

**MINUTES OF THE 17<sup>TH</sup> MEETING**  
**PHONE-PAID SERVICES AUTHORITY CONSUMER PANEL**

Wednesday 28 September 2022

10.30-12.30

Microsoft Teams

**Attendees:**

**Chair:** Rhian Johns

**Consumer Panel members**

Louise Baxter

Patrick Bligh-Cheesman

Paul Eaves

Fred Forbes

Nicola Wilson

**Phone-paid Services Authority**

Jonathan Levack

Sarah-Louise Prouse

Joanne Prowse

Simon Towler

**Guest:**

**Minutes:** Emma Hurt

**Apologies:**

**1. Introduction**

***1.1 Introduction and apologies***

Rhian welcomed members to the Consumer Panel meeting. This meeting was intended to be held in person, but it was moved to online due to the National Rail Strike. No apologies were received.

***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:

- **Complaint levels:** the continuing low level of complaints is indicative of a broadly compliant market. The one exception to this trend is ICSS which amount to roughly 40% of complaints received equal to around 40 to 50 complaints a month on ICSS. A Thematic Review on Information, Connection and Signposting Services (ICSS) has been launched, utilizing one of the new regulatory powers available under Code 15. The response from providers to date has been positive, with the information and data being gathered enabling a better understanding of the consumer experience and detriment suffered. Under Code 15, PSA is committed to publishing a summary of the findings.
- **Code 15 implementation:** Code 15 is now considered internally as business as usual and externally and continues to embed well. The Supervisory role has been welcomed with cooperation from industry and, relationships with industry have improved through supervision creating a collaborative partnership between industry and regulator. Since the launch of Code 15, there have been no new enforcement cases opened, only engagement cases and importantly, Code 15 has not had a detrimental effect on the market as the level of transactions has remained the same.  
**ACTION: an update on Enforcement will be given to the Panel at the December meeting.**
- **Consultation on virtual chat** – the Executive is working with industry to resolve an issue regarding receipting for virtual chat services, making good use of the flexibility available within the new Code. This would be the first general permission issued under Code 15.

### 1.4 Panel update

The work plan for the Consumer Panel has been circulated for consideration. The panel will continue to operate up to the point of transfer. If the agenda becomes lighter this may mean the meetings become shorter.

The next meeting is offered as a hybrid option with lunch to follow the meeting. There were no further updates from panel.

## 2. Annual Market Review

The AMR gives an overview of the market trends market during 2020 /21. The findings are based on insights obtained through:

- An in-depth survey of 5000 users of phone-paid services.
- Interviews with industry stakeholders/service providers
- Undertaking an extensive market modelling exercise forecasting future spend on phone-paid services.

Headline findings:

- UK consumers spent £588.7m on premium rate services last year, a £39.9m (6.3%) decrease on the year before.
- TV and Radio Engagement continues to be the largest sector, followed by Games and then Entertainment.
- Analysys Mason predict the market to be stable over the next three years with industry reporting no significant new initiatives or services that would drive growth in that timeframe.
- Growth in some service types is offset by continuing decline in voice services in common with wider trends in telecoms.
- The number of consumers using services has increased overall, but with usage skewed towards a younger demographic.
- The key driver for paying by phone remains convenience.
- The consumer experience is improving, with fewer poor and harmful services in the market. Many legacy PMS subscription services have been removed.

The average Net Promoter Score (NPS) has risen marginally from -27 to -26. NPS is a difficult metric, as a score of 6 and below is gauged as negative and only ratings of 9 or 10 generating a positive score. .

### 3. The future of regulation

The Executive provided an update on the transfer. There has been significant activity around progressing the parliamentary process, which is complex and includes bilateral and trilateral activity with Ofcom and DCMS. From the beginning of November, PSA will be relocated to Riverside House.

### 4. Any other business

No further business was discussed

**Date of the next meeting: Tuesday 13 December**

#### Action log

<b>Actions carried forward from previous meetings</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Notes</b>
A Code 15 update will remain on the Consumer Panel agenda.	<b>Ongoing</b>	Consider closing as this has been added to the workplan

#### **Actions from June Consumer Panel meeting**

A clear and comprehensive report covering the areas of focus and achievement of the Panel over the past four years. will be drafted.

**Complete**

**Actions from September Consumer Panel meeting**

An update on Enforcement will be given to the Panel at the December meeting.

**Ongoing**