

**Minutes of the Office of Fair Trading Board Meeting**

**Thursday 7 December 2006**

**Present**

Philip Collins (Chairman)  
John Fingleton (CEO)  
Lord Blackwell  
Richard Whish  
Rosalind Wright

**Apologies**

Allan Asher  
Jonathan May

**OFT Staff**

Brian McHenry  
Bart Smith  
Vincent Smith  
Christine Wade

**Executive Office**

Francesca Seymour (Board Secretary)  
Erik Wilson

**Item 1: Minutes from the last Board meeting (2 November)  
(OFT(06)10<sup>th</sup> minutes)**

Subject to minor changes, the minutes were accepted as a true record.

**Matters arising**

Non - Executive recruitment

Eleven candidates are being interviewed for these posts in the week commencing 11 December.

Quadrilateral meeting - Competition Stocktake

The Secretary of State has given his approval to a consultation towards legislation.

Airports

The publication date of the OFT report is 2 December.

## **Item 2: ExCo Report**

The Executive provided the Board with key updates on their respective areas:

### **CEO**

Farepak

The CEO will be writing to the Secretary of State in the next few days on Farepak. We will bring out the relevance to the DTI proposals for consumer redress - this is a situation where redress would be better than ex ante regulation – and focus on the position of consumers as creditors.

Beagle

The principles of the new structure have been agreed, and are gradually being brought in practice. ExCo is assisting the Prioritisation Committee (PriCo) on what work needs to continue, and what needs to cease.

Promotion standards and approaches are being brought into line across the office, with plans for an internal G7 to G6 board in January. There will be the need to advertise some posts externally. This process, and subsequent recruitment and promotion rounds, will continue for some months.

The cost of the move to open plan will come to the Board in due course. The Board noted that Facilities Management and the IT team had done a great job in getting everyone back to work so quickly.

Comprehensive Spending Review 07 (CSR 07)

Negotiations with HM Treasury (HMT) continue.

### **Chief Operating Officer**

Promod

The Board noted that the anticipated 'go live' date was now 5 February, although the picture will be clearer come January. The delay has been caused due to further problems with data migration.

## **Assistant Chief Executive**

Local Better Regulation Office (LBRO)

The LBRO is now to be part of the Better Regulation Executive (BRE). The work is being led by Hugh McNeil of BRE. Adverts for a Chair will be placed in January and he/she will be appointed during the Spring, and the LBRO Board will be appointed in the Summer.

## **General Counsel**

Magnetic Jewellery

This matter has now been settled.

Vance Miller

This is a good example of partnership working with the TSS.

## **Director of Communications**

A new strategic voice for the OFT is being developed. This will come to the Board in the New Year.

The Board noted that the Competition Commission's report on Home Credit had been published.

### **Item 3: OFT/TSS programme of joint action**

There are two themes to the programme: partnership and funding. The Board noted that our relationship with the Better Regulation Executive is good, and we will be working more with it in the future.

A draft proposal on outputs will be ready by the end of March. TSS outcomes form part of the Annual Plan, and we need to think about how these can add value to other parts of the office. The team is talking to the evaluation team to work out the best way to measure outcomes from this work.

### **Item 4: Output delivery as set out in the 06/07 Annual Plan**

Sarah Kaye updated the Board orally on progress against each objective in the Annual Plan. With some exceptions, principally as a result of the change programme, all are on target for completion by the end of March, and in the Annual Report. The Board was advised that following the NAO review we are obliged to report on performance against competition targets in the Annual Report.

The Board welcomed this useful update, and asked for a further update in February.

**Item 5: Current case**

The Board was updated on progress on a current case.

**Item 6: Any other business**

Staffing issues

The Board was advised that Jonathan May's appointment to the Board will come into effect on receipt of his appointment letter from Secretary of State.

Executive Director and Senior Director posts

Four candidates will be interviewed on 15 January for this post. KPMG is leading on the Senior Director recruitment.

Papers below the line

**Item 7: Scottish representation**

The Board agreed the proposal in this paper.

**Item 8: Management accounting information**

The Board noted the information provided for the six months ending 31 October.

**Item 9: Promod update**

The Board noted the content of this information paper, which had been updated by the COO in his oral report.

**Francesca Seymour**  
**Secretary to the OFT Board**  
**11 December 2006**