

Minutes of the meeting of the Communications Consumer Panel and ACOD

on 16 December 2013 at 10.30

Riverside House, 2A Southwark Bridge Road, London SE1 9HA

PresentConsumer Panel/ACOD

Jo Connell (Chairman)

Kim Brook

Jaya Chakrabarti

Chris Holland

Libby Kinney

Mairi Macleod

Bob Twitchin (items 1 to 5 and item 8)

In attendance

David Edwards

Karen Keaney (item 4 onwards)

Fiona Lennox

Other Ofcom colleagues

Apologies

Craig Tillotson

1. Declarations of interest

1.1 There were no interests to declare.

2. Minutes of the meeting on 21 November 2013 and matters arising2.1 The minutes were **APPROVED** for signature by the Chair.2.2 When all feedback had been received, Members would be sent a note providing a summary of discussions at the recent round of Ofcom National Advisory Committee meetings relating to the Panel's *Going round in circles?* research. Members had been provided with an action plan to disseminate the research and take forward its recommendations with communications providers and other stakeholders. Members were invited to provide feedback by email.2.3 Members had been provided with a note that summarised the Scottish Government's *Mobile Performance and Coverage in Scotland* report.**3. Nuisance calls**

3.1 An Ofcom colleague joined the meeting for discussion of Ofcom's ongoing work related to tackling nuisance calls and the recent report from the House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport (CMS) Committee on nuisance calls. Members had been provided with details of the report's conclusions and recommendations.

3.2 There was discussion of issues including CLI and the Panel's call for its free provision, Members noting that CLI would remain free for BT Basic customers; some public bodies practice of withholding their number; matters

related to the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations; whether there should be a time limit on consent to use personal data; and sources of consumer advice on dealing with nuisance calls. It was **AGREED** that the Panel would review its own next steps in relation to nuisance calls and CLI, one option being to write to communications providers.

4. Residential postal tracker

4.1 An Ofcom colleague joined the meeting for discussion of findings from Ofcom's recent residential postal tracking survey, with a particular emphasis being on findings related to older and disabled consumers. Members were pleased to see data available with detailed age breaks amongst older consumers, ie 55+, 65+ and 75+ and **NOTED** generally high levels of overall satisfaction with postal services amongst older, disabled and housebound consumers.

4.2 A Member raised the issue of mail delivery to homes in the context of the TNT service now available in certain parts of the country. Members would be provided with further details of Ofcom's thinking on end-to-end competition in the postal sector.

5. Political policy - telecommunications update

5.1 Members noted and discussed details of the development of the Government's Telecoms Consumer Action Plan and the proposals outlined in Labour's eight point plan.

6. The user's experience of the online data marketplace

6.1 Members had been provided with discussion papers on the user's experience of online data, including the issues of personal data; consumer concerns; what might define a good experience of online data marketplaces; and summary findings from a number of related research projects. Members discussed and **AGREED** that the starting point for any use of personal data should be to enhance consumer benefit. Issues for consumers included their level of awareness/knowledge; consent; the ability to access their own personal data; control of personal data; redress/protection; and security.

6.2 Other issues raised included the distinction between 'user' and consumer - noting that users could also be considered to include the entities that utilised personal data rather than just the individuals providing that data; trading in personal data and an individual's knowledge of such transactions; the potential value of a consumer guide; and informed consent, and the Panel's preference for a presumed default position of 'no consent'.

7. Traffic management

7.1 Members had received a paper outlining Ofcom's position on the issue of traffic management. An Ofcom colleague spoke about issues including Ofcom's current powers and proposed European regulation. Members **NOTED** the rapid pace of change and the need for any regulation to be able to respond to new challenges.

8. Panel workplan 2014/15

8.2 Members engaged in a wide-ranging discussion about potential Panel work areas for 2014/15, taking into account the views expressed to date by stakeholders. Members evaluated those issues most likely to significantly affect consumers, citizens and micro-businesses in the communications sector and the impact the Panel might have on their behalf. In addition there was discussion of possible Panel research topics. It was **AGREED** that enquiries should be made with Ofcom about its 2014/15 research plans.

8.3 It was **AGREED** that a draft workplan would be circulated to Members for comment, prior to discussion and sign-off at the January Panel meeting.

9. Ofcom Chairman

9.1 The Panel welcomed Colette Bowe to the meeting and held a private session.

10. Any other business

10.1 Members NOTED that Edinburgh City Council was engaged in a joint venture with the Citizens Advice Bureau in Edinburgh, relating to digital participation, with the Council providing funding. Mairi Macleod would provide Members with further details.

10.2 Mairi Macleod had attended the latest in the Independent Living in Scotland's "Solutions" series of pop-up think tanks entitled "Mock The Weak - the representation of disabled people in the media". The event brought together disabled people and other key experts to consider the solutions to mis- and under-representation of disabled people in the media.

10.3 Fiona Lennox updated Members on her recent participation in a BIS workshop on the Consumer Rights Bill.

10.4 Members NOTED that the Chair had attended a productive meeting bringing together the Chairs of a number of sectoral consumer panels to discuss issues of mutual interest.

10.5 Chris Holland would attend the CISAS Annual Forum in the New Year.

.....ChairmanDate