
11. The Board noted the paper.

Cardiff office lease

12. The Board discussed a paper on future options for premises in Cardiff and approved the recommendations set out in the paper.

Advisory Committee for Wales – extended terms for two members

13. The Board discussed a paper on the extension of the terms for two members of the Advisory Committee for Wales.
14. The Board **APPROVED** the three-year extension of Angharad Evans' term and the 18-month extension to Aled Eirug's term as members of the Advisory Committee for Wales.

Information items

15. The Board noted the following information items:
 - Non-executive member updates
 - Monthly performance update
 - Board work programme and publications schedule
 - Minutes of the Communications Consumer Panel (20 July 2023) and Risk and Audit Committee (26 September 2023)

Items in the Board reading room

16. The Board noted the Communications Consumer Panel/ACOD quarterly update.

Any other business

17. There was no other business.

Date of the next meeting

18. The next Board meeting would be held on 15 November 2023.