

I do not support these proposals in its current form.

It is bureaucratic, expensive, and will have lots of consequences which will be negative for the UK.

1) Inflation will be pushed up as costs up as ISP will use it as an excuse to rise prices, even if there are no extra costs not met by the £20 consumer charge to challenge allocations & right holder charges.

2) Increased costs of having internet access will increase social exclusion which will mean inequalities in other areas will increase - lack of access to info on health, employment opportunities.

3) Many families will decide not to have internet access in case they are taken to court for the actions of their children. Children can get around standard controls and you have to be very competent at IT to make PC controls child-proof. This will damage the life chances of the children.

4) Rights Owners could go 'nuclear' - and pay for details of all people suspected of downloading files which would flood the courts, and bring the law & Ofcom into disrepute. There needs to be reserve powers to limit the amount of data that can be requested. It should be noted its well within the right owners budget to afford to do this. & they have been very aggressive in other countries, such as the USA.

5) Will make crime harder to fight and make terrorist outrages more common due to the likely wide take up of encryption technologies and proxy servers for the majority of UK households.

The consultation is also lacking in that it does not really explore key issues such as;

1. Civil liberties and the European Human Rights Act. Privacy is a core part of being human - and any removal of privacy needs to be carefully considered and proportionate to the harm being done.

2. Errors - it likely that there will be a huge amount of errors. As the charges to defend yourself will be seen as fines, the error rate will have to be extremely low.

3. Will target the bill payer - not the person who committed the offence. In terms of UK social trends most young adults aged under 35 lived in shared housing - with people who are not family members.

4. Employment implications - Parents could lose access to the internet that is vital to their work (many people now days work at home part of the week or at weekends) - should they lose their livelihood for the actions of their child - who could only be six years old? It could also mean employers are less likely to introduce flex working which would have implication for subsidies for the railways.

5. Incorrect allegations are going to be very stressful for some people. Vulnerable people who suffer from mental illness or the elderly / frail could be tipped over the edge by erroneous allegations. NICE estimates that Schizophrenia affects around 400,000 people in England, (NICE, 2002) and bipolar disorder about 544,631 people (NICE, 2006). How are these people going to be protected.