

# Note of Meeting of the NACOS Guidance Subgroup, 18 October 2018

**Present:** Ian Power (Spunout.ie)  
Jennifer Glansford (Age Action Ireland)  
Karen McAuley (The Ombudsman for Children's Office)  
Jane McGarrigle (Webwise.ie)  
Niamh Sweeney (Facebook)  
Triona Quill (PO – DCCAIE)  
Ciarán Shanley (AO – DCCAIE)  
Dualta Ó Broin (APO - DCCAIE)

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The guidance subgroup of the National Advisory Council for Online Safety was established at the first meeting of the Council on the 4 October 2018.

The establishment of this subgroup by the Council was in recognition of the Council's role, as set out in its terms of reference, in providing input to the development of clear and easy to understand online safety guidance materials for all internet users. In that context, the following issues were discussed:

- It was agreed by the members of the subgroup that Ian Power would serve as the chairperson for the subgroup.

## Role of the Council and the subgroup:

- TQ and DÓB provided an overview of the role of the Council and the subgroup in relation to the provision of guidance on online safety issues, noting specifically that:
  - Action 15 of the Action Plan for Online Safety 2018-2019 commits the Government to working with industry to develop a practical guide for online services and interactive services to support best practice in Online Safety in design by end-2018 and that this is something where the input of the subgroup into the drafting of the guide by Government would be valuable,
  - That the child safety guide produced by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety for social media and interactive service providers could serve as a useful basis for the development of the practical guide by the Government, and,

- That the subgroup could take stock of existing guidance materials and advise the Government of any gaps in the materials, particularly in relation to vulnerable groups.

### The development of a practical guide for industry:

- The members of the subgroup agreed that it would be useful for the subgroup to provide input into the development of the practical guide. In this regard, the following comments and suggestions were made:
  - That it would be useful to not just focus on children but to broaden the focus of the practical guide to persons of all ages while maintaining an emphasis on children regarding specific issues,
  - That it would be valuable to anchor the practical guide in a rights framework, drawing from work at an EU, Council of Europe and UN level, which would provide the high-level principles for the materials in the practical guide,
  - That it would be useful if the practical guide was regionalised, particularly in terms of examples of best practice, and that the work of Professor Sonia Livingstone would be very helpful in this regard.

### Reviewing the guidance material on besafeonline.ie:

- TQ gave an overview of the development of the single online portal for online safety materials, besafeonline.ie, and asked the subgroup members what would be the best approach to take in reviewing these materials.
- The members of the subgroup agreed that the material on besafeonline.ie needs to be reviewed. In this regard, the following comments and suggestions were made:
  - That consideration should be given to hosting these materials on a dedicated website rather than on Gov.ie,
  - That besafeonline.ie should primarily serve a signposting function, i.e. to act as a directory rather than a repository,
  - That besafeonline.ie would require ongoing maintenance, that there are not insignificant resource implications of this requirement, and that ownership at a Governmental level will need to be determined, and,
  - That besafeonline.ie should be age agnostic and that the information and the materials signposted to should be in plain English to the greatest extent possible.

- The members of the subgroup agreed that a consultative online survey would be useful in identifying what kind of guidance does the public want and what do they view as the gaps in existing guidance.

### Actions:

The following actions were agreed by the subgroup:

- Karen McAuley will forward materials regarding developing rights frameworks to the Council secretariat.
- The Council secretariat will examine the issue of preparing a practical guide and consult with the Departments of Justice & Equality and Children and Youth Affairs in this regard. The members of the subgroup will further consider the best approach to take in preparing a practical guide.
- The Council secretariat will draft a note of the views of the members of the subgroup in relation to reviewing the guidance available on [besafeonline.ie](http://besafeonline.ie).
- Ian Power will give a presentation on the first meeting of the subgroup at the next meeting of the Council, likely to take place in late November.

Ciarán Shanley

Policy Officer

NACOS Secretariat

19/10/18