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20 June 2016

Trevor Barnes
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Standards
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Direct line: 020 7783 4675

Mr E Goodman
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Dear Mr Goodman,

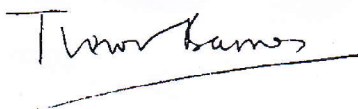
Thank you for your letter of 25 March 2016 to my colleague, Alistair Hall, and clarification of 25 May that you wished for a response to that letter. I apologise for the delay in my reply, but it was not clear to us that you in fact wished for a response to your letter of 25 March in light of Al Hall's earlier letter to you dated 15 March 2016.

Ofcom noted the Government consultation of February 2016 you referred to in your letter of 25 March. You may wish to note that the consultation did not in fact propose, as you suggested in your letter, that a "credit card be used as age verification." It set out various general proposals only about how age verification might be implemented as regards on line services. The Government has not yet published any proposals in response the consultation.

We have noted the various points you made in your letter of 25 March. The regulatory regime for on demand services is however different to that for linear television, which is regulated under the Ofcom Broadcasting Code. Al Hall explained the background to why R18 content is regulated as it is under the Broadcasting Code in his letter to you of 15 March. Because the two regulatory regimes are different, Ofcom currently sees no reason to review how it regulates R18 content on linear television.

For your information, you may wish to note that the UK is not the only European country which prohibits sexually explicit material on all television, even on PIN protected channels. Ofcom understands that at least eleven European countries (other than the UK) regard pornography as material which might seriously impair the physical, mental or moral development of minors, and they prohibit it completely from linear television: Austria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Spain.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Trevor Barnes". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.