

First initial meeting of the CPG on Consumer Affairs

Minutes

Wednesday 17 June 2015

Q1.04, Scottish Parliament

Present:

Cameron Buchanan MSP
Melissa Dring (Chartered Trading Standards Institute)
Keith Dryburgh (Citizens Advice Scotland)
Joe Glancy (Money Advice Scotland)
Patrick Hogan (Citizens Advice Scotland)
Paul McFadden (Scottish Public Services Ombudsman)
Mark McGinty (Chartered Trading Standards Institute)
Fiona Richardson (Trading Standards Scotland)
Gordon Robb (Society of Chief Officers of Trading Standards in Scotland)
Dave Thompson MSP
David Wright (SELECT)

1. Welcome and introductions

- DT welcomed participants and introductions were made around the table.

2. Discussion of group details

Name

- Participants agreed that the proposed CPG should be called the “Cross-Party Group on Consumer Affairs” to keep the spirit of the group broad.

Purpose

- DT read out a revised draft purpose for the group for discussion.
- MD raised the question of whether “consumer issues” was too vague a heading and it was agreed the particular topics covered by the group would have to capture the interest of MSPs and inform their work. CB said the group should keep as wide a brief as possible.
- It was agreed that the naming specific sectors to focus on in the group’s purpose would be too restrictive.
- Group’s purpose confirmed as, “To raise awareness of consumer affairs in the Scottish Parliament by engaging with MSPs and external stakeholders”.
- Background to the purpose (for Standards Committee) confirmed as, “Consumer affairs covers a wide range of issues which impact upon different key stakeholders, including the Scottish Government, local government, consumers and the business community. Establishing this group would be in the public interest because there is

currently no Cross-Party Group which has consumer affairs as its focus. This group would address this gap in the parliamentary landscape and provide regular opportunities for MSPs of all parties, external stakeholders and others to meet and discuss these and many other issues around consumer affairs”.

Membership

- MSP and organisational membership was confirmed.
- DT said membership could expand at any time as long as notice is given to the Standards Committee in the Parliament.
- Initial MSP membership is:
 - Dave Thompson MSP
 - Cameron Buchanan MSP
 - Cara Hilton MSP
 - Alison Johnstone MSP
 - Chic Brodie MSP
- Initial organisational members are:
 - Chartered Trading Standards Institute
 - Citizens Advice Scotland
 - Competition and Markets Authority
 - Federation of Small Businesses
 - Money Advice Scotland
 - Scottish Legal Complaints Commission
 - Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
 - SELECT
 - Shelter
 - Society of Chief Officers of Trading Standards in Scotland
 - Trading Standards Scotland
 - Which?

Office bearers

- DT named convener.
- CB named vice-convener.
- PH/CAS will act as secretary and treasurer.

Financial benefits

- Agreed £1000 for secretariat support.
- DW to enquire as to cost of catering for meetings which SELECT would provide.

Subscription

- It was agreed that there would be no subscription fee.

Topics

- Topic for the first meeting of the CPG will be decided between DT, CB and PH with those with particular requests to send these to PH for consideration.

Meeting frequency

- It was agreed that the group will meet quarterly.

- Meetings will be held in September, November and February with dates to be confirmed.
- DT's staff to handle room booking in the parliament.

3. AOB

- There was no other business to discuss.

PH will send confirmation of September meeting date to members once known.