



**Consumer Codes Approval Scheme  
Meeting: Code Sponsors Panel**

Date: 14 July 2015  
Time: 11.00 – 13.00  
Location: Motor Codes Offices, 71 Great Peter Street, London, SW1P 2BN

Present: Ray Hodgkinson (Chair), Mark Terry (MC), Mark Cutler (RECC), Paul Sharpe (IPW), Leon Livermore (TSI)  
Attendees: Sarah Langley (TSI), Rachel Martin (TSI)  
Apologies: Ian Studd (BAR)

**MINUTES**

**1. Welcome**

Ray Hodgkinson welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending the Motor Codes offices on this occasion. It was agreed to be flexible on the order of the agenda due to Leon's attendance and time constraints.

The previous meeting minutes (29 September 2014) were approved by the Panel.

**2. Matter Arising**

- (i) Leon updated the panel on the success of conference and set out the general tone following the new government. He advised the Panel on the complex portfolio now being managed by the Minister, Nick Boles. With Consumer Protection just one area he is responsible for out of so many, Leon asked the Panel to consider how they present themselves to him and how best to approach him for support. It was also suggested the Panel consider establishing a relationship with Anna Soubry, Small Business Minister.

Leon advised the Panel on the ongoing austerity cuts and asked how we might keep the integrity of the Codes brand with limited resources. The Institute itself is pushing for a full strategic review of Consumer Protection. Leon will update the Panel electronically with news as and when it comes through.

Leon assured the Panel that the Board are fully committed to Codes and as we are now 3 years into managing the scheme, the CCAS Board have more experience and knowledge of how best to continue.

Leon said that the greatest tool for managing the economics and planning for the long term are the Performance Indicators. He asked that all Codes continue to assist with providing figures when needed.

There are discussions to be had around current Codes supporting the scheme where new Codes join without a membership base balanced with opening Codes up to more applicants and managing cost recovery for the administration.

The Panel raised some concerns over consumers being confused where there are more Codes within the same sector. Leon assured the Panel that the governance of the scheme allows it to be open to all and that we have a robust set of core values whereby we are working towards a single standard, not a single Code.

The Panel also raised questions over ADR. It was agreed that Andy Allen would be invited to the next panel meeting to answer any questions the Panel has on ADR. Leon suggested he could speak with BIS and ask for a representative to come to a Codes Sponsors Panel meeting.

Leon suggested that Ray and Sarah put together a letter inviting Nick Boles to the Codes Sponsor Forum in November / December. If he can attend, Mark Terry offered the use of the Motor Codes office as it is ideally located and convenient to Westminster.

Ray thanked Leon, on behalf of the Panel, for his time in attending the meeting.

**Action: Ray and Sarah to prepare a letter to Nick Boles.**

**Action: Ray and Sarah to make contact with Anna Sourbry.**

**Action: Leon to contact BIS and ask for a representative to attend a Panel meeting.**

**Action: Rachel to invite Andy Allen to the next Panel meeting.**

- (ii) The Chair requested that the Panel look towards having a more strategic and proactive agenda. With the CTSI's Board's decision to underwrite Codes, he feels that over the next 12-18 months Codes needs to make a real impact. The Panel recommends that Codes and ADR needs to weave together to improve the success of Codes.

The Chair would like a standing ADR item on the agenda in future and the Panel would like Andy Allen to attend regularly to provide updates and assist with Ombudsmen issues.

The Panel suggested all Codes should have the right to become an Ombudsman, not in general, but for the Code.

- (iii) Sarah updated the Panel on the recent Stage 1 applications and the decisions from the CCAS Board. There are a number of well recognised organisations, with high street presence which would be very good from a marketing perspective and these would serve to make the Code brand more recognisable to consumers.
- (iv) Sarah and Ray will meet or hold a conference call to discuss preparing a letter to the Minister. Mark Terry offered the assistance of his Policy department in this matter.

**Action: Sarah, Ray and Mark Terry to set a date to discuss.**

- (v) Sarah presented a paper on proposed fee changes. The Codes Team feel that the Stage 1 and Stage 2 fees are the wrong way around. Currently Stage 1 fees are £2950 +VAT and Stage 2 £3950 + VAT. With the team now having 3 years experience and having processed several applications, it is evident that the majority of the administration work is needed at Stage 1 and less so at Stage 2. It is therefore proposed that both fees are set at £3950 + VAT. It is also proposed that while the Expression of Interest fee remains at £750 + VAT, it should become time

limited to one year from initial application. Those who do not progress to Stage 1 within the year would have to put in another Expression of Interest and would therefore have to pay again.

The question was asked if fees could be linked to ADR with those who are ADR compliant perhaps having reduced audits.

Sarah asked the panel if they would consider subsidising new applications and provide support to new Codes coming through. The Panel agreed this would be good business and would only serve to promote Codes. A service likened to the passport check and send, could be explored. Sarah does this to a certain extent already, with new Codes only being presented to the Board when they have been checked.

There were no objections to the proposed changes so Sarah will now take the paper to the CCAS Board for consideration. Sarah expects it to be approved and it will then be implemented immediately.

Annual fees for existing Codes will need to be reviewed and a paper is planned for the October Board meeting. Members of the panel expressed their own views on this, with some feeling an increase would make them consider their ability to remain in the scheme, others felt an increase would be justified as long as the value of the brand to the consumer is evident. The ideas of banding of fees and grandfather rights was suggested. The Chair would like a separate agenda item and paper for the consultation of existing fees at the next meeting. Or if necessary a separate meeting to be arranged.

Mark Terry offered to represent larger businesses, along with his colleague Holly McAllister, and Paul Sharpe offered to represent small business in any discussions.

**Action: Sarah and Ray to discuss if a paper or extra meeting is required and prepare as necessary.**

- (vi) A Forum in November was discussed. It was suggested to limit the head count to 40 people and Mark Terry offered the Motor Codes offices as a possible venue, especially if a Minister were to attend as it is close to Westminster.

**Action: Sarah and Ray to invite the Minister.**

The date for the next meeting is set for Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September. Venue to be confirmed.