

ECONOMY AND FAIR WORK COMMITTEE

**16th Meeting, 2023 (Session 6), Wednesday
24 May 2023**

Consumer Scotland

Note by the Clerk

Background

1. [Consumer Scotland](#) is the independent statutory body for consumers in Scotland, established by [the Consumer Scotland Act 2020](#) (“the Act”).
2. The Act established Consumer Scotland as a Non-Ministerial Office, accountable to the Scottish Parliament. It covers the public, private, and third sectors, and became operational on 1 April 2022.
3. This is the first opportunity for the Committee to hear from the organisation.

Purpose and Functions

4. Consumer Scotland has six main functions, as set out in the Act—
 - Advocacy and advice
 - Representation
 - Research and investigation
 - Information
 - Recall of goods
 - The Consumer Duty
5. The Act also set out five key areas of focus—
 - Reducing harm to consumers
 - Increasing consumer confidence
 - Encouraging public bodies to address consumer matters
 - Promoting the sustainable consumption of natural resources
 - Advancing inclusion, prosperity, and wellbeing

6. The organisation's core funding comes from the Scottish Government. It also receives some funding for specific advocacy activities in the electricity, gas, post, and water sectors from the levies derived from consumers' bills.
7. Consumer Scotland published its [Strategic Plan](#) and [Work Programme](#) in March 2023.

Witnesses

8. The Committee will hear from—
 - [David Wilson](#), Board Chair;
 - [Sam Ghibaldan](#), Chief Executive;
 - Susan Bomphray, Director of Operations;
 - David Eiser, Director of Analysis; and
 - Douglas White, Director of Policy and Advocacy, Consumer Scotland.

**Economy and Fair Work Committee Clerks
19 May 2023**