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Convener
Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Affairs
Committee
Scottish Parliament
Holyrood
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From: Andrea Coscelli CBE
Chief Executive

By email: europe@parliament.scot

2 March 2021

Dear Joan,

Office for the Internal Market (OIM)

I am writing with regard to the UK Internal Market Act which requires the CMA to establish a new Office for the Internal Market (OIM) later this year.

The OIM will have a distinct remit within the CMA to provide technical advice to the UK government and parliament and the devolved administrations and legislatures on the smooth running of trade within the United Kingdom. The OIM will also monitor and report on the health of the UK internal market, including trends and developments across sectors, nations and regions.

The OIM will be an important new function for the CMA and I am determined to ensure that it fulfils its role with professionalism, impartiality and analytical rigour.

The Act provides that the OIM must act even-handedly in carrying out its functions with respect to each of the governments across the UK. This will be an important principle underpinning the work of the OIM, and we will work closely with the Devolved Administrations, as the CMA already does with many of its functions when there is an aspect of the work that touches on devolved responsibilities.

The OIM is not expected to be operational until autumn 2021 and so the details of its governance and functions are still being developed. However, as required by the Act, the CMA intends to prepare and publish general advice and information about how it will approach the exercise of its internal market functions over the coming months. We expect to consult on this guidance in late spring and summer (being aware of the elections in May for the Scottish Parliament and the Senedd Cymru/Welsh Parliament).

As the OIM prepares to start its work, engagement with the Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Affairs Committee will be important. Once our planning has progressed further, we will write to you again with further details in advance of the consultation and would be keen to meet and discuss these with you.

Please do not hesitate to let me know if you have any questions in the meantime.

Best regards

Andrea Coscelli CBE
Chief Executive