



Consumer Codes Approval Scheme Code Sponsors Panel Meeting

Date: 13th July 2016
Time: 11:00 – 14:00
Present: Ray Hodgkinson (Chair), Holly McAllister (MC), Mark Cutler (RECC), Ian Studd (BAR), Gerry Fitzjohn (TPO) Adrian Simpson (CTSI)
Attendees: Kristie Lockwood (CTSI), Mandy Garnham (CTSI)
Apologies: Bill Fennell (MC), Barbara Hughes (FCA)

MINUTES

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending, introductions were then made.

The Chair then informed A Simpson, M Garnham and K Lockwood that the pre meeting between just the Code Sponsors was to clarify where they were all at and that any issues that arose during the pre meeting would be discussed throughout the actual meeting.

The previous meeting minutes of 1st March 2016 were approved by the Panel.

2. Service Director Update

The Chair suggested that the relationship between CTSI and Codes Panel needs a re-evaluation. There is concern that the panel is not as effective as it could be. The chair asked if it could be an honest and open meeting.

A Simpson began by introducing Mandy Garnham. M Garnham told the panel her background of 2 years at CTSI with a background in training. M Garnham will be looking after the relationship management between CTSI and the different Codes, any logo misuse and consumer complaints. Mandy will not be dealing with audits, but has shadowed the audit process to understand it better.

A Simpson informed the Panel that there are 19 Codes now; the most recent Code to be approved is Building Life Plans (BLP). There was also one stage 1 approved recently, Sennocke International (Buildzone). A Simpson informed the Panel that M Garnham will be looking at the performance Indicators and will soon be in contact regarding those.

A Simpson went on to say that there are some big Code names that will be coming to CTSI in the future, but that he was unable to disclose those names now. The Panel then challenged why these names could not be disclosed. A Simpson told the Panel that he has been asked by the applicant to keep it confidential. At this stage they do not have to be open.

I Studd asked how likely we are to get the prospective Codes on board. A Simpson confirmed that it will be very likely.

A Simpson then told the Panel about publicity. A Twitter account has recently been launched for Codes. A Simpson is currently writing a communications strategy with Chris Fay, who is the manager of the CTSI Communications team. A Simpson will show the Communications Strategy to the Panel and the Consumer Codes Approval Board for feedback.

A Simpson confirmed that the CTSI Conference was very successful and that there was good interaction with various Codes that came to the drinks reception held by A Simpson and M Garnham. A Simpson said that the team had also spoken to a few prospective Codes who were interested in the scheme.

A Simpson told the Panel that we are now in the third year of the Consumer Codes Approval Scheme and there will be contract evaluation taking place. Mandy will be contacting and meeting the different Codes throughout the year talking through ideas between CTSI and the Codes to see where any improvement can be made or if there is any training to be looked at. There was an idea raised for a potential training day in February for Code Sponsors staff members.

3. Feedback from the CCAS Strategy day

Christine Crawley and Leon Livermore were at the strategy day. A Simpson gave the Panel a list of figures that were highlighted in the annual report:-

- 92% customer satisfaction rate with services provided by members
- Over 33,000 code members taking part across 11 code sponsors
- Half a million searches were made using the online directory
- £2.3m compensation recovered
- £83 billion pounds consumer spending

A Simpson went on to tell the Panel that the governance procedures and performance indicator work will be reviewed. The organisations that showed an interest in becoming a Code Sponsor in the past, but didn't for whatever reason will be revisited in the near future.

The Codes Sponsors review showed that the biggest challenge is marketing. This brings up the debate of resources versus growth. Local authorities are a lot more about generating income now and are partnering with Checkatrade and Buy With Confidence which is in competition with Consumer Codes Approval Scheme.

It was said that it is a shame some local trading standards have turned to Checkatrade when CTSI has their own Consumer Codes Scheme. Looking at the benefits CTSI have over other schemes shows that we are bigger and already have the backing of trading standards.

R Hodgkinson asked if it is based on revenue, is this a form of kickback? A Simpson answered yes; we have to compete with Checkatrade who have incredibly large marketing budgets. It is more about compliance now. R Hodgkinson asked for more clarity on what is meant by compliance.

ACTION: A Simpson to go and find out more information on compliance.

I Studd asked if there was a target number for member figures. G Fitzjohn expressed uncertainty as to whether the £2.3 million recovery is correct and whether that is an underestimate.

ACTION: A Simpson to list each different code and their recovery amount.

R Hodgkinson asked what the Panel's purpose is if it is not supporting CTSI properly. A message back to the Board would be clarity on what the remit of the Codes Sponsors Panel is. H McAllister asked what the clear set of objectives are that the group can work to. A Simpson said that he saw the Panel as a group feeding in, rather than as an Exec. He also asked that as the scheme grows, should the panel size increase? Would one person from each code make too large a group? A Review will need to show what size is a good size to be effective.

It was suggested that we need more high street type participants to increase publicity for consumers about the Consumer Codes Scheme. It is about getting those logos out there to raise awareness.

R Hodgkinson asked why would somebody not want people to know they are a Code Sponsor? The Panel can get enthusiastic about it all. It is a possibility that this can be communicated at a training day.

A review between the Panel and CTSI needs to be done regarding the terms of reference. Who will have ownership of this document? We need to create this document and we need to get the public and BIS involved.

4. Code Sponsors Update

A Simpson told the Codes Panel that CTSI are going to be having a meeting with all of the Communications contacts.

It was said that the Communications Group needs to feel official, like they are on a journey that reports back to the Codes Sponsors Panel. What contribution can some marketing teams bring; do any have a particular set of skills they could put forward?

ACTION: M Garnham to communicate with the CTSI Communications team to set a date for the communications meeting with all the Codes.

A discussion was then had about the lack of consumer knowledge about Codes. It was suggested that we need a celebrity champion.

G Fitzjohn raised an idea that Codes should do a certificate like the ATOL certificate as a free download for all members which would then raise awareness both quickly and cheaply. The Panel said that it needs to be clear that the certificate is not an insurance policy. The certificate will be for if there is a problem, the certificate will tell you what you can do. It was also noted that this would be great for auditing and monitoring purposes.

5. Any Other Business

ADR

The Panel asked if it would be possible to join ADR and CCAS audits to reduce costs. M Garnham told the Panel that she was unsure if this would be possible.

ACTION: M Garnham to provide regular ADR updates.

ACTION: A Simpson to speak to Andy Allen to confirm.

Code Sponsors Forum

It was decided that the date for the next Codes Sponsors Forum would be sometime at the end of January 2017.

6. Date for the next meeting

The next meeting will be the end of September with Leon Livermore in attendance. A Doodle Poll will be sent out to the Panel to find a date that works for everyone.

There will also be another meeting in December prior to the Codes Sponsors Forum.

Items for the agenda for the next Code Sponsors Panel Meeting are:

- Planning for Code Sponsors Forum
- Consumer protection following Brexit
- Is the number of people on the Panel sufficient for 19 Codes