

Online Information Advisory Committee minutes 8(26)

Publication Minutes of the eighth meeting of the Online Information Advisory Committee held on 23 January 2026 at Riverside House, London SE1 9HA

Present

Richard Allan	Chair and Ofcom Board Member
Elisabeth Costa (online)	Committee Member
Jeff Howard	Committee Member
Will Moy	Committee Member
Mark Scott (online)	Committee Member
Devika Shanker-Grandpierre	Committee Member

In attendance

Colleagues from the Online Safety Group (OSG)
Governance Manager

Item 1: Welcome and declaration of members' interests

1. The Chair welcomed Members and attendees to the eighth meeting.
2. No new declarations of interest were noted.

Item 2: Minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2025

3. The Committee **APPROVED** the minutes of the meeting held on 5 December.

Item 3: Chair's update

4. The Chair noted that there was continued scrutiny of Ofcom's work on online safety from a range of perspectives.

Item 4: Elections update

5. Senedd, Scottish Parliament and some England local and mayoral elections would take place in May 2026. Ofcom would be holding two pre-election events, in Cardiff in February and in Edinburgh in March. The Chair and OSG colleagues would take part, and Members might wish to attend. Further details would be shared.

6. The pre-election events would allow engagement with stakeholders to discuss potential election-related concerns. 7. Discussion touched on a range of topics including lessons learned from elections in other countries and relevant information sharing between different bodies, including those in other jurisdictions where appropriate; and the nature of Ofcom's powers under the OSA. 8. Members NOTED the discussion and that elections would likely remain a standing agenda item at Committee meetings over the coming months.
Item 5: Advice note 2 further discussion 9. Members discussed a variety of public disorder frameworks and how they had been identified and grouped for inclusion in a literature review. They considered the role of case studies; whether there were frameworks that had been omitted or needed to be added; the issues to be drawn out from each framework; and how best to structure the literature review. 10. Members noted the discussion that had taken place and reiterated a commitment to ensure that freedom of expression is taken properly into account in the work of the Committee.
Item 6: Advice note 3 discussion 11. Members discussed scoping research on threats to elections as a potential topic for the Committee's future advice notes, its framing being the UK parliamentary system. Case studies of recent elections in other countries may be relevant to inform its work. It was emphasised that the Committee's focus would be online behaviour and not topics like political finance. 12. Members discussed the nature of evidence that might be considered in any research; the importance of freedom of expression, particularly in elections; and the nature of harms and public concerns during elections. The Committee would return to this work area in a future meeting to refine its focus. 13. The Committee NOTED the discussion that had taken place.
Item 7: Freedom of Expression and the OSA 14. The Committee discussed the UK legislative and regulatory context for freedom of expression (FoE). Members noted the positions of stakeholders; that the OSA was designed to make proportionate interventions to deliver online safety outcomes; the importance of communicating Ofcom's approach to FoE in its decision making and of monitoring the impact of the regime; and the need to use insights to inform any future policy interventions. 15. Issues discussed by Members included platform terms of service and empowerment of users; user understanding of and proportionate use of moderation; whether there was research on users' views about the OSA and how FoE debates were perceived in that context; value in Ofcom communicating what it does as a regulator and on FoE; the role of the

Committee and whether it had work to do in the FoE space, to provide advice to Ofcom on choices and trade-offs or related to public education.

16. The Committee noted the discussion that had taken place.

Item 8: Any other business

17. There was no other business.

Item 9: Date of the next meeting

18. The next Committee meeting would be on 27 February 2026.