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Annual Report

All-Party Parliamentary Group on Customer Service

Reporting Year: 10 December 2024 – 9 December 2025

1. About the Group

Name: All-Party Parliamentary Group on Customer Service

Category: Subject group

Reporting year: 10 December 2024 – 9 December 2025

Secretariat: The Institute of Customer Service (www.instituteofcustomerservice.com)

Statement of Purpose

To raise awareness and understanding of customer service, including its impact on economic growth. To improve public services, business performance and employability through customer service skills training and provide an improved outcome for customers and citizens.

2. Officers

The following officers served during the reporting year:

Role	Name	Party
Chair & Registered Contact	Connor Rand MP	Labour
Officer (Co-chair)	Baroness Stowell of Beeston	Conservative
Officer	Esther McVey MP	Conservative
Officer	Lord Sahota	Labour

3. Work of the Group

The APPG on Customer Service was established in the current Parliament with its Inaugural General Meeting on 10 December 2024. This annual report covers the group's first reporting year from that date to 9 December 2025.

Inaugural General Meeting – 10 December 2024

The group held its Inaugural General Meeting on 10 December 2024 on the parliamentary estate, at which the four officers were elected and the group's registration was subsequently submitted to the Registry Office.

Discussed the future work of the APPG, with a focus on worker protection, particularly focussed on those in front-line customer service roles, AI and regulating for better service.

Meetings and Activities During the Reporting Year

APPG on Customer Service – Protecting Public Facing Workers Roundtable

Date: 12 February 2025

Venue: Room W3, Westminster Hall, Houses of Parliament

Overview

This roundtable focused on the increasing levels of abuse and violence faced by public-facing workers across sectors, and on how legislation, employer action, and regulatory change could better protect staff.

Key Topics Discussed

- Rising abuse and violence across retail, hospitality, transport, banking, and call centre sectors.
- The role of the forthcoming **Policing and Crime Bill**, and calls for a **standalone offence** covering violence and abuse toward all public-facing workers.
- Sector-specific challenges:
 - *Hospitality*: dine-and-dash incidents, staff facing multi-customer violence.
 - *Banking*: long-term abuse patterns, mental health impacts, property damage.
 - *Transport*: fare dodging, lone working, anti-social behaviour.
- Impact of abuse on **recruitment, retention, morale, and economic costs**.
- Need for **zero-tolerance policies**, better training, and improved reporting mechanisms.
- Importance of employer responsibility alongside legislative reform.

Speakers (selected)

- **Connor Rand MP** – Chair
- **Jo Causon**, CEO, Institute of Customer Service
- **Eric Leenders**, UK Finance
- **Maryam Eslamdoust**, TSSA
- **Carol Knowles**, Accord Union
- **Allen Simpson**, UKHospitality
- **Baroness Natalie Bennett**, **Baroness Tina Stowell**

Attendance

Approx. **18 attendees** plus apologies.

APPG on Customer Service – Regulated Sectors: The Role of Customer Service Roundtable

Date: 4 June 2025

Venue: Room N, Portcullis House, Houses of Parliament

Overview

This roundtable explored how regulators across energy, finance, telecoms, and social housing can balance growth, innovation, and strong customer outcomes—while ensuring regulation remains proportionate and future-focused.

Key Topics Discussed

- The balance between **economic growth** and **regulatory oversight**.
- How regulatory frameworks (e.g., **Consumer Duty**, **Independent Football Regulator**) can improve customer outcomes.
- Cross-sector comparison of customer service standards; avoiding box-ticking cultures.
- Using data and satisfaction measures (e.g., **UKCSI**, Ofcom service reports, Tenant Satisfaction Measures).
- Challenges in energy, telecoms, and finance:
 - Energy price pressures and customer dissatisfaction.
 - Full-fibre rollout, telecoms complaint mechanisms.
 - Cultural change required for customer-centricity in finance.
- Need for **proportionate**, agile regulation allowing firms flexibility while protecting customers.
- Ensuring vulnerable and digitally excluded groups are supported.

Speakers (selected)

- **Connor Rand MP** – Chair
- **Esther McVey MP, Lord Sahota**
- **Jo Causon**, Institute of Customer Service
- **Will Perry**, Regulator of Social Housing
- **Christina Luna-Esteban**, Ofcom
- **Joanna Legg**, FCA
- **Beth Martin**, Ofgem
- Senior representatives from **E.ON, EDF, Phoenix Group**

Attendance

Approx. **22 attendees** plus apologies.

APPG on Customer Service – Regulated Sectors: AI in a Customer Roundtable

Date: 3 September 2025

Venue: Cancelled due to industrial action on the parliamentary estate

Thematic Focus

During its first reporting year, the group focused on establishing its presence in the new Parliament and identifying its priority areas of inquiry. The group's work has been informed by the following key considerations:

- The significance of customer service to the UK economy, with 78% of UK GDP generated by the service sector and over 70% of UK employees dealing directly with customers
- The growing impact of artificial intelligence on customer service delivery, including questions of trust, transparency, data privacy and the maintenance of human contact
- The role of government and Parliament in ensuring effective regulation of AI as it is adopted across customer-facing sectors
- The importance of skills development and training for the customer service workforce, particularly in the context of technological change

Forward Programme

The group has planned its AGM and a substantive meeting for 25 March 2026, at which The Institute of Customer Service will present findings from its research “Hype or Reality? How AI is impacting customer service, productivity and governance”. The meeting will also hear from senior business leaders on their organisations’ experience of AI adoption in customer-facing operations.

The group intends to meet three to four times per year, with each meeting considering a different aspect of customer service or sector of the economy, and including presentations from industry representatives and group discussion.

4. Secretariat

The Institute of Customer Service acts as the group's secretariat. The Institute provides policy support, suggests topics for meetings, helps to organise meetings, prepares and circulates agendas and minutes, and generally keeps members informed of the group's activities.

The value of the secretariat services provided by The Institute of Customer Service during the reporting year has been registered in accordance with the rules.

We confirm the value band for the secretariat services provided during this reporting year (10 December 2024 – 9 December 2025) with costs of contractors and freelance staff in the £10,501–£12,000 band.

5. Financial Summary

The group's income and expenditure statement for the reporting year 10 December 2024 to 9 December 2025 has been prepared and is presented separately for approval at the AGM. A summary is provided below.

Name of APPG	APPG for Customer Service
Period covered by this statement	10/12/24-09/12/25

£

A. Balance brought forward from previous year:

nil

B. Income received during the year:

i. Membership subscriptions (parliamentarians)

nil

ii. Monetary donations (including external subscriptions and sponsorship)

nil

iii. Trading income

nil

iv. Interest received

nil

v. Other (please explain)

nil

TOTAL income

0

C. Expenditure during the year:

i. Employment costs (salaries, NI, pensions costs)

nil

ii. Costs of contractors and freelance staff	10,501-12,000
iii. Visits and events (UK)	nil
iv. Visits and events (abroad)	nil
v. Cost of generating income	nil
vi. Office and communications costs	nil
vii. Other (please explain)	nil
TOTAL expenditure	10,501-12,000

D. Balance carried forward (A+ total B-total C)	(10,501-12,000)
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E. Value of benefits in kind received from each source during the reporting year (in bands of up to £1,500; £1,501-£3,000; £3,001 to £4,500; £4,501 to £6,000 etc) Please itemise according to the source and band	
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6. Membership

The group maintains an up-to-date list of both its parliamentary and external members, which is published on The Institute's website available on request. The group has met the minimum requirement of 20 members of either House.

7. Due Diligence Statement on Foreign Government Funding

In accordance with the rules governing All-Party Parliamentary Groups that have received registrable financial benefits exceeding £1,500, the officers of the APPG on Customer Service confirm the following:

- The group has not received any funding, whether directly or indirectly, from a foreign government during the reporting year 10 December 2024 to 9 December 2025.
- The group's secretariat, The Institute of Customer Service, is a UK-based independent professional membership body. It is not funded by, nor does it act on behalf of, any foreign government.
- The officers have undertaken due diligence to satisfy themselves that no benefit received by the group, including the provision of secretariat services, has been funded directly or indirectly by a foreign government.

The four officers of the group are jointly and severally liable for compliance with these requirements.

Approved at the Annual General Meeting on: 24 June 2026

Signed: 

Chris Evans MP

Chair & Registered Contact, APPG on Customer Service

Date: 13 / 07 / 2026