

Summary Note of Retail Market Opening Management Group meeting on 16th August 2016

Present

Sarah Hendry (Chair, Defra), Cathryn Ross (Ofwat), Adam Cooper (Ofwat), Tim Griffiths (Ofwat), Amanda Rooney (Ofwat), Gillian Tanfield (Ofwat), Ben Jeffs (MOSL), Paul Scott (MOSL), Holly Yates (Defra), Sebastian Catovsky (Defra), Jess Keedy (Defra, secretariat).

Apologies: Steve Lyon, MOSL; Tim Griffiths and Helen Robinson-Gordon, Ofwat.

Programme update

The management group reviewed the risk register and made amendments to risk 7 to reflect the importance of making rapid progress on the customer communications strategy and to risk 2 to highlight the need for an increased regulatory focus on securing the level playing field ahead of market opening.

The group noted some small changes to the level 1 plan and critical path and agreed publication of the core programme documentation.

Communications, engagement and customer awareness

Progress on implementation of the communications strategy and customer awareness was discussed in-depth. The management group agreed that a collaborative approach with market participants was essential, noting that there was broad support for independent, consistent and neutral information about the market. A further workshop with companies' communications directors was proposed to jointly explore ideas for a national campaign.

Scenarios and contingency planning

The management group discussed contingency planning and identified a number of potential scenarios requiring further work. The group noted that at present they could see no material barriers to market opening in April 2017.

Market and company readiness

The management group considered the most up to date Market and Company Readiness information and noted a positive trend in terms of the self-assessments supplied by market participants. There was a discussion about the management information the group would require on readiness in the future and on the process for escalating any concerns.

Assurance Group

The management group discussed the content of the first Chair's letter from the Assurance Group.

CEO workshop

The management group planned the agenda for the next CEO workshop taking place on 4 October (date tbc).