

Summary Note of Retail Market Opening Management Group meeting on 21st July 2016

Present

Sarah Hendry (Chair, Defra), Cathryn Ross (Ofwat), Adam Cooper (Ofwat), Tim Griffiths (Ofwat), Amanda Rooney (Ofwat), Gillian Tanfield (Ofwat), Helen Robinson-Gordon (Ofwat), Steve Lyon (MOSL), Patrick de Souza (MOSL), Gordon Hedge (MOSL), Holly Yates (Defra), Jess Keedy (Defra, secretariat), Michael Yip (Defra intern and observer).

Apologies: Ben Jeffs and Martin Silcock, MOSL.

Programme update

The management group noted and welcomed the return of MOSL's work programme to an Amber status and the reassuring message that MOSL cannot currently foresee any delay to shadow market opening.

The group also welcomed Defra's completion of the work to make the Retail Exits Regulations, and noted recent company activity and announcements made in the press about intentions to exit.

The group agreed the suggested changes to the risk and issues register summarised on the programme dashboard, and highlighted a number of areas to review at its next meeting. The group discussed and agreed the importance of reflecting level-playing field issues as we move towards market opening.

The group agreed publication of the programme dashboard, level 1 plan, critical path and risk register.

Communications, engagement and customer awareness

The management group received an update on recent communications and engagement activities and discussed the valuable part to be played by a national campaign in raising customer awareness.

The group were pleased to note that the independent review report and the programme response would be published over the coming days.

Scenarios and contingency planning

The management group had a broad discussion about the work in train with the PMG to identify and explore possible scenarios that might require the group to implement a particular contingency plan, agreeing that this work would continue to be a key focus at its next meetings.

Market and company readiness

Following on from the discussion of the May market report at its last meeting, the management group talked through a draft 'timeline of readiness information' compiled by the PMG, agreeing it was a useful tool. From the information available to date, the group noted the positive progress companies were making and the confidence that this gave in terms of readiness.

AOB

Sarah Hendry gave a brief update on changes to the ministerial team at Defra following the referendum and reassured the management group that the wider political changes would not affect the work of the Open Water programme.