

# Minutes of the 75<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Communications Consumer Panel

on 16 March 2011 at 11.00 hours

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

## Present

### Consumer Panel

Anna Bradley (Chair)

Fiona Ballantyne

Colin Browne

Roger Darlington

Maureen Edmondson

Bob Warner

### In attendance

Alistair Bridge (Principal Adviser)

David Edwards (standing in for Panel Secretary - excl items 3 & 4)

Sian Evans (Media Adviser)

Ofcom colleagues (items 3 and 4)

	Action
<p>1. Declaration of members' interests</p> <p>1.1 Members declared no additional interests.</p>	
<p>2. Minutes of the meeting on 23 February 2011, matters arising and progress on actions</p> <p>2.1 Members <b>APPROVED</b> the draft minutes for signature by the Chair, subject to minor amendment.</p> <p>2.2 It was <b>NOTED</b> that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Policy Positions paper will be re-drafted and signed off by Bob Warner, as incoming Chair;</li> <li>• the status of outstanding actions will be discussed with the Chair and Bob Warner prior to Alistair's move to his new role in Ofcom's Consumer Group.</li> </ul>	<p>AnB</p> <p>AIB</p> <p>AIB</p>
<p>3. Future of Consumer Advocacy</p> <p>3.1 Members <b>NOTED</b> a verbal update on progress on this area since the last meeting and <b>DISCUSSED</b> the Panel's role in this debate.</p> <p>3.2 Members <b>AGREED</b> to respond to the Consumer landscape consultation once issued.</p> <p>3.3 Members <b>REQUESTED</b> a copy of the Consumer Focus paper <i>Regulated industries and consumers</i> be circulated.</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>AIB</p>
<p>4. Panel transition to 2011/12</p> <p>4.1 Members <b>NOTED</b> a verbal update on progress on this area since the last meeting.</p>	

<p>4.2 Members <b>NOTED</b> the content of the handover report circulated prior to the meeting, which will ensure effective handover from the current Panel team to Ofcom colleagues under new Panel support arrangements.</p>	
<p>5. <b>Monetisation of Data research</b></p> <p>5.1 The Panel <b>CONSIDERED</b> the research findings, recommendations, a communications plan and publication of the Panel’s monetisation of data research project. Members <b>NOTED</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the need to clarify whether research findings covered GB or UK;</li> <li>• that publication would be followed by a roundtable event, making it reasonable for the Panel to articulate hypotheses in its report rather than make firm policy recommendations;</li> <li>• the Chair’s take on key messages: the views of respondents had been more nuanced than expected; they had demands for knowledge, control and transparency; the benefits for respondents differed from the benefits for third parties and more work was required on the trade-offs; value could be gained from mapping the extent to which consumers were aware of, or comfortable with, the monetisation of data against debates and media coverage of the issues; the way forward seemed to be less about campaigning and more about encouraging further public debate;</li> <li>• findings were robust but it was necessary to recognize the limitations of the research methodology, which stemmed from the need to use an approach that would enable completion of the report by the end of March;</li> <li>• respondents’ awareness had been raised in the course of interviews;</li> <li>• a large number of respondents (70%) said it was their responsibility to control their own data, which the Panel felt was a significant finding that should be stressed in the report;</li> <li>• that an issue for further exploration was the ability to delete personal data on social network sites like Facebook, in particular an individual’s personal data on other people’s pages;</li> <li>• that there were issues about how long third parties should be allowed to store personal data;</li> <li>• the importance of consumers being able to change their minds about use of their data and their awareness of online terms and conditions related to use of their data;</li> <li>• various suggestions about how the report might be communicated externally, including: a twin-track approach of a news release and a feature story placed in a media outlet; highlighting the planned roundtable and plans to use the research to identify questions to explore with others; giving advance warning of publication to industry players 24 hours prior to publication; exploration of whether publication of the report might coincide with any other related media events;</li> <li>• that Alistair Bridge would revise, copy around for comment and finalise the report by the end of the month and communicate with members about the process for publication, the date of which it was <b>AGREED</b> would be in April or early May; he would confirm that the Panel had permission to make use of case studies.</li> </ul>	<p><b>AIB</b></p>

<p><b>6. Ofcom update on Broadband speeds</b></p> <p>6.1 The Panel considered a paper and a set of slides that summarised Ofcom’s work on fixed-line and mobile broadband speeds research, its engagement with the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) and industry committees, the Committee of Advertising Practice and the Broadcast Committee of Advertising Practice, and the voluntary Code of Practice on broadband speeds. Members <b>NOTED</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that average broadband speeds had continued to increase but there remained a continuing differential between ‘up to’ and typical speeds;</li> <li>• that actual speeds could sometimes be lower for some services advertised as high speed than for some more standard packages;</li> <li>• that Ofcom’s research showed consumer dissatisfaction with the continued use of advertising based on ‘up to’ speeds, a view shared by the Panel;</li> <li>• Ofcom’s plans to make available a map of broadband performance searchable by postcode and indicating broadband speeds; a move welcomed by the Panel whilst recognizing that there could be limitations to the robustness of data;</li> <li>• that speeds did not feature in mobile broadband advertising and currently there was wide variation in mobile broadband performance by location; this was likely to continue until spectrum became available for high speed mobile technologies; and</li> <li>• an updated code of practice would come into force in July 2011 and require use of a consistent methodology for speed estimates.</li> </ul> <p>6.2 The Panel <b>AGREED</b> that Bob Warner should have an introductory meeting with Guy Parker, CEO of the ASA, to build on the relationship which Anna Bradley has established with him.</p>	<p><b>BW</b></p>
<p><b>7. Panel Annual Report</b></p> <p>7.1 The Panel reviewed a paper that outlined a proposed structure and publications timetable for the Panel’s 2010/11 Annual Report, both of which were <b>AGREED</b> by Panel. The Foreword would be signed by the outgoing Chair and the document would make reference to the Panel’s planned position and philosophy papers. Alistair Bridge would draft the Annual Report, copy to members for comment, revise and prepare for circulation with the papers for the next Panel meeting on 6 April.</p>	<p><b>AIB</b></p>
<p><b>8. Any Other Business</b></p> <p>8.1 There was no other business.</p>	

.....Chairman .....Date