



Advisory Group Meeting - 28.04.2021

Members

- Andy Agathangelou, Founder, Transparency Task Force; Governor, Pensions Policy Institute; Chair, Secretariat Committee, APPG on Pension Scams; Chair, Secretariat Committee, APPG on Personal Banking and Fairer Financial Services; Chair, Violation Tracker UK Advisory Board
- Charlotte Ringer, Head of Fundraising and Outreach, The Transparency Task Force
- David Masters, Director at Lansons
- David Pitt-Watson, Visiting Fellow, Cambridge Judge Business School
- David Weeks, Co-Chair, AMNT
- Gavin Starks, Founder, D Gen
- Heather Buchanan, Director of Policy, All-Party Parliamentary Group on Fair Business Banking
- JB Beckett, UK Director, Association of Professional Fund Investors
- John Howard, Director, Consumer Insights; Chair
- Steve Kenzie, Executive Director, UN Global Compact UK
- Sue Flood, Leader of the Ark Pension Scam Group, A Leader of the Transparency Task Force's Anti-Scams Special Interest Group, Director of Reborn Recycling
- Sue Lewis, Trustee Director, The People's Pension

Advance Fundraising Strategy

We have created a Financial Sustainability Strategy Group, including:

Greg LeRoy
Sue Flood
Sandy Finlayson
Mike O'Dwyer
Larry Elford
Noha Al Afifi
Heidi Fisher
Gareth Hart
Andy Agathangelou
Charlotte Ringer

During April, we applied for the RSA Catalyst Awards and Impact Shaker Awards

Charlotte's fundraising database, which includes:

- Research on a multitude of potential grant-givers and programmes, providing relevant information on eligibility, suitability, deadlines, etc.
- A brain-storming area where we can plan our new projects for each TTF group
- Crowdfunding ideas and platforms
- Potential Partnerships and memberships – creating new contacts and reaching out to them
- Similar organisations and their funders
- Previous fund-givers

Moving forward, we want to focus more on the pitch for these grant proposals.

The more applications we apply for, the better we get at this.

We understand that different organisations want different pitch, similarly we would choose to back different TTF groups dependant on their suitability.

On Charlotte's database, there is a 'suitability' column which focuses on how aligned our values are, so that we are not applying to receive support from the wrong organisations. This led to an **IDEA**:

We should write a policy position on our website which illustrates our values and who we seek support from, as we do not welcome the support of organisations who may wish to abuse or exploit the relationship with us to achieve their agenda at the expense of ours.

Referring to the structure as to who would be a suitable candidate, is there an interplay here between those on Violation Tracker being not suitable as potential funders for the TTF?

Yes - organisations that behave so badly that they end up in Violation Tracker database are very unlikely to be the kind of organisations that we would think to go to get money from

We need a fool-proof protector from supporters who could end up on the VT database:

- Some sort of "morality" clause in any sponsorship agreement could address these concerns, including our standpoint e.g. we will not give the money back but we will remove their logos etc
- We need money so that we have the ability to fight back when we disrupt larger companies and they start to come for us. Therefore, we need a long-term fundraising strategy that does not involve corporate, because you both have the potential friction between getting support from corporate donors who are later being picked up on the violation tracker.
- We want to avoid the awkward situation of organisation X giving us money and then organisation X ending up on VT.
- We want to be able to walk away from that relationship if this occurs.

[Becoming a charity](#)

If and when we get to looking at a more formally constituted board, we will need to bare that takeover risk in mind. Especially in the processes around the nomination and voting for

trustees, because that would then become probably the biggest risk in that a powerful organisation, depending on the voting process could mobilise a lot of people to get favourable to their views into the board.

Another takeover risk, to be considered in any future governance model, is how Trustees to the TTF Board will be appointed. A too democratic process might open the door for a powerful organisation to mobilise votes to stack the Board. Of course, a not democratic enough process has problems too.

Board of trustees is the most important as could be the biggest risk, therefore we need to make sure that when we interview, that there isn't any conflicts of interests

It is natural enough for an organisation at this stage in its development to have this type of exposure. However, it makes sense to explore mitigating this risk in longer term planning.

Food for thought for Andy: Succession planning and key man assurance policy

Violation Tracker

Has the backing of both the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the Joffe Charitable Trust – From this, TTF will be allocated some of this for our promotional work.

We ran a meeting last March at this build back better event to showcase VT in the UK – indicated that a consortium is also going to be putting money into the project
Violation Tracker UK Advisory board that Andy chairs

May get the Green, Labour and Conservative to become users of VT, so if we can leverage these political connections all sorts of possibilities are opened up

VT is a transparency machine and Andy wants it to do just that, so if that means that from time to time it imbalances organisations who are in the public eye and have done something to end up on VT, then so be it.

We would rather stay true to mission, which is shining a bright light on all kinds of misconduct in organisations, even if it is awkward for us to highlight this.

There is a danger from stepping from Violation to Vilification – presentation is so important:

- Messaging needs to be careful and constructive
- 'Naming and shaming' with factual information
- A factor in finding a balance is how far back in time the reporting goes.
- The further back in time, the greater the risk of tipping into "unfairness", as the company may well have transformed since then and that nuance doesn't come through in the tracker.
- What we are expressing is something that is really business friendly.

- If we present things properly, you'll be able to see the facts about who's done well and who's done badly and the reason that we want to present these facts is so that everybody does well.
- We all know that companies can't be held to account properly unless we've got some facts on the table
- If you get into the language of vilification, then you end up in a difficult position.

Where then covering a specific offender in a Symposia then perhaps invite offender spokesperson to talk about lessons, current works?

Free to use for everybody unless you want to buy the entire data set, however the idea is creating it as a public good.

- How to monetize? Subscription basis?

Andy now has a valid reason to email the chief executive of every financial organisation in the UK to say:

- Violation Tracker is going to be happening in the UK
- This is what it is,
- We'd like to talk to you about the aims and objectives behind it, etc,

This is an excellent door opener, as no PR professional in any financial organisation would be insane to not have a conversation with us about this

Financial Ombudsman Service; source of data for violation tracker?

[APPG Update](#)

Pension Scams

- They have done a wonderful five-month investigation into pension scams and they published a report where the government needs to respond by the 25th of May.
- The report is full of lots and lots of great ideas, and TTF was mentioned 5 or 6 times as we gave loads of evidence all kinds of ways, both directly written down, videos, oral advice to Parliament etc.
- We're going to be running an event about the government's response on all of this: The main idea being to create campaign momentum to basically get the government to take up as many of the recommendations as possible.

Personal Banking and Fairer Financial Services

This APPG has the view of the Financial Conduct Authority isn't doing a very good job, and they've issued a couple of press releases to that effect.

They've decided to carry out a call for evidence about the FCA and they've asked the Secretariat, ie the TTF to conduct that call for evidence. So we are going to be providing an opportunity for different cohorts of people to provide feedback about their interaction with the FCA.

The cohorts are:

- those who've been pensions or investments scam victims,
- those who are victims of other kinds of scams,
- whistle-blowers,
- people who've been exploited by the banks through things like interest rate
- and other key stakeholders, people like for example, Anthony Stansfeld - the Police Crime Commissioner

We're going to be doing this exercise over the next few months in getting the information to APPG, who subsequently might decide to open a debate in Parliament about whether the FCA is fit for purpose.

Andy had a meeting with the chairman and the chief executive of the FCA in January to talk about what TTF do. Our job being the secretary of the APPG is simply to collect the evidence and give it to the APPG and we'll do that as effectively as we can.

[Financial Services Consumer Panel](#)

<https://www.fs-cp.org.uk/>

Who is on the panel: Membership of the Financial Services Consumer Panel is mainly made up of representatives of the various sectors within which regulated financial businesses operate, often based on nominations made by trade associations rather than 'consumers'.

Not true to purpose – it is captured. This means that the FSCP is unlikely to work well as it has the wrong sort of people in it.

Idea for TTF – Shadow consumer panel

PR and Media – Created a strategy group which meet monthly for one hour to discuss PR opportunities and how to execute them.

Annual Report – Lots of work has gone into this and it should be completely finished within the next couple of weeks

Events – Since we have moved over the subscription member model, we have had a healthy increase in the number of attendees.

CPD Model is now in place.

Volunteering network is fast growing at about one new recruit a week, which is excellent as we have a variety of very accomplished people helping us in different areas.

Ambassadors – We currently have about 300 Ambassadors. When we invite someone, we make sure that they align strongly with what we are about.

Next meeting dates

On Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/2281276828>

Wednesday, July 7th, 6:00pm to 7:30pm

Wednesday, October 6th, 6:00pm to 7:30pm