

**MINUTES OF THE SIXTY-FIRST MEETING OF THE OFCOM ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR ENGLAND HELD AT RIVERSIDE HOUSE ON 27<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2017**

**Present**

John Varney	Chair
Graham Creelman	Member
Caroline Roberts-Cherry	Member
Emma Davison	Member
Becky Hogge	Member

**In Attendance**

Chris Holland, Communications Consumer Panel  
 Steve Gettings, Corporation Secretary and Director – England  
 Emma McFadyen, Ofcom Governanace and Accountability  
 Catriona Lawrence, Ofcom Governance and Accountability  
 Other Ofcom Colleagues

<b>1.</b>	<p><b><u>Introduction and declarations of interest</u></b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed all present to the sixty-first meeting.</p>
<b>2.</b>	<p><b><u>Minutes of the meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2017 and matters arising</u></b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2017 were approved.</p> <p>The Committee raised the outstanding action on Garden Villages and noted there was still interest in being further informed on the matter.</p> <p>It was agreed the International team should be invited to come to the next meeting to discuss Net Neutrality and UK ISPs.</p>
<b>3.</b>	<p><b><u>Regulatory political update</u></b></p> <p>An Ofcom colleague joined the meeting and members had received a paper to brief the Committee on recent and current Government and legislative issues.</p> <p>It was noted that the Fox/Sky merger had been a priority in recent months, and that the process with the Secretary of State had been a positive one.</p> <p>It was agreed that more information would be provided to members on the measures in the Digital Economy Act that required additional work from Government.</p> <p>BT had recently made an offer to Government to supply the Broadband USO. The Committee discussed the mechanisms available to Government to provide the USO.</p>

4.	<p><b><u>Update of Activities for the 700MHz Clearance Programme in England</u></b></p> <p>Ofcom colleagues joined the meeting and members were provided with a paper detailing the timetable for 700 MHz clearance in England and the impact this would have on certain consumers.</p> <p>There was discussion on the support available for affected consumers and how Programme Making and Special Events (PMSE) services would be affected. A consultation on PMSE closed in July and a statement would be published in the next few months.</p>
5.	<p><b><u>Connected Nations</u></b></p> <p>Members had been provided with a paper and Ofcom colleagues joined the meeting to discuss the Connected Nations report, especially concerning the England specific results.</p> <p>There was discussion on Virgin Media customers failing to receive advertised speeds and how it was proposed that this would be addressed. Members expressed interest in seeing a projected timeline in the report detailing the rollout of superfast and ultrafast technologies.</p> <p>It was noted that two years previously the Committee had received a presentation on the take up and use of broadband services. It was agreed that it would be useful to hear more on this to help assess where investment was best placed.</p>
6.	<p><b><u>BBC Operating licence</u></b></p> <p>Ofcom colleagues joined the meeting and briefed the Committee on the forthcoming publication of the new BBC Operating Licence.</p> <p>It was noted that Ofcom's earlier consultation on the draft operating licence had been due to close on 17 July but the deadline had been extended to allow stakeholders to take account of new research published by Ofcom on distinctiveness and audience perceptions of the BBC.</p> <p>Members noted that PACT was calling for improved out of London quotas and asking for criteria to be tightened.</p>
7.	<p><b><u>Brexit</u></b></p>

	<p>Members were provided with a paper identifying issues regarding Brexit and Ofcom colleagues joined the meeting. Those issues were divided into three areas – the withdrawal bill, specific negotiation issues, and impact on business.</p> <p>Broadcast jurisdiction was discussed and the potential for licensees to move out of the UK. DCMS was currently considering how best to preserve the country of origin model through negotiation.</p> <p>It was noted that EU mobile roaming was an issue of which the Government was very aware and options were being explored to ensure it continues.</p> <p>Members agreed with Ofcom colleagues that remaining a part of BEREC would be beneficial.</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p><b><u>Ofcom Annual Plan 2018/19</u></b></p> <p>Members were provided with a paper and Ofcom colleagues joined the meeting to seek early views on items to include in the Annual Plan. Members noted that the Plan was already on the right track and that Ofcom colleagues should continue to focus on making sure the report had clarity, focus, and brevity.</p> <p>Members’ suggested ideas included: exploratory work on ‘fake news’; a review of PSBs; and work on quality of customer service and on diversity in content production.</p> <p>It was noted that the phrasing of the section on diversity and representation gave the impression that goals had already been achieved. It was suggested that Ofcom’s focus on diversity should be woven throughout the Plan.</p> <p>It was noted that there were still issues with consumers being unaware of switching rules. It was agreed this issue would be further explored.</p> <p>The Committee suggested the team could draw attention to ongoing issues that affect England, such as poor mobile and fixed line connections that affected both rural areas and the middle of cities.</p> <p>Members agreed to submit any further ideas by email for collation, to then be passed on to Ofcom colleagues.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p><b><u>Communications Consumer Panel update</u></b></p> <p>Members had been provided with a summary note on the recent activity of the Panel/ACOD, covering engagement on triple play, auto-compensation, broadband speeds, and the updating of the General Conditions.</p>

	<p>Members expressed interest in the stronger complaints handling and ADR rules in the updated General Conditions, noting that satisfaction in complaints handling was generally very low.</p> <p>Members agreed that it would be useful to have an update on Post from Ofcom colleagues.</p>
10.	<p><b><u>Nations Committee/Board session</u></b></p> <p>The Chairman would soon be attending a meeting of the Nations Committee, including a session with the Ofcom Board. He requested that members inform him of any subjects that they thought should be raised.</p>
11.	<p><b><u>AOB</u></b></p> <p>It was agreed that the Committee should begin generating a forward plan of subjects they think worth putting on the agenda.</p>

Chairman.....

Date.....