

Note of the Ofcom Board held on 4 February 2026

Members were welcomed to the 331st meeting of the Ofcom Board. In addition to Board members, Martin Ballantyne (General Counsel), Veronica Branton (Corporation Secretary), Sharon Malley (Governance Manager) and Jamie Mordue (Governance Manager) attended throughout.

Declaration of members' interests

1. No new declarations of interest were raised.

Minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2025

2. The minutes of the Ofcom Board meeting held on 17 December 2025 were approved as a correct record subject to minor amendments and progress against actions was noted.

Chair's report

3. The Chair recommended the appointment of Oliver Griffiths, Online Safety Group Director, as a third executive member of the Ofcom Board. The Board approved the appointment with effect from Monday 9 February 2026.
4. The Chair updated the Board on his activity. He said appointments to the Board of Channel 4 would be forthcoming and would be led by Ofcom's Deputy Chair as they would extend beyond the Chair's term of appointment. Karen Baxter's term had been extended by one year. The appointment of a new Board member for Scotland had now been approved by the Scotland Government and by DSIT and he would hopefully be in post by the next meeting.
5. The Board noted the report.

Chief Executive's report

6. The Chief Executive updated the Board on her activities. She said there had been an increase in debate around online safety in the last few weeks and this would be discussed further in the online safety item later on the agenda. She updated the Board on relationships with ministers and how Ofcom was responding to their priorities.
7. On broadcasting, Ofcom had published its consultation on prominence under the Media Act and the Government had published a Green Paper on the future of the BBC. Work to implement changes set out in the 2024 Mid-Term Review of the BBC would now proceed following the Government and BBC's publication of the updated Framework Agreement in December 2025.
8. In telecoms, the major piece of Ofcom work continued to be the Telecoms Access Review. There were reports of some likely consolidation in the altnet market which Ofcom was monitoring.

9. The Board discussed Royal Mail and noted the difficulty it was experiencing in delivering its updated business plan. The Board noted the forthcoming postal pricing review and agreed that a substantive discussion on this at a future Board may be needed.
10. The Board noted the report.

Ofcom stakeholder review 2025

11. Individuals from a consultancy engaged to conduct the Ofcom stakeholder review 2025 presented a paper on the findings.
12. The Board discussed the review and the responses of stakeholders. The Board noted the report.

Review of effectiveness of the Board and Committees

13. Individuals from a consultancy engaged to conduct the review of effectiveness of the Ofcom Board and Committees 2026 presented a paper on the findings. The Chair noted that the report would be helpful for the new Chair, when appointed.
14. The Board discussed the review and the recommendations. The Board noted the review.

One Ofcom – transformation programme

15. The Board discussed a paper on the Government's growth and regulatory reform agenda. It was noted that Ofcom had carried out a range of activity to reduce burdens on businesses and to introduce policies that enabled growth and this had been brought together in a letter for the Prime Minister and Chancellor. This work had also been highlighted by the Chief Executive at a recent Select Committee appearance.
16. The Board noted that growth and regulatory reform continued to be a high profile area for the Government and that Ofcom was deregulating where possible but also being asked to introduce new regulation in areas such as cyber security. These new regulations would support growth through enabling resilience and certainty for industry. It was noted that Ofcom's duties since foundation were compatible with economic growth.
17. The Board noted the paper.

Online Safety: 2026/27 programme of work

18. The Board discussed a paper on the 2026/27 online safety programme and the current operating environment. It was noted that Ofcom had opened an investigation into the use of the Grok AI chatbot on X to share sexual deepfakes of real people for a period over the end of the year.
19. The Board held a wide-ranging discussion on the emerging threats and pace of change in the online safety environment, and the speed of Ofcom's response.
20. The Board discussed the changes in the online safety landscape since the previous Board meeting, including the Australian under-16s social media ban and the Grok deepfakes, and noted that they had led to high profile discussions on how to tackle online safety and Ofcom's role in this.

21. The Board expressed their support for what the executive was doing to achieve progress in an extremely difficult and highly politicised environment. The Board noted that significant progress had been made on implementing the Online Safety Act and that Ofcom's response to X had been swift. It may be helpful to be more explicit about work done at the supervision stage to achieve compliance although this would require sensitive handling to ensure it did not compromise the outcomes.
22. It was noted that the forthcoming budget paper should ensure adequate resource was allocated to online safety to respond to the changed environment.
23. The Board noted the paper.

Work programme of the Content Board 2026/27

24. The Board approved the Content Board's work programme for 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027

Communications Consumer Panel/Advisory Committee for Older and Disabled People – appointments

25. The Board approved a recommendation being made to the Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology for the reappointment of four members of the CCP/ACOD.

Advisory Committee for Wales – appointments

26. The Board approved two appointments to the Advisory Committee for Wales and one alternate appointment.

MG ALBA reappointment

27. The Board approved a reappointment to the Board of MG ALBA, subject to final approval by Scottish Ministers.

Standing items

28. The Board noted the following standing items:
 - Non-executive member updates
 - Monthly performance report
 - Board work programme and publications schedule
 - Minutes of the Communications Consumer Panel/ACOD of 13 November 2025, Advisory Committee for England of 25 November 2025, Risk & Audit Committee of 26 November 2025, Content Board of 2 December 2025, Advisory Committee for Northern Ireland of 4 December 2025, Online Information Advisory Committee of 5 December 2025, Advisory Committee for Wales of 9 December 2025 and Communications Consumer Panel/ACOD of 18 December 2025.

Any other business

29. There was no other business.

Date of the next meeting

30. The next Board meeting would be held on 11 March 2026.