# Note of the Ofcom Board held on 18 June 2025

Members were welcomed to the 325th meeting of the Ofcom Board. In addition to Board members, Martin Ballantyne (General Counsel), Veronica Branton (Corporation Secretary) and Sharon Malley (Governance Manager) attended throughout.

## Declaration of members' interests

1. No new interests were declared.

## Minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2025

2. The minutes of the Ofcom Board meeting held on 2 April 2025 were approved as a correct record and progress against actions was noted.

## Chair's report

3. The Chair updated the Board on his activity, including his meeting with Daniel Kretinsky and progress with the appointment of the Channel 4 Chair.

4. The Board noted the report.

## Chief Executive's report

5. The Chief Executive updated the Board on her activity, including on a forthcoming online safety consultation and the initial indications of providers' compliance with obligations to provide online safety risk assessments. She said she had held interesting meetings with CEOs of satellite operators and that a fuller Spectrum update was due at the next Board meeting. She advised the Board on updates in the mobile market and insights from London Tech Week and Founders Forum.

6. The Board noted the paper.

## Risk and Audit Committee update, Annual Review of Risk Appetite Statement and Annual Review of Risk Management Framework

7. Angela Dean updated the Board on the meetings of the Risk and Audit Committee held on 21 May 2025 and 9 June 2025. She said the May meeting had discussed two internal reports and updated the Board on the findings. The internal auditor had provided an overall opinion of moderate assurance 2024/25, which was the same as last year and was in line with the results of the individual audits carried out during the year. The Committee had considered a deep dive on the Trusted Regulator strategic risk and had reviewed the strategic risk register. The Committee

had also reviewed the new regulatory risk registers for the first time. The June meeting had reviewed the annual report and accounts and this would be covered in the next item.

8. The Board noted the update.

9. Angela Dean said the Committee had made significant changes to the Risk Management Policy last year and that no further changes were proposed now. She said the Committee had agreed two minor amendments to the Risk Appetite Framework to combine the security risks into one category and to update the description of the "delivery timescale risk to policy implementation" risk to clarify that Ofcom prioritised speed of delivery where possible.

10. The Board noted that Ofcom accepted minimal risk in relation to the health and safety of colleagues, which was an aggregation of all risks in this area, including some which Ofcom would be averse to accepting and others where Ofcom would be cautious or open.

11. The Board approved the Risk Appetite Statement and the Risk Management Policy.

## Annual Report and Accounts 2024/25

12. Angela Dean presented a paper on the Risk and Audit Committee's annual report to the Board. The Board noted the report.

13. Angela Dean presented a paper on the 2024/25 Annual Report and Accounts. She recorded the Board's thanks to the team for the smooth and efficient production of the accounts. The Board noted that although production of the report consumed significant resource, it formed the basis of Ofcom's accountability to Parliament and set out on record Ofcom's position on its performance.

14. The Board approved the 2024/25 Annual Report and Accounts and the 2024/25 Section 400 Licence Fees and Penalty Accounts.

## Spectrum Licensing System – approval of contract award

15. The Board discussed a paper on a proposal to award an updated contract for the provision of spectrum licensing. He said the contract would run for a minimum of five years with an option to extend and would give Ofcom certainty that its licensing system would be maintained and developed over the period.

16. The Board approved the paper, including the award of the contract, the maximum envelope of spend and the delegation of authority to the Chief Executive, Chief Operating Officer and Group Director Spectrum for the finalisation of the contract.

## Webchecker and update on mobile

17. The Board discussed a paper on Ofcom's emerging strategy for the promotion of investment in wireless connectivity and the launch of Ofcom's relaunched and overhauled mobile webchecker. The webchecker – named Map Your Mobile – had been a cross-Ofcom project and aimed to provide consumers with more useful information about data quality in their area. It should improve competition by moving decisions about mobile providers towards quality rather than just price, with the information expected to be used by price comparison sites alongside pricing.

18. The Board noted that the webchecker provided crowdsourced data on the likelihood of being able to achieve download speed of 5 Mbits per second, sufficient for streaming HD video. It also included information provided by networks on their coverage at a threshold to indicate where consumers were likely to get a connection for data-hungry services.

19. The Board reviewed the webchecker and noted the importance of ensuring the communications around the launch were clear and that expectations were managed. The language used on the site had been through rigorous user testing to ensure it was as clear and accurate as possible.

20. The Board welcomed the webchecker and noted the contribution it would provide towards competition and improved quality. The restrictions on coverage caused by planning issues in relation to masts were noted.

21. The Board noted the paper.

# Future of the post USO: proposals for reform

22. The Board discussed a paper on proposed changes to the Universal Service Obligation ("USO") for post. There would be engagement with political and other stakeholders prior to publication of the decision.

23. The Board noted the paper.

# Reflections of the new Online Safety Group Director

24. Oliver Griffiths gave the Board his initial reflections since joining Ofcom as Online Safety Group Director. He said he had inherited a team that was strong, talented and highly dedicated to the mission. They were tasked with operationalising a challenging policy programme that continued to evolve and there would be important strategic choices on direction.

25. The Board discussed the online safety programme and noted the forthcoming milestones. The key messages for stakeholders were discussed, including where there had been movement from major platforms and progress with Ofcom's enforcement activity.

26. The Board noted the different approaches to regulation adopted in the UK and the EU over age assurance and the different ways the platforms were responding to the regimes. It was important that the focus remained on improvements in online safety for consumers through demonstrable changes by platforms.

27. The Board noted the significant volume of work that had already been achieved by the team and agreed it would be important to manage colleagues' workload carefully. Oliver Griffiths said this would be helped by prioritising key delivery areas and adopting a flexible resourcing model, making better use of the breadth of skills and experience among staff and rotating colleagues to different areas more easily.

28. The Board noted the update.

## Online Information Advisory Committee report from first meeting and plan of work

29. Richard Allan updated the Board on the first meeting of the Online Information Advisory Committee and presented the Committee's draft plan of work. He said the Committee aimed to focus on where it could best add value while avoiding overlap with Ofcom's existing work.

30. The Board noted the report of the first meeting and approved the plan of work.

## Ofcom statutory governance

31. The Board noted the paper on Ofcom's statutory governance arrangements.

## Standing items

32. The Board noted the following standing items:

   - Non-executive member updates

   - Quarterly performance report

   - Board work programme and publications schedule

   - Minutes of the Communications Consumer Panel/AOCD of 10 April 2025, Content Board of 29 April 2025 and Risk and Audit Committee of 21 May 2025.

## Any other business

33. There was no other business.

## Date of the next meeting

34. The next Board meeting would be held on 16 July 2025.