

Helen Charlton

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By email

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Dear Helen,

FCA ENGAGEMENT WITH THE FINANCIAL SERVICES CONSUMER PANEL 2025-26

You will recall that we wrote to you around this time last year to set out the areas the FCA expected to prioritise when engaging with the Financial Services Consumer Panel (FSCP) during 2024-25. We are extremely grateful for the Panel's input on those topics and others during the past year. In particular, we welcomed your contributions which have helped the Board shape our [new strategy](#) for the next 5 years, which we published on 25 March, and our [work programme](#) for the coming year, which we published on 8 April.

In our work programme and strategy, we recognise that although the challenges we face continue to grow, it is simply not possible or appropriate for our budget and headcount to do the same. With continued pressures on consumers, firms and markets, and our commitments to support the government's growth agenda as set out in our recent [letter to the Prime Minister](#), it continues to be vital that we focus our efforts to ensure that we achieve the most benefit we can within broadly stable resource levels.

With this in mind, we have reviewed how and where we might get the most value from our Panels during 2025-26 and are writing to the Chairs of all our representative Statutory Panels¹ to set out how we would like to engage.

Priorities for 2025-26

Reflecting our letter to the Prime Minister, we would particularly value the Panel's input on how we can secure an appropriate degree of protection for consumers while also supporting growth. We would wish to prioritise the following policy and operational areas for our engagement with you, subject to unexpected events:

Highest priority

- Advancing the implementation of the “helping consumers” theme of Strategy 25, including further embedding of the Consumer Duty.

High/medium priority

- Further enhance our approach to enforcement investigations under the Integrated Regulatory Model work, focusing on identifying harm across the FCA and delivering timely enforcement outcomes on behalf of consumers – acting more strategically and at pace.
- Progress the development of regulation of the Crypto sector.
- Changes to credit regulation. Subject to necessary next steps from HM Treasury, this will include informing our approach to regulating Deferred Payment Credit and engaging with the reform of the Consumer Credit Act.
- Digital markets, with particular focus on our work on AI, BigTech, Open Banking and digital sludge practices.
- Pensions, particularly work to develop pensions dashboards and improve consumer engagement.
- Exploring how the FCA can provide clarity on the Advice/Guidance boundary in a way that expands the number of consumers who can be helped to make appropriate choices.

Notwithstanding that many of the above areas are also high priorities for the Panel, we fully recognise that you, as a Panel which has an independent voice, also have your own additional priorities on which you will want to engage with the FCA. This includes alerting us to emerging risks/issues from a consumer perspective.

We will prioritise engagement with the FSCP on the areas set out above. However, where there is capacity to do so, we would also value your input on other relevant issues, as appropriate. The Panel Secretariat will be happy to support the Panel to maintain sustainable workloads for its members through effective prioritisation.

Engaging with the FCA

We ask the Panel to operate, as always, as a “critical friend” to the FCA, providing advice and constructive challenge on current and future reform – whether through regulatory reform or policy development or changes to the ways in which the FCA operates.

We ask the FSCP – and will ask our own teams also – to engage on these topics both at a “strategic” level and to gather “on the ground” insights from the consumer perspective, which inform the FCA’s approach to regulation.

We would welcome your input on cross-sector issues from across the whole Panel and on more sector-specific issues from a sub-group of members with more direct relevant expertise. This may include, where appropriate, members from across different Panels.

We will endeavour to engage with you from an early stage in our work wherever possible, to help inform our thinking before we consult more widely. The Panel Secretariat, together with Anthony Monaghan as Consumer Panel sponsor director, will work with the Panel and with relevant FCA teams to plan agendas and deliver our engagement, as part of the wider support it provides.

The role of ExCo and the Board

We expect that the Panel will continue to have access to and engage regularly with the FCA Chair, Board, Chief Executive and senior executives of the FCA, in line with the terms of reference agreed by the Board. A member of ExCo will always endeavour to attend each of your formal meetings.

We ask that you continue to submit a regular “Report to the Board” (which will also be considered by ExCo), which should focus on the two or three most important strategic themes that you wish to bring to the Board’s attention. The Board and ExCo will also welcome sight of your annual report ahead of publication.

We will continue to have periodic Board lunches with the Panel Chairs. We will ensure there is at least an annual meeting between the FCA Chair and each of the Panel Chairs, one-to-one, to discuss the work of the Panel, to reflect on the previous year’s interaction.

Concluding remarks

We look forward to continuing the constructive dialogue and close working relationships that we have built up with the Panel over previous years. We continue to value the advice and challenge from all of our Statutory Panels, which help us deliver our objectives more effectively and efficiently.

Yours sincerely

Ashley Alder

FCA Chair

Nikhil Rathi

FCA Chief Executive