

# Online Information Advisory Committee minutes 7(25)

Publication Minutes of the seventh meeting of the Online Information Advisory Committee held on 5 December 2025 via Teams

## Present

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

## In attendance

Colleagues from the Online Safety Group (OSG)  
Colleagues from the Economics and Analytics Group  
Governance Manager

### Item 1: Welcome and declaration of members' interests

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

### Item 2: Minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2025

2. The Committee **APPROVED** the minutes of the meeting held on 7 November.

### Item 3: Chair's update

3. The Chair reported that at in November the Ofcom Board had noted the Committee's first advice note on understanding financial harm online and its related literature review as required by the Terms of Reference. As concrete examples of work led by the Committee, both documents were published later in the month, the advice note a Committee document, the literature review as an Ofcom document.

### Item 4: Advice note 2 further discussion

4. As part of their thinking on public order and a possible taxonomy, Members discussed examples of events where there were claims that misinformation or disinformation may have played a role. The Committee was seeking to draw lessons from previous incidents, e.g. where false information or

unsubstantiated claims have been said to have contributed to public disorder, and also where this may not have been the case.

5. Members engaged in a wide-ranging discussion about how to proceed with this work. Matters discussed included: scope and framing; recognition that rumours and false information online were not always factors in offline harm, facts could also lead to public order events or arise from information vacuums when authorities were unable to ascertain, confirm or deny what was happening on the ground; the role of a range of public bodies in responding; other variables such as underlying factors like long-held discontent; the consideration of over-reaction and the need to respond proportionately; whether frameworks or toolkits exist for decision-makers; and the role of the Committee and how best to present its work in an advice note.
6. The Committee **NOTED** the discussion that had taken place.

#### **Item 5: Elections discussion**

7. It was noted that the previous Committee meeting had included a useful discussion on elections. Polls were due in May 2026 for the Senedd, the Scottish Parliament and some local elections in England, and it was further noted that colleagues in Ofcom would be undertaking some elections-related work and could coordinate with the Committee.
8. Discussion touched on whether the Committee could carry out work related to elections and the nature of what such work might involve. The Committee asked the Executive to be kept up to date on relevant work, including where the Committee could add value.
9. The Committee **NOTED** the discussion that had taken place.

#### **Item 6: Helping Users to Assess Content Online**

10. The Committee was briefed on work arising from Ofcom's statutory duties to promote and carry out research into media literacy. This was to explore the effectiveness of various behavioural interventions to help users to assess the veracity of information in online content. It involved the use of a new statistical method to run Randomised Controlled Trials (RCT) more effectively and allow testing of a comprehensive range of interventions simultaneously.
11. Members noted the reasoning behind the use of Adaptive RCTs; the team's approach and experimental design; trial arms; the results of interventions; an overview of the results obtained and the limitations of the study. The intention was to publish findings as an Ofcom Behavioural Insights Paper (along with a Technical Report), the draft Paper had been shared with the Committee.
12. Members discussed the research, including how it may add to existing research, its conclusions and limitations, and how ARCTs might work in a dynamic context and effectiveness in the real world.

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>13. A Member of the Committee offered to provide further advice if helpful. A request was made that the technical report behind the research be shared with Members.</p> <p>14. The Committee <b>NOTED</b> the discussion that had taken place.</p> |
| <p><b>Item 7: Any other business</b></p> <p>15. There was no other business.</p>                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <p><b>Item 8: Date of the next meeting</b></p> <p>16. The next Committee meeting would be on 23 January 2026.</p>                                                                                                                                      |