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Economy and Fair Work Committee
Scottish Parliament
Holyrood
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31 March 2022

I am writing to advise you that the new Scottish non-ministerial office; Consumer Scotland, will formally vest on Friday 1 April 2022, and adopt its powers as set out in the Consumer Scotland Act 2020.

Consumer Scotland will represent the views of consumers and take an evidence-based approach to tackling the most serious issues of consumer harm in Scotland. Although Consumer Scotland will legally vest on 1 April 2022, the body will not be operational until late Summer 2022 following a phased implementation period. The Chair of the Consumer Scotland Board; David Wilson, will write to the Committee with more detailed information.

Consumer Scotland will have the general function of providing consumer advocacy and advice with a view to:

- reducing harm to consumers in Scotland;
- increasing confidence among consumers in Scotland in dealing with businesses that supply goods and services to consumers;
- increasing the extent to which consumer matters are taken into account by public authorities in Scotland, including introducing a new Consumer Duty;
- promoting
 - sustainable consumption of natural resources, and
 - other environmentally sustainable practices in relation to the acquisition, use and disposal of goods by consumers in Scotland
- otherwise advancing inclusion, fairness, prosperity and other aspects of wellbeing in Scotland.

Once operational, Consumer Scotland will also work with existing consumer organisations, industry, public bodies and the Scottish Government while conducting investigations into the most serious issues of consumer harm in Scotland. Stakeholder engagement will be key to the work of Consumer Scotland and the body is committed to building on and complementing the work of existing organisations, by working in partnership to promote the interests of Scottish consumers.

I'm sure you will agree that this is more important than ever, given the current cost of living crisis facing households in Scotland.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of Consumer Scotland, David Wilson.

I hope you find this information helpful.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Arthur', written in a cursive style.

TOM ARTHUR