

Minutes of the meeting of the Communications Consumer Panel and ACOD**on 26 March 2014 at 10.30****Riverside House, 2A Southwark Bridge Road, London SE1 9HA****Present**Consumer Panel/ACOD

Jo Connell (Chairman)

Kim Brook

Jaya Chakrabarti

Chris Holland

Mairi Macleod

Craig Tillotson

Bob Twitchin (by telephone, items 1 - 4 and items 8 and 9)

In attendance

Eleanor Berg

David Edwards

Karen Keany (items 8 and 9)

Fiona Lennox

External visitor from Go ON UK (item 4)

External visitors from Jigsaw (item 6)

External visitors from BIS (item 7)

Other Ofcom colleagues

1. Minutes of the meeting on 26 February 2014 and matters arising1.1 The minutes were **APPROVED** for signature by the Chair.1.2 Members **NOTED** that Craig Tillotson had been appointed as a director of Mobile Payments Services Company.1.3 Members **NOTED** that:

- the High Street Skills programme launch coincided with today's Panel meeting and that further details would be available shortly.
- Media Access Australia had just published the world's first review of how the quality of closed captions and subtitles for the deaf and hearing impaired was controlled internationally and a link to the document would be emailed to Members.
- The BIS consultation on Online Dispute Resolution had been published on 11 March 2014 and a Panel response would be drafted.
- The Panel would consider its next steps in relation to nuisance calls following publication of the DCMS Action Plan [note: DCMS launched its Nuisance Calls Action Plan on 30 March 2014].
- Summary feedback from Ofcom's National Advisory Committees on the Panel's *Going round in circles?* research had been copied to Members.

1.4 It was **AGREED** that the Panel would respond to the consultation on the terms of reference of DCMS' Digital Communications Infrastructure Strategy.**2. Research Update**

2.1 An Ofcom colleague joined the meeting for discussion of recent and

forthcoming Ofcom research projects and a study on the apps environment. Issues discussed included the contrast between the slow broadband speeds experienced by some consumers and the positive messages about the UK's broadband in the European Broadband Scorecard 2014; the usability of devices and the suggestion that this be included in Ofcom research; apps and parental controls; a *Consumer Experience Report* finding of a rise in dissatisfaction amongst bundlers; and a consumer switching experience study.

3. Cloud Computing

3.1 An Ofcom colleague joined the meeting for discussion of cloud computing and cloud-based services (remotely accessible, pay-on-demand computing resources). Issues raised included risk and security; a lack of both consumer protections and visibility of the underlying service architecture; and the opportunities presented by remote managed data storage.

4. Go ON UK

4.1 A colleague from Go ON UK joined the meeting and gave a presentation on the work, recent and current activity of the organisation, a charity focused on making the UK the world's most digitally skilled nation. Issues discussed included the Go ON UK Digital Skills Charter; its current 26-week local partner-based North East Pathfinder project; and new web resources.

5. Ofcom Chairman

5.1 The Panel welcomed Colette Bowe to the meeting and held a private session. The Ofcom Chairman was about to step down and Members thanked her for her valuable contribution to the work of both Ofcom and previously, as Chair of the original Consumer Panel.

6. Micro-business research

6.1 An Ofcom colleague joined the meeting and colleagues from Jigsaw Research Limited, following completion of their fieldwork for the Panel's research project on micro-businesses. Members highlighted a number of areas of further interest, including analysis of disability, ethnicity, switching, mobile on the move and the customer service experience. It was **AGREED** that the draft report would be discussed at the next Panel meeting.

6.2 Links to recent small business related research commissioned by the Broadband Stakeholders Group and by Lloyds Bank would be forwarded to the Jigsaw team.

7. BIS - household bills and review of contract renewal transparency

7.1 Colleagues from BIS joined the meeting to discuss its review of the transparency of consumer bills across a number of sectors, looking in particular at the information available to consumers when they renewed contracts - including the specific information provided, how information was presented

and if/when notifications were sent to consumers. Members **ADVISED** on a number of points, and suggested including contract renewal dates on all printed bills, also highlighting the problem of a lack of co-terminous elements of bundles.

8. Panel workplan

8.1 Members reviewed the Panel's draft workplan, following the consultation that had closed on 19 March 2014 and had resulted in a number of responses. A number of final drafting comments were made by Members and the workplan would be revised, translated into Welsh and published shortly. It was **AGREED** also that Members would indicate areas of interest for which they would take the Panel lead.

9. Any other business

9.1 Jaya Chakrabarti gave details of a plan to develop a spectrum strategy for the Bristol region. There could be linkages with Ofcom's Cities Project and relevant contact details would be shared.

.....ChairmanDate