

June 2011

COMMUNICATIONS  
CONSUMER  
PANEL



## Panel newsletter

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### In short...

#### Reappointment for Kim Brook...

We're delighted that former Panel member for Wales, Kim Brook, has been reappointed as an ex-officio member of the Panel.

#### Panel meetings...

To read minutes from previous meetings go to:

<http://www.communicationsconsumerpanel.org.uk/smartweb/angenda-and-minutes/2011>

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### Latest news...

#### Future consumer advocacy system must continue as a powerful voice

Consumer Panel Chair Bob Warner said he was pleased to see that the Government's consultation into the future of consumer advocacy would look at enhancing consumer representation in communications. He called for "a powerful advocate for consumers" that would have the ability to help shape future policy, and have strong links with consumer bodies in the Nations. He said that the "pace of change in the communications sector and a proposed new Communications Bill mean that it is even more important for consumers to have a strong voice in this debate". To read the Panel's comment go to:

<http://www.communicationsconsumerpanel.org.uk/New%20communications%20consumer%20system%20must%20continue%20to%20provide%20powerful%20advocacy.pdf>

*Consumer empowerment and protection: consultation on reform to the institutional landscape of consumer bodies* was published by BIS (the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills). The proposal is to bring together as many existing sectoral consumer advocacy functions as possible at Citizens Advice. To read the consultation go to:

<http://www.bis.gov.uk/news/topstories/2011/Jun/consumer-protection-reform>

#### Panel works with Ofcom to protect consumers from possible impact of 4G on DTT viewers

Communications Consumer Panel Chair Bob Warner has welcomed Ofcom's consultation into the possible impact that new, 4G mobile services may have on digital terrestrial television (DTT) viewers: "The next generation of mobile services will bring many benefits for customers, so it is important that we get the best we can from those new resources for consumers."

"However, it is vital that any potential problems for existing DTT viewers are identified and consumers

protected. The Panel will be working closely with Ofcom, and other consumer bodies, throughout the consultation process to ensure the best outcome for all consumers.”

To read the Panel’s comment go to:

<http://www.communicationsconsumerpanel.org.uk/DTT%20comment%20final.pdf>

The Ofcom consultation *Coexistence of new services in the 800 MHz band with digital terrestrial television* is available at:

<http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/consultations/dtt/summary/dttcondoc.pdf>

### Reappointment for Kim Brook

We are delighted that former Panel member for Wales, Kim Brook, has been reappointed as an ex-officio member of the Panel. Kim resumes the role of representing consumer interests for Wales on the Panel, which also includes members for Scotland, Northern Ireland and the English Regions. Kim is also a member of the Ofcom Advisory Committee Wales.

He said: “I’m extremely happy to resume my role representing the communications interests of consumers in Wales. Wales has been relatively poorly served in the communications arena in the past. Admittedly, the challenges of sparse population density and very difficult topography have been partly at the root of this. But today, businesses and individuals are vitally dependent on having extensive and reliable mobile coverage, whether at home or on the move. High quality fast broadband service is also an absolute requirement for successful business and for citizens to access vital public services, which will increasingly be online. There is much to be done in Wales, as in Scotland, Northern Ireland and parts of rural England, to ensure that we do not fall further behind in the provision of fit-for-purpose communications facilities for consumers and citizens irrespective of where they live. I am delighted to have the opportunity to help the drive for better services in Wales and in other poorly served-areas.”

You can read more about Kim’s background at:

<http://www.communicationsconsumerpanel.org.uk/smartweb/panel-members/kim-brook>

### June Panel meeting

This month’s Panel meeting included:

- Panel members were updated on the Communications Bill and discussed their response to the Department of Culture Media & Sport’s open letter *A Communications Review for the Digital Age*
- Ofcom updated members on the consultation into the possible impact of 4G mobile services on digital terrestrial television (DTT) viewers.
- The Panel discussed its response to the spectrum auction consultation.
- There were also discussions about net neutrality and the Panel’s 2011/2012 work projects.