

MINUTES OF THE 435th MEETING
PHONE-PAID SERVICES AUTHORITY LTD BOARD MEETING

Monday 25 March 2024

13.30-15.30

**Phone-paid Services Authority, Riverside House, 2A Southwark Bridge Road, London
SE1 9HA**

Attendees:

Chair: David Edmonds

Board members:

Meg Munn

Winnie Palmer

Jo Prowse

Mark Thomson

PSA Executive:

Tor Ahjem

Peter Barker

Laura Carter

Jonathan Levack

Alex Littlemore

Ayo Omideyi

Simon Towler

Guest:

Gavin Daykin, Ofcom

Minutes: Emma Hurt

Apologies:

1. Standing Items

1.1 Introduction and apologies

The Chair welcomed members and attendees to the Board meeting. The Chairman noted the apologies.

1.2 Previous minutes, matters arising and action log

The previous meeting minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. All actions from the last meeting have been completed.

1.3 Standing and other declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest recorded.

1.4 Chief Executive Report

The Chief Executive presented her report on activity across the organisation. In addition to updates on operational matters and items elsewhere on the agenda, the Board noted in particular:

- The phone-paid services market remains largely compliant. Complaint volumes are at record low levels, and the market is robust with revenues 5% higher than estimated in the Annual Market Review (AMR). The AMR has been commissioned for this year and interim findings will be presented at the Board meeting in June;
- The Consumer Panel is liaising with its Ofcom counterpart, with a view to ensuring phone-paid consumer interests continue to be fully represented within Ofcom's Communications Consumer Panel;
- Staff engagement and motivation continues to be maintained, aided by the commencement of informal meetings around roles in Ofcom. The formal TUPE process is expected to start in June;
- The company's finances remain robust, with the projected retained surplus being sufficient to enable an orderly windup under the current known circumstances.

The Board thanked the Chief Executive for her report.

2. Items for approval/decision

There were no items for approval/decision.

3. Items for discussion

3.1 Information, Connection and Signposting Services (ICSS) update

The Executive presented an assessment of the ICSS market, based on recent data collection. The Board noted that since the regulatory changes to the PSA Code were introduced in September 2023:

- There are a reduced number of providers in the market;
- There has been a significant reduction in call volumes and consumer spend;
- Providers have shifted further towards use of a drop charge model rather than cost per minute;
- There has been an increase in calls dropping out before 60 seconds, which the Executive observed is an indicator of ongoing consumer detriment.

The Board thanked the Executive for the presentation and noted the positive impact the Code changes have had for consumers.

3.2 Enforcement update

The Executive provided an overview of current enforcement activities, with the Board noting the close liaison with Ofcom colleagues to ensure all non-compliant providers are held to account during the transition of regulatory responsibilities into Ofcom.

The Board also noted that the engagement and informal resolution process is working well to resolve less serious matters.

3.3 Future of Regulation

The Board received an update from Ofcom on the process for the transfer of regulation into Ofcom, including ongoing engagement with the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT). All parties currently are planning for the required Statutory Instrument, which Ofcom consulted on earlier in the year, to be laid before Parliament in June, with a commencement date of 1 October 2024.

The Board thanked Ofcom for the update.

4. Items for information

4.1 Management Accounts Summary for the period ended 31st January 2024- as presented to Resources Committee on 21 March 2024

The Board noted the Management Accounts summary as presented to the Resources Committee.

4.2 Risk Register as at March 2024- as presented to Audit, Risk and Corporate Governance Committee on 20 March 2024

The Board noted the Risk Register as presented to the Audit, Risk and Corporate Governance Committee.

5. Any other business

The Board held a closed discussion on the transfer process.

Date of the next meeting: Monday 24 June 2024, 10.00-13.00

Action log

Actions carried forward from previous meetings	Status	Notes
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Minutes from the internal Regulatory Oversight Group to be circulated to the Board for information.

Ongoing

Actions from 25 March 2024 meeting