

The CoPSO Conference – 28th March 2019

Chairman, James Sherwood-Rogers, welcomed members to this year's event at the Victory Services Club in London and reflected on CoPSO's achievements which started with the creation of a trade body to set industry standards over 15 years ago. We now have recognition as an important stakeholder by Government, HMLR, The Environment Agency, OS, HMRC, ICO amongst others. The recognition of the Search Code by mortgage lenders and the Law Society in their Lenders' Handbook, the introduction of compliance notes to provide clarity for Search Code Subscribers and the introduction of Specialist Search Insurance on regulated personal searches and improved access to data at lower cost and with greater speed from local authorities are also key achievements to date. James then went on to say that CoPSO has now started to look forward to the next stage with the strategy work, covered in the afternoon session.

We were then delighted to welcome back Matt Prior, from the MHCLG on *Improving the Home Buying and Selling Process* and he gave an update on the work carried out following the Government's Call for Evidence. This then tied in nicely with our next speaker, PCCB Board member and property expert, Kate Faulkner. Kate is also Chair of the Home Buying and Selling Group which meets regularly with a growing number of stakeholders, including MHCLG and CoPSO.

Our next speaker was Rob Stevens, Head of Property Risk at Nationwide, who gave an insight into the work that Nationwide is doing to provide more information, speed up transactions and reduce risk to give a better experience for customers.

After a quick refreshment break, we welcomed our last speaker, Mark Hayward, Chief Executive NAEA PropertyMark. Mark gave a fast-paced update on the importance of information upfront and then joined all the speakers for a Q&A session before lunch. Thanks also to Jamie and Mark from HM Land Registry who were on hand to answer questions and demonstrate the latest software.

Our facilitator for the afternoon session was Angela Newton, who highlighted the strategy work the CoPSO Exec has been doing so far, including looking at the mission and vision of CoPSO going forwards. Other areas include the new challenges that the industry faces – the role of data, trends towards insurance and innovation. All attendees were encouraged to answer questions by voting via an app on various questions raised around priorities, focus for the future and regulation and the results were shared on screen. There were several breakout sessions where members could unleash their hidden artist talents put their views forward.

With regulation in mind, PCCB Chairman, Kate Davies, and Chief Inspector, Lorna Bown, were welcomed to the stage and gave an update on the strategy work that the PCCB has been doing. Actions already completed include inspection of new firms within 3 months, a full review and documentation of processes, introduction of a half-yearly audit check and improved transparency of outcomes reported to the PCCB Board and redacted information to the CoPSO Exec. Work is also progressing on a 'Welcome Pack' for new members, lessons learned process, SLAs, review of and change in format of Compliance Notes and creating more opportunities for Code Compliance Officers to get involved. Both Kate and Lorna were around all afternoon to meet and chat to members.

James summarised the day and thanked Angela and all the speakers for the making the conference such an interesting day. The outcomes and next stages will be decided by the Exec at their next meeting on 1st May but for any member not able to make it on the day, the workstreams are:-

- 1 Setting the Agenda
- 2 Stakeholder Engagement
- 3 Compliance
- 4 Processes, Governance and Communications
- 5 Membership Structure

If you would like to be involved in any of the above, please contact emma@copso.org.uk and she will put you in touch with the member leading the workstream.

Discussions went on into the evening with a drinks reception where silhouette artist, Alison Russell, chatted to guests whilst cutting portraits in profile in only a few minutes. After dinner, magician - Paul Martin, a firm favourite amongst CoPSO members, entertained with his mix of comedy, interactive mind-reading and latest tricks.

We would like to thank FCI for sponsoring the conference and entertainment.

Our speakers have kindly agreed to make their presentations available to download and they are available by logging in and clicking on the 'Resources' tab of the PCCB website.





