



**Minutes of the meeting of the Communications Consumer Panel (CCP) and
Advisory Committee for Older and Disabled People (ACOD)**

12 February 2026, 10:30 - 15:35

Meeting held in hybrid format via Microsoft Teams

Present

CCP/ACOD (The Panel)

Helen Froud (Chair)

Rachel Burr (Member for Wales)

Judith Clifton

Lenna Cumberbatch

Grant Davis

Michelle Goddard

Robert Hammond (Member for England)

Rhian Johns

Carrie Matchett (Member for Northern Ireland)

Sarah O'Neill (Member for Scotland)

David Warburton-Broadhurst

Michael Wardlow

Apologies

none

In attendance for the duration of the meeting

The Panel's Executive Team

Will Harding (Ofcom Board Member, attending as an observer) until the end of item 9.

UK Regulators Network's 'Next Generation Non-Executive Directors' scheme member ('Next Gen NED')

Item
<p>1. Welcome and introduction</p> <p>1.1 The Chair welcomed Ofcom's Board Member, Panel Members and attendees to the meeting and advised that as agreed by the Panel in respect of the previous Next Gen NED member, the new Next Gen NED member would be permitted to input during Panel meetings.</p>



2. Declarations of Members' interests

- 2.1 Helen Froud declared she would retire from official Salvation Army duties on 31 March 2026, while continuing to support the Salvation Army's work in a voluntary capacity.

3. Minutes of the meeting on 15 January 2026 and matters arising

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting of 15 January 2026 were **APPROVED** as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting with minor amendments.
- 3.2 A query was reiterated about the status of Linksys, in terms of its role in the communications industry.

4. Chair's Update

- 4.1 The Chair and Panel Members discussed the Panel's recent activity and stakeholder engagement across the UK since the last meeting held on 15 January.
- 4.2 The Chair opened a brief discussion on the Panel's statement on its role in Online Safety and listened to final edits.
- 4.3 Panel Members discussed the importance of stating publicly that the Panel would pay attention to children and childrens needs, as a group of consumers and citizens more susceptible to harm. The Panel would seek to build and strengthen relationships with childrens representative groups as stakeholders, including charities and Childrens Commissioners.
- 4.4 The Panel raised concerns around timescales relating to Ofcom's enforcement investigations on Online Safety matters, given the pace of bad actors in causing and spreading harm. Panel Members discussed the potential use of horizon-scanning by Ofcom in order to prepare for harms before they take effect.

5. Consumer Policy update

- 5.1 The Panel received an update from Ofcom's consumer policy team on current consumer policy areas.
- 5.2 The Panel's areas of discussion with Ofcom included:
- (a) **Social Tariffs:** limited choice remains a concern to the Panel; many available tariffs offer very low speeds with prices not sufficiently lower to justify reduced quality; consumers in some parts of the UK have less opportunity to benefit from competition which has a knock-on effect on the selection of social tariffs available to them (e.g. Northern Ireland). The Panel highlighted the need to align social tariff design with Minimum Digital Living



Standards, noting current offers often do not meet minimum expectations. Take-up was considered extremely low; the Panel asked for further exploration of barriers, effectiveness and consumer suitability. The Panel expressed strong interest in returning to this topic early, including issues of quality, human rights, and practical usability. The Ofcom policy team would attend the March meeting to discuss affordability (including social tariffs), pricing and consumer engagement. The Panel urged Ofcom to keep them informed if any policy changes were likely from government regarding social tariffs.

- (b) **Mid-contract price rises in telecoms and the recent charter signed by industry:** the Panel welcomed clarity for consumers, but raised the risk of CPs meeting compliance targets, but still raising prices, to the detriment of consumers. The Panel raised the question of how government commitments will be tracked and evidenced, and asked for future reporting. Ofcom would write to CPs, monitor closely and review the situation in 2027.
- (c) **Digital Use and Access Act**
The Panel requested Ofcom's views on obligations, impacts, and implementation implications. The Panel discussed the possibility of engaging with the UK Government to feed in the consumer voice around data sharing, affordability and the Minimum Digital Living Standards. A Panel Member offered to draft an explanatory note for Panel Members on the implications of the Act for this sector.
- (d) **Data Sharing & Vulnerability**
- The Panel asked if Ofcom will consider seeking Secretary of State approval to enable more effective data-sharing on vulnerable consumers with CPs.
- (e) **Telecoms Access Review** - the Panel requested early notice of publication of the outcomes.
- (f) **Post** - the Panel expressed concerns about the impact on Quality of Service arising from industrial disputes, and highlighted a gap in consumer empowerment around redress in postal services.
- (g) **Mobile connectivity and 2G/3G switch-off** - the Panel raised concerns around upselling; and the previously highlighted dangers of unknown users of 2G and risk to life.

6. Migration to VoIP update

6.1 Panel Members received an update on the final year of the migration from PSTN networks to IP networks.

6.2 The Panel raised concerns on behalf of landline-reliant users, additionally to telecare users, who would be at higher risk of harm in



an emergency and asked how consumers in these vulnerable circumstances would be identified. Panel Members highlighted the imbalance in responsibility and information, with consumers in vulnerable circumstances currently needing to know that they need to self-identify to their CP and then go through the process of doing so.

- 6.3 Panel Members raised concerns that the emergency provisions by Openreach after January 2027 were designed for 'vulnerable' consumers and highlighted the risk of consumers not being identified in this category by their provider.
- 6.4 The Panel challenged Ofcom's assumptions around the success of the National Telecare Awareness Campaign, which had raised awareness among a relatively small group of consumers over a short period of time.
- 6.5 The Panel asked Ofcom what the plan was for the awareness campaign in the final year to end of January 2027 - and would Ofcom have a role in evaluating how effective it would be. Ofcom would ask CPs many questions to understand what they are doing and provide contacts like local govt organisations and tools.
- 6.6 The Panel highlighted that consumers with complex needs will have been more difficult to migrate, so will have been left until the end of the programme, which is not a measured approach. The Panel advised Ofcom the CPs should monitor consumers migrated last for service faults to ensure that they are not left with a lack of service.
- 6.7 The Chair requested further updates throughout the final year of migration, to include Ofcom's analysis of the way CPs identify 'vulnerable' consumers.

7. Public Policy update

- 7.1 The Public Policy paper was taken as read and the Panel would raise questions with the team if any arose from the reading.

8. Phone-paid Services Authority (PSA) update

- 8.1 The Panel received an update on the work of the PSA, since its remit and powers had transferred back into Ofcom.
- 8.2 The Panel was pleased to hear of the continued monitoring of premium rate services and of enforcement action taken to protect consumers from unfair and costly practices such as those of Information, Connection and Signposting Services.
- 8.3 The Panel looks forward to further updates from the team in due course.



9. Consumer Protection Monitoring and Compliance Programme (CPMC) update

- 9.1 The Panel received an update from Ofcom on its CPMC programme of work, which had been rebranded ‘Consumer Supervision’.
- 9.2 The Panel supported Ofcom’s use of inclusive language that recognised the Social Model of Disability and the Panel’s advice on inclusive policymaking and communications.
- 9.3 The Panel welcomed Ofcom’s intention to expand its analysis of the consumer voice in this sector, beyond complaints statistics, to social media - and extending its engagement with consumer bodies such as the Panel.
- 9.4 The Panel raised key areas of concern for Ofcom such as tacking CPs’ approach to ‘vulnerability’.
- 9.5 The Panel urged Ofcom to use all of the levers available to it, including intelligence gathering across the Nations, to working with organisations to identify consumer harm, not relying on data from CPs.

10. Panel Priorities for 2026

- 10.1 The Panel discussed effective, future-looking ways of working and would finalise a plan in the next meeting.

11. Any Other Business

- 11.1 The Ofcom Board Member provided an update on the Board’s current priorities (exiting before item 10).