



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

National Advisory Council for Online Safety

Annual Report

2019

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Minister's Foreword

I am pleased to present this second report of the National Advisory Council for Online Safety, a group of which I am very proud to be chair. The Council has continued to provide valuable input into the development of online safety policy throughout 2019. I would like to thank all the members for their contributions and for giving up their time to serve on the group.

Last year, the Council identified a need for further research into online safety in the Irish context. The Council has made good progress this year in developing a research proposal and, with the support of the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, has procured IPSOS-MRBI to conduct a nationally representative survey on behalf of the Council. This work is taking place now, and when complete will provide a wealth of information, including on the demographic profile of internet users in Ireland and the prevalence of online risks and abuse experienced by internet users. This research will support the development of evidence-based policy in this area, as well as providing a research baseline which could be further developed in the future

This Government is serious about playing its part tackling the dangers of online life – this is demonstrated by the work of this National Advisory Council, efforts across Government Departments to deliver the Action Plan for Online Safety, engagement with the Oireachtas on Private Members' initiatives and the publication of a general scheme for the proposed Online Safety and Media Regulation Bill. This proposed Bill will end the era of self-regulation for social media companies, putting in place an Online Safety Commissioner which will ensure all citizens are protected online to the greatest extent possible. This is particularly important for our younger citizens – we have a responsibility to protect our children and support parents in dealing with online safety issues.

I look forward to the work of the Council continuing throughout 2020, confident that it will continue to have a positive and meaningful impact on work to make the online world a safer world for all our citizens.

Seán Canney TD

Minister of State for Community Development, Natural Resources and Digital Development

1 National Advisory Council for Online Safety – Background

The increasing use and availability of services in the online world brings with it new risks and challenges that citizens and Government alike must face and overcome. In recognition of these risks, the Taoiseach launched Ireland's first Action Plan for Online Safety on 11 July 2018. This cross-Government initiative has constituted a joined up and wide-ranging approach to implementing or substantially progressing 25 actions to improve online safety in Ireland. One of these actions was the establishment of a National Advisory Council for Online Safety (NACOS).

The NACOS is chaired by Minister of State for Community Development, Natural Resources and Digital Development, Seán Canney TD, and includes representatives from children's and parents' organisations, major online platforms, Government Departments and experts on online safety issues. The Secretariat to the Council is provided by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE). For further information on the members of the group, please see Appendix 1.

The role of the Council is to:

- provide advice to Government on online safety issues,
- identify emerging issues where Government intervention might be needed,
- help in the creation of clear and easy to understand online safety guidance materials for all internet users, and,
- examine national and international research and communicate key findings to Government, stakeholders and the wider public.

The Council's Terms of Reference and Work Plan 2018-2019 are available at Appendices 2 and 3 respectively.

2 Review of NACOS Activity in 2019

2.1 Work of the Council

The NACOS met three times in 2019. The Research subgroup also met in February 2019. Meeting minutes are available on the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment's website.

Discussions at those meetings covered a wide range of topics, in line with the NACOS' Terms of Reference and Work Programme.

Additionally, the NACOS has regularly been apprised of and has engaged in cross-Government initiatives in relation to online safety – notably progress in delivering the Action Plan for Online Safety, and work to develop an Online Safety and Media Regulation Bill by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment. Meetings of the Council have also provided a useful forum for members to brief their colleagues on projects of mutual interest. This has included briefings and presentations in relation to the ongoing assessment of the Be Safe Online website following recommendations made by the guidance subgroup of the Council, as well as subjects such as Childline.ie and Facebook's Oversight Board for Content Decisions.

This interaction between the diverse members of the NACOS demonstrates the value of the Council acting as a multi-stakeholder forum, bringing together in one place a broad range of stakeholders from industry, Government and representative groups and providing a platform for those groups to actively discuss matters relating to online safety.

2.2 Research Project

The Council has acknowledged that there is a lack of sufficient recent evidence regarding Irish citizens' experiences when they go online. For example, the last representative survey specifically focused on a wide range of online safety issues for children was the Net Children Go Mobile study, undertaken in 2014, with the EU Kids Online Project dating back to 2011. In that regard, the NACOS Research Subgroup recommended that new primary research be carried out in this field, to ensure that up-to-date information is available to inform policy debate, to identify trends and assist in prioritising issues for attention.

Work has continued throughout 2019 to progress this work item. On behalf of the Council, the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment has engaged IPSOS-MRBI to carry out this research, following a competitive procurement process.

The objectives of the research are to:

- describe the demographic profile of internet users in Ireland;
- determine how all internet users in Ireland use and access the internet, and the level of their digital skills;
- estimate the prevalence of online risks and abuse experienced by internet users;
- identify opportunities and benefits obtained through the use of the internet;
- identify safety practices of adults and children when using the internet; and
- identify how parents mediate in the use of internet by their children.

The project comprises three nationally representative surveys. The target audiences for these surveys are – adults (18+), children (9-17) and the parents, guardians or caregivers of those children. The data will be conducted via face-to-face interviews.

The adult cohort will be asked questions on subjects that include how often they access the internet, how they communicate online and how they deal with negative online experiences.

The child cohort will be asked questions on topics that include how they access the internet, activities they carry out online, challenges they face on the internet, and how they interact with their parents/carers in relation to their online issues.

The parent cohort will be asked questions on themes that include their own internet use, how they interact with their children in relation to online issues, and what parental controls they use.

The survey is currently being carried out by IPSOS-MRBI, with the raw data collected expected to be available in the second quarter of 2020. An analysis of the data will then take place. It is intended that this research will usefully inform the work of the Council and Government policy. It will also allow for benchmarking with other European Union Member States, demonstrating how Ireland ranks in terms of online safety issues and responses. Furthermore, it will provide a robust benchmark on which future surveys can be built to ascertain trends and the effectiveness of measures taken.

3 Online Safety and Media Regulation Bill

There are already significant regulatory and legal frameworks in place in relation to many online issues, including data protection and criminal justice responses to criminal activities online. However, there is a serious gap both internationally and in Ireland when it comes to addressing harmful online content. Cognisant of this gap, Minister Bruton announced proposals for an Online Safety and Media Regulation Bill on 4 March 2019, to tackle the spread of harmful online content. At the same time, the Minister launched a public consultation to gather feedback on the proposals.

The public consultation closed on 15 April 2019. In total, 84 submissions were received from a wide range of stakeholders, including members of the public, commercial organisations and industry groups, public bodies, and NGOs. Of these responses, 40 were from members of the public, 21 were from commercial organisations and industry groups, 7 were from public bodies and 16 were from NGOs.

The responses were published on the DCCAE website on 27 June 2019 and a thematic analysis of the submissions identifying key themes and issues was published on 25 July 2019.

Running through responses to the consultation were overarching issues regarding the need for consistency in legislation and regulation, that legislation and regulation should be future-proof to the greatest extent possible and that legal safeguards are needed in legislation to prevent unintended consequences and to avoid imbalances in the consideration of fundamental rights.

The responses to the public consultation have formed a vital input into the development of the Online Safety and Media Regulation Bill. The Government approved the general scheme of the proposed Bill on 9 January 2020, also referring the text to the Office of the Attorney General for the start of detailed legal drafting.

This new law will establish a robust regulatory framework to address the proliferation of harmful online content. In broad terms, the proposed Bill seeks to provide for:

- the establishment of a framework for the regulation of online safety through binding online safety codes dealing with a wide range of issues including measures to be taken by online services to tackle the availability of harmful online content, for example cyberbullying material, on their services;
- the establishment of a multi-person Media Commission, including an Online Safety Commissioner to oversee the new regulatory framework for online safety;

- the dissolution of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland and the assignment of all the present functions of the Authority to the Media Commission;
- the transposition of the revised Audiovisual Media Services Directive, including those provisions of the Directive relating to the regulation of video sharing platform services; and
- the provision to the Media Commission of appropriate compliance and sanction powers, including the power to seek the imposition of administrative financial sanctions.

The General Scheme and a set of explanatory documents are available on the [DCCAE website](https://dcae.gov.ie/en-ie/communications/legislation/Pages/General-Scheme-Online-Safety-Media-Regulation.aspx)¹.



Minister Bruton launching the General Scheme of the Online Safety and Media Regulation Bill at Donahies Community School in Dublin, 10 January 2020

¹ <https://dcae.gov.ie/en-ie/communications/legislation/Pages/General-Scheme-Online-Safety-Media-Regulation.aspx>

4 Online Safety Statistics

Whilst the Council has commissioned its own research into online safety matters, various other organisations have conducted surveys and research that has included questions related to the area. Statistics from some of these studies (which include projects led by NACOS members) are set out below.

The statistics demonstrate that more people are using the internet this year – 88% of respondents to a 2019 Central Statistics Office (CSO) survey had used the internet in the previous three months compared to 82% in 2018. However, use of the internet for the purposes of sharing uploading self-created content has declined – with the CSO finding in 2019 that 39% of respondents had used the internet for this purpose in the previous three months compared with 46% in 2018. This fall was recorded across all age ranges.

91 % of all households have internet access; in families composed of two adults with dependent children, this rises to 99%.	Central Statistics Office – Information Society Statistics, 2019
88% of respondents have used the internet in the past three months, rising to 99% amongst ages 16-29, and falling to 68% amongst ages 60-74	Central Statistics Office – Information Society Statistics, 2019
79% of respondents use the internet every day, rising to 96% amongst ages 16-29, and falling to 53% amongst ages 60-74.	Central Statistics Office – Information Society Statistics, 2019
84% own a smartphone, with 78% using 3G or 4G data on their mobile handset	ComReg Mobile Consumer Experience survey 2019
36% of 20 year old women and 22% of 20 year old men reported that they had posted or shared political material online.	Growing Up in Ireland – Key Findings for Cohort '98 at 20 years old – Being 20 years old
49% of 20-year-olds reported spending over three hours per day 'online'.	Growing Up in Ireland – Key Findings for Cohort '98 at 20 years old – Being 20 years old
59% of 16-29 year olds used the internet to upload self-created content, falling to 23% of 60-74 year olds	Central Statistics Office – Information Society Statistics, 2019
68% of parents regularly talk to their children about what they do online, rising to 79% in parents with children aged 9-12	Webwise 2017 Parenting Survey

Hotline.ie received and processed 10,773 reports of suspected illegal content online, with 2,575 of these confirmed and classified as child sexual abuse images.	Hotline.ie Annual Report 2019
33% of parents are confident that they can protect their children when they are online	Webwise 2017 Parenting Survey
Trust in children's ability to use the internet safely rises with age, from just 30% for 5-8 years to 40% for 9-12 year olds and 46% for teenagers	Webwise 2017 Parenting Survey
Significant concerns held by parents in relation to their children's internet use include exposure to pornography (71%) and cyberbullying (70%).	Webwise 2017 Parenting Survey
A study of over two thousand adolescents aged between 12-16 years old demonstrated gender differences were found where victimisation was more likely to occur through messaging platforms and social networking sites for females and on gaming platforms for males.	National Anti-Bullying Research Centre, DCU - Friendship Quality, Gender and Cyberbullying Study, 2019 ²

² Foody, McGuire, Kuldass and O'Higgins Norman (2019). Friendship quality, gender and their role in cyberbullying involvement and psychological well-being. *Frontiers in Psychology*.

5 Online Safety Resources



A variety of resources are available which promote online safety and give practical advice to adults, parents and children alike. The Government's Be Safe Online webpage provides access to a wide range of Online Safety resources, to support online safety for all. This page can be accessed at www.gov.ie/besafeonline.



A national reporting mechanism – the Hotline.ie Service – is also available. This allows the public to anonymously, confidentially and securely report suspected child sexual abuse and exploitation online.


Additionally, the following organisations, which are also represented on the Council, also provide information and resources in relation to online safety:


Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children	www.ispcc.ie/
Webwise	www.webwise.ie
Spun Out	www.spunout.ie
National Parents Council	www.npc.ie
Cybersafe Ireland	www.cybersafeireland.org/
National Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre	www.antibullyingcentre.ie/ ; www.tacklebullying.ie



Appendix 1: NACOS Members


Name	Bio	Photo
Seán Canney TD	<p>Seán was appointed Minister of State for Community Development, Natural Resources and Digital Development on 16 October 2018, was elected to Dáil Éireann as an Independent TD for Galway East in 2016 and had served as Minister of State for OPW and Flood Relief from May 2016 until June 2017 before his latest appointment.</p> <p>He had previously been a member of Galway County Council for three terms where he held various positions including Mayor of County Galway (2007-2008).</p> <p>Seán is a Chartered Quantity Surveyor and lectured at GMIT prior to his election to Dáil Éireann.</p>	
Ian Power	<p>Ian is CEO of Community Creations, the not-for-profit company behind the award-winning SpunOut.ie and Crisis Text Line Ireland. SpunOut.ie is Ireland's youth information website by young people, for young people with over 1.2 million young people using SpunOut.ie resources in 2018. Crisis Text Line is a free, 24/7, confidential messaging service for young people in crisis. Ian is also a board member of the Citizens Information Board (CIB) and a board member of the Community Foundation for Ireland.</p>	




Áine Lynch	<p>Áine qualified as a nurse and then completed an honours degree in Behavioural Sciences. Áine worked for two years in the area of child psychiatry then went on to work for the ISPCC as Childline Manager and Director of Services. In August 2007 Áine was appointed CEO of the National Parents Council Primary (NPC).</p> <p>Áine is on the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) and was formerly on the Teaching Council.</p> <p>In December 2017 Áine was awarded a Masters in Executive Leadership, for her thesis 'Will joining the Charity Sector impact the Governance of Primary Schools in Ireland?'.</p>	
Declan Daly	<p>Declan is the Detective Chief Superintendent attached to the Garda National Protective Services Bureau and has national responsibility for the investigation and coordination of, sexual crimes against adults and children, domestic violence, human trafficking, organised prostitution, missing persons and the management of sex offenders. He is the Child Protection Officer for An Garda Síochána. Declan has been a member of An Garda Síochána for 29 years, having spent most of that time in crime investigation in the areas of Drug</p>	


	<p>enforcement, Fraud investigation and now presently in the Protective Services Bureau. He represents Ireland on the FBI led, Violent Crimes Against Children International Taskforce and has both Management and Law Degrees.</p>	
<p>Ana Niculescu</p>	<p>Ana Niculescu, Chief Executive of a not for profit organisation (ISPAI) which is delivering the Hotline.ie Service – the Irish national reporting mechanism where the public can anonymously, confidentially and securely report suspected child sexual abuse and exploitation online. She joined ISPAI in 2013 and has extensive knowledge in areas such as child protection, public affairs, marketing and media relations. In 2018 Ana was also appointed Vice-President of the INHOPE Board of Directors - the international Association uniting a global network of 46 Hotlines across 41 countries engaged in combating child sexual abuse and exploitation online.</p>	


Una Fitzpatrick	<p>Una Fitzpatrick is a Dublin City University STEM graduate with a master's in management from Smurfit Business School. She has spent the last 15 years working in the knowledge economy, specifically the last six years being spent with Technology Ireland. Una was appointed Director of Technology Ireland in June 2018. Technology Ireland is the largest and most influential tech sector representative group in Ireland. Una is vice chair of the Digital Europe Brexit Taskforce and sits on the Board of Directors of FIT Ltd (Fastrack into Technology).</p>	
Stephanie Anderson	<p>As a Public Policy Manager for Facebook in Ireland, Stephanie engages with a wide range of stakeholders on issues such as online safety, privacy and media literacy. Prior to joining Facebook, Stephanie worked in politics and public affairs. She is a graduate of the University of Limerick.</p>	
Dr. Cormac Callanan	<p>Dr. Callanan owns Aconite Internet Solutions (www.aconite.com) which provides expertise in cybersecurity risk mitigation and cybercrime. Dr. Callanan has a PhD in data privacy risks on mobile devices, an MSc in Computer Systems Design and an MSc in Advanced Security and Digital Forensics (GCHQ certified). He has over 30 years working experience on international computer networks and 20 years' experience on illegal content and cybercrime activities on the Internet. He co-authored the Council of Europe Guidelines</p>	



	<p>on Cooperation between Law Enforcement and Internet Service Providers quoted by the European Court of Human Rights. Dr. Callanan is past-president and CEO of INHOPE (www.inhope.org) dealing with illegal child abuse material on the internet.</p>	
Liam O'Brien	<p>Liam O'Brien is Director of Strategy & External Affairs for Vodafone Ireland. Liam has responsibility for Vodafone's external relationships with key stakeholders such as the media, regulators and Government, as well as responsibility for key corporate functions such as Corporate Security, Privacy, Wholesale, Vodafone Foundation & Legal Affairs. Liam is also a Board member of the Vodafone & ESB joint venture, SIRO. Liam also has extensive global experience, having spent several years working abroad, including Australia, Sweden, China & India. Liam holds a Bachelor of Electronic Engineering Degree (1993) and a Masters of Business Administration (2003) from University College Dublin.</p>	
Alex Cooney	<p>Alex is an experienced programme manager from the not-for-profit sector. She has managed large teams of staff both in Ireland and internationally. She has spent most of her career working in the international development sector with agencies such as UNDP in East Timor and CAFOD where she was responsible for the</p>	



	<p>South East Asia programme. This work involved writing strategic plans, developing funding applications and engaging advocacy programmes to effect policy change. Alex has enjoyed living and working in South East Asia, the Caribbean and in Europe. Since her return to Ireland in 2012, she has worked for Move4Parkinson's Foundation Limited as a Programme Manager and she is co-founder and now CEO of CyberSafeIreland CLG since 2015. Alex recently completed a QQI Level 6 component certificate in Child Psychology.</p>	
Ruth Carmody	<p>Ruth is Assistant Secretary General in the Department of Education and Skills with responsibility for Curriculum and Assessment Policy, Early Childhood Education and Teacher Education Policy. She is responsible for a range of reforms in Early Childhood, Primary, Junior and Senior Cycle curricula and for Teacher Education and Supply. She oversees implementation of the Digital Strategy for Schools 2015-2020. Previous areas of responsibility included Higher Education and Social Inclusion. More recently, she oversaw the development of the Action Plan for Education, the ETB/Solas sector programme of reform and modernisation and the creation of the Education Shared Business Service (ESBS).</p>	

Ryan Meade	<p>Ryan works with Google in Ireland as Public Policy & Government Relations Manager. Before joining Google in 2018 he worked for 7 years as a public policy consultant, advising private and NGO clients on policy, public affairs, strategic communications and government relations. Prior to this he spent 10 years working in politics in Ireland, including serving as Special Adviser to the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. He is a member of the National Advisory Council on Online Safety and the Advisory Group to the National Dialogue on Climate Action.</p>	
Brian O'Neill	<p>Brian is Director of Research, Enterprise and Innovation at Technological University Dublin. His research focuses on young people's use of digital technologies, online safety and policy for the digital environment. He has conducted research for the European Commission, UNICEF and the Council Europe. Brian is a member of the EU Kids Online research network. He also now leads the policy and stakeholder work for CORE - Children Online Research Evidence, a new European project supported under the Horizon 2020 research programme. Brian is currently chair of Media Literacy Ireland coordinated by the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland.</p>	
The Data Protection Commission	<p>The Data Protection Commission (DPC) is the national independent authority responsible for upholding the fundamental right of individuals in the EU to have their</p>	 <p>An Coimisiún um Chosaint Sonraí Data Protection Commission</p>

	<p>personal data protected. The DPC is the Irish supervisory authority for the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and also has functions and powers related to other important regulatory frameworks including the Irish ePrivacy Regulations (2011) and the EU Directive known as the Law Enforcement Directive. The Data Protection Commission is represented on the National Advisory Council for Online Safety by Jenny Dolan. Jenny is an Assistant Commissioner at the Data Protection Commission and heads up the Children's Policy unit within the Legal & Policy division. Jenny's role involves developing formal policy positions and drafting guidance material on matters relating to children's data protection issues. Jenny is currently leading a two-limbed nationwide consultation on the processing of children's personal data and the rights of children as data subjects under the General Data Protection Regulation, which will engage adult stakeholders generally and will separately engage children and young people directly in the classroom.</p>	
The Ombudsman for Children's Office	<p>The OCO is an independent statutory body, which was established in 2004 under the Ombudsman for Children Act 2002. Dr Niall Muldoon is the second Ombudsman for Children and was appointed by President Michael D Higgins in February 2015. The Ombudsman for Children is independent and directly accountable to the Oireachtas</p>	 <p>ombudsman do leanaí for children</p>

	<p>in relation to the OCO's statutory functions.</p> <p>The OCO's core functions are to promote the rights and welfare of children up to the age of 18 years and to deal with complaints made by or for children about the administrative actions of public bodies. The OCO is represented on the National Advisory Council for Online Safety by Karen McAuley, Head of Policy.</p>	
Age Action	<p>Age Action is Ireland's leading advocacy organisation for older people. Age Action works to ensure that older people's voices are heard at the highest level of Government and that the lived experience of older people informs policy responses to their needs. Age Action strives for a rights-based approach to how Ireland supports and plans for each of us as we grow older. Raising awareness of the valuable contribution older people make to society and ensuring that there are adequate statutory safeguards in place to support independent living is a core function of Age Action. Age Action believes that central to realising appropriate policy responses to ageing is enabling the participation of older people in the design and implementation of those policies. Tackling the issue of ageism and the challenges we face as we grow older such as income security, access to adequate and affordable health care and maintaining our independence.</p>	

Webwise.ie	<p>The Webwise initiative of the Professional Development Support Service for Teachers (PDST) acts as the awareness centre of the Safer Internet Ireland project. Webwise develop and disseminate resources that help teachers integrate online safety into teaching and learning in their schools. Webwise also provide information, advice, and tools to parents to support their engagement in their children's online lives. With the help of the Webwise Youth Advisory Panel we develop youth oriented awareness raising resources and campaigns that address topics such as cyber bullying. The project is co-funded by the Department of Education and Skills and the EU Connecting Europe Facility.</p>	
The Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (ISPCC)	<p>The ISPCC is Ireland's national child protection charity. Our mission is to make the protection of children everyone's priority. The ISPCC provides a range of services directly to children and families, and advocates for change to enhance the lives of children in Ireland. It is funded through fundraising and through funding provided by government agencies for the delivery of specified services.</p> <p>Services delivered by the ISPCC include Childline, Ireland's only 24-hour listening service for children and young people, as well as a Child and Family Support Service, a Mentoring Programme for children and young people and a Support Line for</p>	

	members of the public.	
National Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre	The National Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre, is a university designated research centre located in DCU Institute of Education. The Centre hosts the UNESCO Chair on Tackling Bullying in Schools and Cyberspace. Researchers at ABC were the first in Ireland to undertake research on bullying and cyberbullying. ABC leads the field of research, resource development and training in bullying and cyberbullying in Ireland and is an internationally recognised centre of excellence in bullying and cyberbullying research. Current relevant research at the Centre is focused on cyberbullying, sexting, non-consensual sharing of intimate images, online privacy and safety among young people and children in Ireland.	 <div> An tIonad Náisiúnta Taighde agus Acmhainne don Fhrithbhulaíocht National Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre </div>
The Internet Providers Association of Ireland (ISPAI)	The ISPAI was established in 1997 to provide one voice for the Irish ISP Industry at National, International and EU level. The ISPAI part-funds the Hotline.ie and operates a code of practice and ethics among its members.	

Appendix 2: Nacos Terms Of Reference

The Terms of Reference of the NACOS, established in accordance with Action #20 of the Action Plan for Online Safety (APOS), published by the Government on 11 July 2018, are as follows:

- 1) Provide advice to Government on Online Safety policy issues;
- 2) Identify emerging issues where Government intervention may be warranted, including in future iterations of the Government's Action Plan;
- 3) Input to the development of clear and easy to understand Online Safety guidance materials for all internet users, including targeted material for children and young people, parents, persons with learning disabilities, and older people;
- 4) To act as the national stakeholder forum for the purposes of EU funded programmes;
- 5) Review national and international research and disseminate key findings to Government, stakeholders, and the wider public;
- 6) Provide an annual report for Government to coincide with Safer Internet Day.

Appendix 3: Work Programme 2018-2019

The Action Plan for Online Safety envisages that the Council will meet on a quarterly basis and agree a 12 month work programme. The current Action Plan is for the period 2018-2019 and therefore it is envisaged that preparatory work for the next Action Plan will take place during the latter part of 2019.

The 2018/2019 work programme of the Council is as follows:

- 1) Annual Report of the National Advisory Council for Online Safety. It is intended that this report will be published in February to coincide with Safer Internet Day.
- 2) Conducting a high level survey of international and national research and preparing for the commissioning of research to provide an evidence base for the policy issues to be considered by the Council and its advice to Government. It is envisaged that a research subgroup will be established and will report back to the Council with a recommendation on the initial research to be commissioned. It is intended that a call for tenders/research proposals will issue in 2019 and research will begin in 2019 with a view to publication in advance of the Council's Annual Report in February 2020.
- 3) Consideration and preparation of practical guide for online platforms and interactive services, to encourage a standardised approach to best practice in online safety at all stages of design, development and roll out. It is proposed to establish a subgroup to advance this requirement. It is envisaged that the Council would make submit a recommended guide to Government, through the Sponsors' Group, with a view to publication in Q4 2019.
- 4) Review of resources and guidance material on the Government's online safety portal, with a view to making a recommendation to the sponsors' group in relation to gaps and material which could be updated or improved. (Advice issued – Q4 2018)
- 5) Act as the National Stakeholder Forum for the purposes of the EU funded programmes.
- 6) Consideration and Preparation of Advice to Government of actions which should be included in the next Action Plan for Online Safety.
- 7) Other actions which may be suggested and agreed by the Council.