

MINUTES OF THE 24th MEETING

PHONE-PAID SERVICES AUTHORITY CONSUMER PANEL

Thursday 13 June 2024, 11.00-13.00

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

Attendees:

Chair: Rhian Johns

Consumer Panel members

Louise Baxter

Patrick Bligh-Cheesman

Paul Eaves

Nicola Wilson

Phone-paid Services Authority

Jonathan Levack

Sarah-Louise Prouse

Jo Prowse

Simon Towler

Minutes: Emma Hurt

Apologies:

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction and apologies

Rhian welcomed members to the Consumer Panel meeting. There were no apologies.

1.2 Previous meeting minutes and action log

The previous meeting's minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

Matters arising were picked up during the meeting.

1.3 Executive update

The Executive provided an update. The key highlights are:

- Data trends are consistent with previous meetings and complaints are at a historic low.
- There are few PRS services that are risky to consumers
- ICSS – the latest data collection shows another significant drop of roughly 60% in revenue, demonstrating the impact of regulatory changes. Googles advertising policy is also having a positive impact.

The Panel thanked the Executive for the update and noted the importance of good data helps to identify problem areas.

1.4 Panel update

The transfer process has been delayed due to the timing of the General Election. It was agreed for the Panel to remain in place until the point of transfer.

ACTION: the Executive to arrange an informal meeting with the new Ofcom Consumer Communications Panel Chair and invite the new chair to a consumer panel meeting.

2. Theme

2.1 Future of Regulation

The Executive provided an update on the delay to the transfer process and key impacts and future of PRS regulation.

- The SI was due to be laid 17 June by DSIT officials, but Parliament was dissolved on 30 May. The new timeline not yet known.
- There is a clear commitment from DSIT and Ofcom to submit the SI as soon as possible. Factoring in the parliamentary process and taking into account there are several complex cases to be heard through Oral Hearings, PSA are targeting a 1 February transfer.
- PSA will continue to regulate effectively through to the transfer.

The Panel is keen to scope a paper on providing best practice on regulation, effective disruption and how to effectively change the landscape for consumer protection from the consumer panel perspective.

ACTION: the Executive to scope the best practice paper

3. Policy

3.1 Communications Consumer Panel briefing

The Panel considered the briefing paper for the Communications Consumer Panel (CCP). The aim of the paper is to cover the background of the panel and the key areas of the panel focus.

The Panel is keen to understand how PRS complaints data will be reported and reviewed, checking for any emerging new issues and any negative issues caused by the transfer.

The Panel understands whilst it is not possible to be recruited to the CCP as the Ofcom Panel is a statutory body, there may be an option to have an observer on the CCP for short term after the transfer.

The Panel recommended adding Director naming and data to panel briefing.

ACTION: the Panel to review and provide feedback on the panel briefing.

ACTION: the Executive to schedule the next Consumer Panel meeting.

4. Any other business

No further business was discussed

Date of the next meeting:

Action_log

Actions from the previous meeting	Status	Notes
The Executive to check with AM if can differentiate between PAYG and contract billing from a vulnerable consumer link.	Closed	AM have confirmed splitting the data is not possible.
Actions from the June meeting		
The Executive to arrange an informal meeting with the new Ofcom Consumer Communications Panel Chair and invite the new chair to a consumer panel meeting.	Open	
The Executive to scope the best practice paper	Open	
The Panel to review and provide feedback on the panel briefing.	Complete	
The Executive to schedule the next Consumer Panel meeting.	Open	