



Treasury Committee

House of Commons, Committee Office, London SW1A 0AA

Tel 020 7219 5769 Email treascom@parliament.uk Website www.parliament.uk/treascom

Microsoft
Via email

5 November 2021

Online advertising and economic crime

The Treasury Select Committee recently held an evidence session with Google, Amazon, Facebook and eBay as part of our inquiry into Economic Crime. After the session I wrote these companies asking for further information. My letters and the responses have been published by the Committee and can be found on the [Committee webpages](#).

The Committee is now seeking similar information from a wider range of companies, including Microsoft, particularly about the approach taken to prevent the fraudulent online advertising of financial products as well as other measures to combat online fraud.

I would therefore be grateful if you could reply to the following questions:

Expenditure by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and other public bodies on your platform to protect consumers

- How much has the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) paid Microsoft in each of the last three years (2019, 2020 and 2021) to warn users of your online channels about unauthorised advertisements and user-generated content?
- What arrangements, if any, has Microsoft entered into to compensate the FCA for the costs of that advertising?
- Have any other public sector bodies paid Microsoft for advertisements alerting users to risks from online financial fraud? If so, how much has each of those bodies paid?

Data transfer to identify and prevent fraud and other economic crime

- What data do you transfer between your platform, other platforms and law enforcement agencies to help identify fraud and other economic crime?
- What legal or other barriers exist to hinder data transfer which could help to identify and prevent fraud and other economic crime?

Advertising policies for financial services

- Does your advertising policy require firms advertising financial services on your platform to show that they are authorised by the FCA? If not, do you have plans to amend that policy, and from what date?

Policy on promotion of tax avoidance schemes

- What policy do you have regarding the promotion of tax avoidance and evasion on your platform through advertising or as user-generated content?
- What controls do you have in place to prevent your platform hosting the advertisement of products used for the promotion of tax avoidance schemes and tax evasion in the UK?

Revenue from unauthorised firms advertising of financial services

- How much revenue has your platform earned in each of the last three years from paid-for advertising for financial services offered by firms which are not authorised by the FCA?
- What is your estimate of the cost to your company of changing your advertising policy so as to require firms advertising financial services on your platform to be authorised by the FCA, to bring you into line with the policy change made by Google on 6 September 2021?

Meetings with government departments about economic crime

- What meetings have you held in 2019, 2020 or 2021 with Government departments, including the Home Office, Treasury, HMRC and DCMS about online fraud and financial crime?

Compensation of customers for financial fraud

- What policy do you have for compensating users of your platform who become victims of fraud as a result of advertising or user-generated content on your platform?
- Have you ever compensated any customer for fraud or other financial loss? If so, how many customers have received compensation, and could you please give an indication of levels of compensation.

In line with the Committee's usual policy, I expect to place this letter and your response in the public domain. I would be grateful for a reply by 19 November 2021.

With best wishes,



Rt Hon. Mel Stride MP
Chair of the Treasury Committee