

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF THE
ISLE OF MAN OFFICE OF FAIR TRADING HELD ON 29TH FEBRUARY 2024 AT 9.30 AM
IN THE 'SILVERDALE' BOARDROOM, THIE SLIEAU WHALLIAN, ST JOHNS**

	TO PUBLISH	ACTION
PRESENT	Mr T S Glover MHK, Chairman Mr M J Bathgate, Member Mr L Wong, Member Mr B Murphy, Member	
SUPPORTED BY	Ms V McLauchlan, Director of OFT Mr J R Peet, Head of OFT Mr M M Smith, Senior Trading Standards Officer Mr N R Taylor, Secretary to the Board	
2024 02/01	CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS Members and officers considered agenda items in which they had interests or may have been conflicted. None were identified.	-
2024 02/02	MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS HELD ON 25TH JANUARY 2024 The Minutes of the meeting of 25 th January 2024 were reviewed, agreed, and signed by the Chairman as true records of proceedings.	-
2024 02/03	MATTERS ARISING The Board Actions Update and Agenda Planner dated 25 th February 2024 was noted. <u>VICE-CHAIR – 2024/01/03</u> The vacant post was discussed. <u>FUEL LEAK – 2024/01/16</u> This matter was still under investigation. (See also AOB 2024/02/14).	

<p>2024 02/04</p>	<p>ISLE OF MAN ENERGY</p> <p>Responses in regard to various queries raised at the January meeting were noted.</p> <p>Complaints being received by the OFT about billing issues had reduced to a minimum. There had been recent instances of duplication of Direct Debits, but these had been reasonably quickly resolved.</p> <p>IOM Energy had been advised to update its 'Vulnerable Customer' criteria in light of The Vulnerability Order. It appeared that this was to be enforced by the police. It was noted that OFGEM had different criteria to the Order, but the Cabinet Office had been cognisant of this in its drafting. The criteria were to be circulated to Members.</p> <p>In regard to the calorific value of LPG, it had been explained that natural gas had a variable calorific range, whereas LPG didn't, as it was a manufactured product.</p> <p>It had been queried why bottled cooking gas was so expensive. The production process and additional parties added to the cost. Bottled cooking gas was not covered by the CURA regulatory regime. The OFT had powers to investigate if price was of major public concern. It was not deemed to be such at present, but it was agreed to monitor and publish prices of bottled cooking gas.</p> <p>Mr Murphy was pleased that the pressure brought to bear by Government, including the huge contribution of the OFT, had seemed to achieve significant results for gas customers.</p> <p>In considering opportunities to publicise the good work of the OFT, it was agreed that the OFT website would benefit from improvement. Members were to review the site to collate comments and proposals for updating.</p>	<p>JRP</p> <p>JRP/ ZAM</p> <p>ALL</p>
<p>2024 02/05</p>	<p>OFT INDEPENDENCE</p> <p>The office move had gone relatively well with the staff team now being accommodated in the Old Forestry Office, Garey ny Cloie.</p> <p>The Director had spoken to the Organisational Development Team at OHR. The Team was not able to undertake an OFT organisational review to meet timescales relevant to the retirement of the Head of OFT. The Director was therefore to lead the review, which was to be an internal OFT collaboration. The Director and Head were to meet to draft terms of reference, with the resultant scoping document to be agreed with OHR.</p> <p>The proposed Regulatory Hub remained an influencing factor and clarity on its direction was to be sought. One principle of the Regulatory Hub was that it would be at arm's length from</p>	<p>VM/JRP</p> <p>VM</p>

	Government. The benefits of OFT independence could also be considered. Major drivers for OFT independence were the existing senior staffing structure overlap with DEFA, and the perception that the OFT was part of DEFA.	
2024 02/06	<p>STAFFING AND SUCCESSION PLANNING</p> <p>The new Senior Trading Standards Officer had been welcomed at the start of the meeting and was getting up to speed with current issues.</p> <p>Candidates were to be interviewed for the post of Ombudsman Services Manager on 11th March 2024.</p> <p>Other topical matters were discussed including retirement of the Head of OFT and regrading of a postholder.</p>	-
2024 02/07	<p>ATOL PROTECTION IN RELATION TO ISLE OF MAN</p> <p>The Head of OFT gave an oral update.</p>	-
2024 02/08	<p>ESTATE AGENTS BILL</p> <p>The Head of OFT was to meet the Drafting Officer to discuss the Bill. Previous advice had been that Isle of Man Estate Agents could not be required to be part of a UK Redress Scheme, but this was being revisited.</p>	-
2024 02/09	<p>POTENTIAL COMPLAINT TO ESTATE AGENTS TRIBUNAL</p> <p>The Senior Trading Standards Officer was to review the case.</p>	-
2024 02/10	<p>COMPETITION ACT SECONDARY LEGISLATION CONSULTATION</p> <p>Responses to the consultation had been collated. The Head of OFT was to review the paper prior to Board consideration. No major issues had been raised. There had been comment on the financial limit for mergers notification.</p>	-
2024 02/11	<p>BUSINESS PLAN COMMITMENTS AND TARGETS UPDATE</p> <p>The update dated 23rd February 2024 was noted.</p>	
2024 02/12	<p>POSTAL CHARGES</p> <p>The paper was to be finalised and circulated.</p>	-

<p>2024 02/13</p>	<p>NURSING HOME FEES</p> <p>The paper was to be finalised and circulated.</p>	<p>-</p>
<p>2024/02/14</p>	<p>ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p><u>TT 2024 ARRANGEMENTS</u></p> <p>The Pit Lane Dangerous Goods licence was being arranged, as were various Non-Resident Trader licences. The Head of OFT was to discuss the Garlanding Ceremony with the Clerk of the Course, following risks identified in 2023.</p> <p><u>UPDATES</u></p> <p>The following were also discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with telecoms provider regarding cold calling and flyers which suggested loss of internet service. • Visiting itinerant workers and liaison with police. • Petrol station fuel leak ongoing. The site had been closed for a few days for investigation. Engineers were to come to the Island to further investigate source and route. • FSOS complaint relating to terms and conditions. <p><u>COMPUTER SECURITY</u></p> <p>Mr Murphy raised concern about computer security, particularly in reference to not updating passwords personally on iPads. The Secretary was to consider the matter.</p> <p><u>SOCIAL MEDIA</u></p> <p>There had been reference to the OFT on IOM News and Politics facebook page regarding price monitoring. Review of the website could include opportunities to comment on topical items.</p> <p><u>HOME AND CAR INSURANCE</u></p> <p>Mr Bathgate referred to very significant increases in insurance premiums. As minimal complaints had been received it was not felt necessary to review the matter as the present time, although an eye would be kept on the matter.</p>	<p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>NRT</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p>
	<p>The meeting closed at 11.30 am.</p> <p>Signed _____ T S Glover MHK_____</p> <p>Dated _____ 28th March 2024_____</p> <p>Chairman</p>	<p>-</p>

