

Note of the Ofcom Board held on 15 July 2026

Members were welcomed to the 336th meeting of the Ofcom Board. In addition to Board members, Martin Ballantyne (General Counsel), Veronica Branton (Corporation Secretary), Francesca Carter (Deputy Corporation Secretary) and Sharon Malley (Governance Manager) attended throughout.

Declaration of members' interests

1. The Chair updated the Board on a new interest.

Minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2026

2. The minutes of the Ofcom Board meeting held on 17 June 2026 were approved as a correct record
3. A summary of progress against action points was noted.

Chair's report

4. The Chair updated the Board on his activity. He said he had met the DSIT Secretary of State and Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, as well as various stakeholders, including peers.
5. The Chair said he was sorry to report that Richard Allan had stepped down from the Board for personal reasons. The Chief Executive added her regret at his departure and noted that his expertise and insight on online safety would be greatly missed.
6. The Board noted the report.
7. The Board approved an exception to its rules for this meeting to waive the requirement that either the Chair or the Deputy Chair be present for the Board to be quorate. Angela Dean agreed to chair the parts of the Board meeting where the Chair and the Deputy Chair were not present.

Chief Executive's report

8. The Board discussed a paper the Chief Executive's activities. The period had been busy with work to finalise reports in areas including scams and categorisation prior to the summer recess.
9. Ofcom's announcement on enforcement against VM02, including a £28m fine, had been well received. It had taken three years to complete the investigation into the behaviour that led to the fine, partly due to VM02's poor responses to Ofcom's information requests. This had been reflected in the fine.
10. Ofcom would shortly be publishing research on age checks for porn sites one year after the introduction of age verification.
11. The Board noted the report.

Online safety: programme update July 2026

12. The Board discussed a paper on Ofcom's online safety programme. The Government had announced a new package of measures, including a social media ban for under 16s, and the team was beginning work on planning for the new duties.
13. The paper included an early stage business case to identify costs associated with the new measures and areas for potential internal reprioritisation and efficiencies to help meet these additional costs.
14. The Board discussed the Ofcom Transformation programme and its interaction with the new online safety duties. The Transformation programme should enable new pieces of work to be set up consistently and be embedded well across the organisation. It should also support the effective and timely working of cross-functional teams.
15. The Board noted the paper, including the significantly expanded and more complex delivery environment for the Online Safety programme following the Government's package of online safety legislation.

Broadcasting and Media Group strategic update: shaping and implementing the future media framework

16. The Board discussed a paper on the Broadcasting and Media Group's approach to the regulatory transition to a more platform-facing media framework from the enforcement of broadcasting regulations. Ofcom was in the final stages of implementing the Media Act and this was being followed by a new Green Paper "Watch this space" on the strategic direction for UK media. This included the next stage on prominence for trusted UK news and public service media content on social media and streamers.
17. The Board discussed the paper and noted that it raised policy areas that crossed Group boundaries, for example with definitions of news featuring in legislation for both broadcasting and online safety. This would need consistent handling within Ofcom.
18. The fall in BBC licence payers was noted. Ofcom had engaged with the BBC over its Charter renewal and funding challenges and an update on the BBC programme of work would be presented to the Board in September.
19. It would be important to continue to recognise the needs of consumers in the nations and regions and to be clear on Ofcom's work in this area with the devolved governments.
20. The Board noted that it was increasingly challenging to establish the best way to support consumers in the rapidly changing broadcasting environment with harms such as misinformation/disinformation hard to define.
21. The Board noted the paper.

Ofcom's international strategy

22. The Board discussed a paper on Ofcom's international strategy. The international context was becoming increasingly important across all of Ofcom's work, impacting both what was done and how it was communicated. The team was conscious of prioritising its work to focus on the areas

of greatest significance and impact for Ofcom. Resourcing and value for money were managed carefully and international engagement was not pursued only through international travel.

23. The Board discussed the paper and the geopolitical dynamics and the extent to which they impacted the Government and Ofcom. In this context it was noted that cultivating a wide range of alliances, including with the EU and Australia, was increasingly important. Given Ofcom's regulated sectors were part of global ecosystems, Ofcom should engage broadly, with a view to establishing common ground and enabling constructive dialogues.
24. The Board noted the paper.

Media literacy: three-year strategy update

25. The Board discussed a paper on progress on the implementation of Ofcom's three-year media literacy strategy.
26. The Board noted that Ofcom had recently published its first regulatory statement and was at the halfway point of the three-year strategy. The recommendations in the statement had the potential to lead to online platforms and broadcasters taking steps to improve media literacy among citizens.
27. Work to date had focused on the three core work areas of the three-year media literacy strategy, including research and evaluation, publishing a Media Literacy Outcomes Bank, which has been well received, and promoting media literacy through community-based projects.
28. The Board noted the importance of ensuring that Ofcom's partnership working reached all the UK nations and Ofcom worked with teams in the nations on this.
29. The Board noted the paper.

Satellite connectivity in the UK

30. The Board discussed a paper on the UK satellite market and the implications for Ofcom's work. The market was evolving rapidly with frequent innovations attracting high levels of investment. Ofcom was establishing where its work would intersect with these developments and how to engage with key stakeholders.
31. It was noted that satellite offered an opportunity to fill connectivity gaps but also put pressure on mobile and fibre networks. The growth of the satellite market would have an impact on quality and competition in the UK.
32. The Board discussed Ofcom's options for regulation. The satellite market offered significant potential to improve rural connectivity and drive economic growth. It would be important to have a joined up approach to regulation to enable the best development of the market.
33. The Board noted the importance of supporting competition in the satellite market by enabling the entrance of smaller players were possible.
34. It was noted that British telecoms companies were beginning to offer satellite services to consumers but their overall strategies on integrating satellite offers were still developing. Ofcom would need to assess its approach to consumer regulation in this area.
35. The Board noted the report.

Advisory Committee for Wales member and Chair appointment

36. The Board approved an appointment to the Advisory Committee for Wales.

Appointments to the Online Information Advisory Committee

37. The Board approved appointments to the Online Information Advisory Committee.

Planning for the Board Strategy Day

38. The Board noted the paper on planning for the Board Strategy Day.

Hull Area Review 2026-31

39. The Board noted the paper on the Hull Area Review 2026-31.

Media Literacy Statement of Recommendations

40. The Board noted the forthcoming publication of the Media Literacy Statement of Recommendations and Ofcom's approach to implementation.

Standing items

41. 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/Advisory Committee for Older and Disabled People of 14 May 2026 and the Online Information Advisory Committee meeting of 5 June 2026.

Any other business

42. The Chief Executive said Ofcom would be announcing the outcome of its investigation into an online suicide forum a few days after the meeting. The Board noted the decision.

Date of the next meeting

43. The next Board meeting would be held on 23 September 2026.