

Note of the Ofcom Board held on 16 October 2024

Members were welcomed to the 318th meeting of the Ofcom Board. In addition to Board members, Natalie Black (future Group Director, Network and Communications), Martin Ballantyne (General Counsel), Veronica Branton (Corporation Secretary), Francesca Carter (Head of Governance) and Sharon Malley (Governance Manager) attended throughout.

Declaration of members' interests

1. No new interests were declared.

Minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2024 and matters arising

2. The minutes of the Ofcom Board meeting held on 25 September 2024 would be presented to the next meeting for approval.
3. A summary of progress against action points was noted.

Chair's report

4. The Chair updated the Board on two non-executive appointments to the Ofcom Board. He said he had visited the Manchester office and had received informative briefings from the teams based there. He had also attended a constructive meeting with the CEO and representatives of Netflix to discuss their plans
5. The Board noted the report.

Chief Executive's report

6. Melanie Dawes presented a paper on her activities. She had attended the government's investment summit where business leaders, ministers and regulators had discussed opportunities for economic growth and she had participated in a discussion on telecoms. She updated the Board on matters in the telecoms market, on broadcasting standards compliance and on online safety.
7. The Board noted the paper.

Report from the Chair of the People Committee

8. Ben Verwaayen updated the Board on the meeting of the People Committee held on 8 October 2024. He said the Committee had discussed the findings of the Colleague Survey, which had shown improved levels of colleague satisfaction and engagement in all key areas. The

Committee had also discussed Ofcom's new pay framework and had noted various matters relating to pay and bonuses.

9. The Board noted the update.

Update on the BBC work programme

10. The Board discussed a paper on Ofcom's BBC work programme. It was noted that it had been a busy period, with the BBC making several changes to its operations in response to financial constraints. Ofcom's Annual Report on the BBC would assess its compliance with the requirements in its operating licence and in areas such as competition and standards. The report would be informed by Ofcom's mystery shopping research, which had looked at how the BBC had responded to Ofcom's previous concerns on complaint handling, and would be linked to Ofcom's work on the Public Service Media Review and the Local Media Review.
11. The Board discussed the mystery shopping research and noted that it would be helpful in the context of the forthcoming BBC Charter review. The scope of the research was more extensive than that previously conducted and compared favourably on cost compared with other recent pieces of audience attitudes research.
12. The Board noted that the BBC had appointed a new Head of News in 2022 and discussed the BBC's position in the market.
13. The Board noted the paper.

Standing items

14. 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 of 25 July 2024 and the Risk & Audit Committee of 18 September 2024.

Any other business

15. The Board noted that Ofcom had recently published its new Channel 4 licence and that some stakeholders appeared to be waiting for Channel 4's response before making their own statements.

Date of the next meeting

16. The next Board meeting would be held on 13 November 2024.
17. The Board Strategy Day followed the Board meeting.