



Multiple Legal teams at Ogier advise Waitrose on entry into Channel Islands

Deals - 28/06/2010

The culmination of several months' work by legal teams at both Ogier's Jersey and Guernsey offices has helped Waitrose, a leading UK supermarket, acquire substantial retail businesses in both islands. Lawyers from many disciplines advised on the various legal aspects of the transaction, which sees Waitrose acquiring five supermarket stores from the Sandpiper CI Group. The Commercial Property, Corporate, Competition, Employment, Pension and Employee Benefit teams worked around the clock in the run up to the signing of contracts on Wednesday morning, and provided the legal advice on the acquisition, competition, corporate, regulatory, insurance, property, employment and pension elements of the deal. The deal is expected to complete in October 2010, subject to regulatory authority approval. Ogier worked in conjunction with leading UK law firm Eversheds on this acquisition with Babbé assisting on the Guernsey property aspects of the deal.

Chris Renouf led the Jersey team with partner, Caroline Chan, leading the Guernsey team on this high profile acquisition. Chris Renouf commented:

"We have called upon the expertise of over 18 Ogier lawyers of various specialisms to help bring the Waitrose brand to the Channel Islands. This deal demonstrates that Ogier has the capacity to offer a broad multi-discipline, multi-jurisdictional service for large, complex transactions of this nature. We are delighted to have assisted Waitrose on their latest acquisition. It is a great endorsement for both islands to have such a reputable retail business setting up here."

Ogier will continue to assist in the introduction of the Waitrose operations in the Channel Islands. To integrate the Waitrose culture and procedures throughout the new stores will require new contracts of employment being issued for over 480 existing employees and for a significant number of additional new employees, as well as the production of a revised staff handbook for the Guernsey and Jersey stores. Michael Little, Head of Ogier's Employment Group, will continue to advise Waitrose on the new employment documents and processes that need to be established.

He commented "This transaction has been complex in as much as it has required a high level of knowledge and understanding of the legislation, regulation, cultures and differences between the two

Channel Islands for a major UK company. In working closely with Waitrose it is evident that an affinity to their people is of paramount importance to them. They set very high standards, put people at the centre of what they do and will undoubtedly become one of the leading employers in the Channel Islands.”

Margaret Casely-Hayford, Director of Legal Services to the John Lewis Partnership said:

"We are very pleased to be opening our first stores in the Channel Islands, which will enable us to make our brand available to more shoppers. The support of law firms Ogier and Eversheds has been invaluable. We worked closely with both law firms to make this deal possible and we appreciate the efforts of the whole team throughout the process. Ogier's having specialist knowledge of the Islands' jurisdiction was particularly helpful."

Chris Renouf was assisted by Partners Marc Yates and Matthew Thompson, Managing Associates Michael Little, Sara Johns, Jonathan Hughes, Nathan Powell, Jayne Wycherley and Victoria Yates and Senior Associates Matthew Gilly and trainee solicitor Lisa Floris in Jersey.

The Guernsey team consisted of Partner, Caroline Chan, Managing Associates Michael Little and Andy Lowe, Senior Associate Andrew Keast and Associate lawyers, Kerrie Le Tissier, Charisma Lyall and Kim Paiva.

Ogier Fiduciary Services, led by associate director Jo Freeman, provided administration services to the Jersey and Guernsey bid companies in the transaction and worked closely with the legal teams to ensure successful completion.

About Ogier

Ogier is a professional services firm with the knowledge and expertise to handle the most demanding and complex transactions and provide expert, efficient and cost-effective services to all our clients. We regularly win awards for the quality of our client service, our work and our people.

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Key Contacts



Chris Renouf

Consultant

Jersey

E: chris.renouf@ogier.com

T: [+44 1534 514104](tel:+441534514104)



Jonathan Hughes

Partner

Jersey

E: jonathan.hughes@ogier.com

T: [+44 1534 514336](tel:+441534514336)



Catherine Moore

Partner

Guernsey

E: catherine.moore@ogier.com

T: [+44 1481 752364](tel:+441481752364)



James Campbell

Partner

Jersey

E: james.campbell@ogier.com

T: [+44 1534 514230](tel:+441534514230)



Josephine Howe

Partner

Jersey

E: josephine.howe@ogier.com

T: [+44 1534 514201](tel:+441534514201)



Matt Guthrie

Partner

Guernsey

E: matt.guthrie@ogier.com

T: [+44 1481 752342](tel:+441481752342)