

**MINUTES OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FIFTH MEETING OF THE OFCOM
CONTENT BOARD HELD AT RIVERSIDE HOUSE, LONDON,
ON TUESDAY 18 DECEMBER 2018**

Members Present:

Tim Suter	Chairman
Jonathan Baker	Member
Kevin Bakhurst	Executive Member
Tony Close	Executive Member
Maggie Cunningham	Member
Bob Downes	Member
Aled Eirug	Member
Robin Foster	Member
Angelina Fusco	Member
Stephen Nuttall	Member
Monisha Shah	Member
Janey Walker	Member

Apologies:

Sophie Morgan	Member
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In Attendance:

Vikki Cook	Director, Standards and Audience Protection
David Edwards	Assistant Corporation Secretary
Other Ofcom Colleagues	

Introduction & Welcome

1. The Chairman welcomed all present to the one hundred and fifty-fifth meeting of the Content Board, in particular Stephen Nuttall who was attending his first meeting.
2. Members noted that at its meeting on 13 November the Ofcom Board had agreed to appoint Tim Suter as permanent Chairman of the Content Board (he had been interim Chairman) and to renew the appointments of Aled Eirug and Robin Foster.

Chairman's update

3. The Chairman reported on discussions at the November and December 2018 Ofcom Board meetings and focussed on the main areas of work.

Minutes of the Content Board Meeting held 6 November 2018 - CB Minutes 154(18), Actions List and Matters Arising

4. The minutes of the Content Board meeting held on 6 November 2018 were agreed as a true and accurate record for signature by the Chairman.
5. Members noted the actions completed since the last meeting. There were no other matters arising that were not covered by the meeting agenda.

Members' interests

6. The Chairman highlighted the agenda item on Ofcom's approach to review of Channel 4 Corporation's 2019 Statement of Media Content Policy. This would be an early stage discussion and the Chairman and members **AGREED** unanimously that on this occasion Sophie Morgan's interest as a presenter at Channel 4 be disregarded. [Note: Subsequent to the start of

the meeting apologies for absence were received from Sophie Morgan.]

Content and Media Policy updates - CB 43(18)

7. Members noted the contents of a paper providing an update on key policy and project areas in the Content and Media Policy Group.
8. Members were updated on and discussed a wide range of topics, including:
 - BBC proposed changes to iPlayer; following review of the BBC's materiality assessment and representations from other stakeholders, Ofcom had published a final interim direction the previous day and the BBC had been directed to carry out a public interest test.
 - Wireless Group's request that Ofcom undertake a BBC Competition Review ('BCR'); Ofcom had reached the view that it would not be appropriate to launch a BCR and was about to publish its assessment of the request.
 - BBC news review; terms of reference were expected to be published in February 2019, ie prior to the next meeting of the Content Board, and the Chairman requested the Executive to ensure that the Content Board would be able to input to the scope of the review.
 - Diversity reporting; the first stage of information gathering and engagement with broadcasters was underway for the second radio report, a questionnaire would be sent out in the New Year and the report was expected to be published in June 2019.
 - RT; seven of ten RT news and current affairs programmes under investigation had been found to be in breach of due impartiality rules and Ofcom was minded to consider imposing a statutory sanction; prior to publication of findings later in the week, members would be copied a summary of RT decisions.
 - Brexit; the Executive had been working on preparations for no-deal, should that arise, and engaging with stakeholders. The Government was expected to publish a Statutory Instrument shortly and Ofcom would publish its own guidance explaining what broadcasters might be required to do in a no-deal scenario.
 - Harmful online content; Ofcom was continuing to meet regularly with DCMS and the Home Office to share experience and to inform their thinking on regulation. An Internet Safety Strategy White Paper was expected in February 2019 at the earliest.
 - Review of Regional TV Production and Programming Guidance; the consultation would be published the following day.
 - Local TV and programming commitments.

Ofcom Board discussion of the Content Board's annual work programme 2019 - CB 44(18) and thematic standards report

9. It was noted that, at its meeting on 11 December 2018, the Ofcom Board had reviewed and approved the Content Board's Annual Work Programme for 2019. Consultation on Ofcom's *Proposed Work Plan 2019/20* was in progress and although it was not expected to result in substantial change to content related priorities it was possible that the Government's Internet Safety Strategy White Paper could have an impact.
10. The Ofcom Board had reacted positively to the first of a series of six-monthly updates from the Content Board, submitted as a paper on the key themes and emerging lessons from Ofcom's editorial standards work. Ofcom's intention to undertake a review in 2019 of the BBC's news and current affairs output had also been part of the Board discussion. Content

Board members had discussed earlier iterations of the six-monthly update paper and the final version would be copied to members for information.

Channel 4 Corporation's 2019 Statement of Media Content Policy - CB 45(18)

11. Members had received a paper to outline Ofcom's approach to review of Channel 4 Corporation's (C4C) annual Statement of Media Content Policy (SMCP). The intention in 2019 was to report in less detail than in previous years, because Ofcom would also commence its statutory five-year review of C4C's performance later in the year. In discussion issues raised by members included:
- Risks to financial sustainability. The team would consider the medium/long-term health of the TV and online advertising markets as part of the SMCP review and intended to look at this area in detail as part of the five-year review and wider PSB review.
 - The contribution of C4C's portfolio of services, including All4, to overall performance and remit delivery.
 - Planned C4C relocation (a new central base in Leeds and creative hubs in Glasgow and Bristol), the impact on the Nations and regions and on commissioning. C4C was now in the operational phase of its relocation plans so the team would consider this area by identifying both the opportunities and risks to delivery of C4C's remit as it progressed its plans.
12. The Content Board would engage with the Executive's SMCP review, over the period February to March, as a sub-group of members.

Children's Media Literacy Report - CB 46(18)

13. Members had received a paper to present some of the key findings from Ofcom's forthcoming *Children's and Parents' Media Use and Attitudes Report* and *Children's Media Lives Report*, both due for publication at the end of January 2019 and to coincide with an Ofcom-hosted stakeholder event. Issues discussed included:
- Parental concern around the internet, this was rising but parents were, in some areas, less likely to moderate their child's activities.
 - Older children's awareness of concerns relating to the accuracy of news via social media.
 - Whether there were any differences by region or socioeconomic group in critical understanding of websites and search engines. The Executive would follow-up a member's query.
 - Social media and online safety, the pressure to receive 'likes' and children's management of unsolicited or inappropriate comments.
 - Media literacy research as an aid to thinking about online regulation.
 - Future Ofcom media literacy activities, strategy and vision.

Information items

14. The following information items were noted:
- Minutes of the Ofcom Board (2 October and 13 November 2018) and of the Communications Consumer Panel/ACOD (18 October 2018).

Any Other Business

15. There was none.

Date of the Next Meeting

16. The next meeting of the Content Board was scheduled to take place on 26 February 2019.