



Competition and Markets Authority: Proposed Reforms QSD on 8 May 2019

This briefing identifies relevant reports and useful documents, including recent parliamentary materials and press articles, which may be of assistance to Members in preparing for the following debate:

Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town to ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the letter from the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy dated 21 February which sets out the CMA's proposals on legislative and institutional reforms to safeguard the interests of consumers and to maintain and improve public confidence in markets.

Copies of the materials are available for collection from the Library.

Key Information

- Competition and Markets Authority, '[Letter from Lord Tyrie, Chairman of the CMA, to Greg Clark, Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy](#)', 21 February 2019; and '[Summary of Proposals from Andrew Tyrie, CMA Chair, to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy](#)', 25 February 2019

Full text of the letter from Lord Tyrie and a summary of the Competition and Markets Authority's (CMA) proposed reforms to improve consumer confidence in markets, which included: a new statutory duty on the CMA and the courts (including the Competition Appeal Tribunal) to make the economic interests of consumers paramount in their decision-making; a statutory duty on the CMA to conduct its investigations swiftly; new powers for the CMA to undertake market studies and investigations and to order legally-binding remedies based on their findings; reforms to corporate governance structures and greater protections for whistleblowers; and removal of some CMA legal powers, such as responsibility for licensing and appeals decisions and the investigation of criminal cartel activity.

- Competition and Markets Authority, '[Reforms Proposed to Put Consumers at the Heart of UK Competition Regime](#)', 25 February 2019

Press release from the launch event of the CMA's proposed reforms, at which Lord Tyrie stated "these far reaching proposals [...] will enable the CMA to act more rapidly and put the consumer first" and Greg Clark stated that the reforms were an "encouraging step in the right direction and should now form part of the proposals on which [the Government] will consult in the competition review".

- Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, '[Modernising Consumer Markets: Consumer Green Paper](#)', 11 April 2018, Cm 9595, pp 6–8; and Competition and Markets Authority, '[CMA Response to Government Consultation](#)', July 2018, pp 3–5

Introduction to the Government's Modernising Consumer Markets consultation and summary of the response from the CMA, which provided the background to the CMA's proposals of February 2019. The Government has not yet published a response to the consultation.

Parliamentary Debate, Statements and Questions

- House of Commons, '[Written Question: Competition and Markets Authority](#)', 18 March 2019, 231536
- House of Commons, '[Written Question: Trading Standards](#)', 26 March 2019, 232583
- House of Commons, '[Written Question: Consumers](#)', 26 November 2018, 193477

Press Articles and Comment

- Carl Mortished, '[Competition Watchdog Is In a Lone Battle Outside the EU](#)', *London Evening Standard*, 6 March 2019
- Ben Martin, '[Competition Watchdog Bids to Sharpen Its Teeth](#)', *Times* (£), 26 February 2019
- Which?, '[Which? Response to CMA Consumer and Competition Reform Proposals](#)', 25 February 2019
- Barney Thompson and George Parker, '[Competition Watchdog Wants to Be Consumers' Champion](#)', *Financial Times* (£), 25 February 2019
- James Booth, '[Lord Tyrie Says Consumers Must Be Put at Heart of Competition Law Regime](#)', *City A.M.*, 25 February 2019

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