

Government announces preferred candidate for Ofcom Chair

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Sir Ian Cheshire named as preferred candidate for Ofcom Chair, subject to parliamentary hearing before final appointment is confirmed.

- The Secretary of State for Science and Technology, Liz Kendall, announces Sir Ian Cheshire as the government's preferred candidate to be appointed as Chair of Ofcom
- Subject to parliamentary hearing, Sir Ian will be appointed for a 4-year term
- The former Chair of Channel 4, Sir Ian's career spans senior leadership across the private and public sectors making him ideally suited to lead Ofcom through its next chapter

Business leader Sir Ian Cheshire has been announced as the preferred candidate to be appointed as Chair of Ofcom, the UK's independent regulator for communications.

Sir Ian brings extensive experience of senior leadership across the private and public sectors, with a strong track record in governance, consumer facing regulation and organisational change.

Most recently, Sir Ian was the Chair of Channel 4, having been appointed in April 2022 before leaving at the end of his term in April 2025. If appointed to Ofcom, he would succeed Lord Michael Grade, whose term as Chair concludes at the end of April 2026.

He has previously served as Chief Executive of Kingfisher plc, leading a major international retail group operating across multiple markets, before going on to hold a number of senior non-executive and advisory roles spanning business, sustainability and public policy, including as Chair of Barclays UK, Debenhams plc, Maisons du Monde and Menhaden plc.

The Chair of Ofcom plays a critical role in providing strategic leadership to the organisation as it delivers its statutory responsibilities, including overseeing the implementation and enforcement of the Online Safety Act, protecting consumers and supporting growth and innovation across the UK's communications sectors.

Technology Secretary Liz Kendall said:

The work of Ofcom has never been more relevant to people's lives, from protecting people online to supporting the growth of our communications sector. The organisation sits at the heart of some of the biggest challenges and opportunities facing the country.

Sir Ian has a proven track record of leading complex organisations through periods of significant change, and that is exactly the kind of leadership Ofcom needs right now.

I also want to pay tribute to Lord Grade for his contribution as Chair. He has steered Ofcom through a period of profound change, and his leadership during the introduction of the Online Safety Act has been pivotal.

Sir Ian Cheshire said:

Across my career in e-commerce, telecoms and broadcasting I have seen first-hand how much effective regulation matters - for consumers, for businesses and for the wider economy. Ofcom has a critical job to do at a time of rapid change in how people communicate, access information and stay safe online. I look forward to setting out my vision for how Ofcom can meet those challenges when I appear before the Select Committee.

In April 2015, Sir Ian was appointed government Lead Non-Executive, a role he was reappointed to for a further 3 years in April 2018. That same year, he also became Lead Non-Executive Member of the Cabinet Office Board.

The preferred candidate will now be subject to a pre-appointment hearing by the Science, Innovation and Technology Select Committee, before a final appointment decision is confirmed.

Notes to editors

The Chair of Ofcom is remunerated at £120,000 per annum for a time commitment of 3 days per week.

This appointment has been made in accordance with the Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments. The appointments process is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

Pre-appointment hearings enable select committees to take evidence from preferred candidates for major public appointments before they are appointed.

Hearings are in public and involve the select committee publishing a report setting out their views on the candidate's suitability for the post.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-announces-preferred-candidate-for-ofcom-chair>