 Regulatory Policy Committee	Opinion	
Impact Assessment (IA)	Charity Commission powers and trustee disqualification	
Lead Department/Agency	Cabinet Office	
Stage	Final	
IA number	Not provided	
Origin	Domestic	
Expected date of implementation		
Date submitted to RPC	22 April 2014	
RPC Opinion date and reference	17 June 2014	RPC14-CO-2092
<i>Departmental Assessment</i>		
One-in, Two-out status	IN	
Estimate of the Equivalent Annual Net Cost to Business (EANCB)	£0.42 million	
RPC Overall Assessment	GREEN	
<p>RPC comments</p> <p>The IA is fit for purpose. The Department has provided an informative and well-reasoned IA, complete with a Small and Micro Business Assessment in support of its proposal. The Department has consulted fully on the proposal.</p> <p>The RPC confirms the proposal scores as an 'IN' with an annual cost to business and civil organisations of £0.42 million.</p>		
<p>Background (extracts from IA)</p> <p>What is the problem under consideration? Why is government intervention necessary?</p> <p>The IA explains that: <i>“Various weaknesses and loopholes have been identified in the powers of the Charity Commission to tackle abuse or mismanagement in charities. These are preventing the Charity Commission from effectively and efficiently tackling abuse in charities. The Charity Commission itself has requested these new or enhanced powers. The National Audit Office recommended (December 2013) that Cabinet Office support the Charity Commission in seeking legislation to make these changes. The Prime Minister’s Extremism Task Force (December 2013) also recognised the need for more effective Charity Commission powers to contribute to the fight against extremism and terrorism.”</i></p> <p>What are the policy objectives and the intended effects?</p> <p>The IA explains that <i>“The intended effects of these proposals are:</i></p>		

- *More effective and efficient compliance and enforcement by the Charity Commission where there is serious misconduct or mismanagement or risk to charity property.*
- *Preventing unsuitable people from being involved in running charities (with safeguards to facilitate rehabilitation of offenders).*
- *No significant regulatory impacts on compliant charities / individuals.*
- *To support public trust and confidence in charities and their regulation.”*

Comments on the robustness of the OITO assessment

The IA says that this is a regulatory proposal that would impose a net cost to business and civil organisations (an IN) with an estimated equivalent annual net cost to business and civil organisations of £0.42 million.

Charities will incur familiarisation costs. A small number will face costs of bringing a decision review or appeal to tribunal where the Commission wrongly exercises its compliance powers.

The Department’s OITO assessment is consistent with the current Better Regulation Framework Manual (paragraph 1.9.10). Based on the evidence presented, it provides a reasonable assessment of the likely impacts.

Comments on the robustness of the Small & Micro Business Assessment (SaMBA)

The SaMBA is satisfactory. The SaMBA confirms that most charities are small or micro-sized organisations and that the policy could not be delivered if these organisations were exempt from the proposals. The IA states that exemption is not compatible with the policy objectives and refers to feedback it received from organisations representing small charities which were supportive of the proposed measures.

In terms of mitigation, the Department considers that it would be impractical and confusing to create different categories of trustee based on different sizes of charity. The main costs resulting from the measures are familiarisation costs. The Charity Commission will therefore work with representative bodies of small charities to ensure its guidance will be simple, clear and easily accessible to all.

Quality of the analysis and evidence presented in the IA

The proposal includes a number of measures that will strengthen the powers of the Charity Commission to tackle abuse of charities effectively. The Department has consulted fully on the proposal. The measures include extending the Charity Commission’s powers to disqualify a trustee, introducing a new official warning power, and a power to direct a charity to wind up its activities.

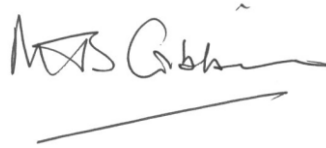
All 200,000 charities will need to become familiar with the changes to the existing criteria for disqualification of trustees. The Department estimates that it will take

one trustee, one hour to read the updated guidance on trustee disqualification and to brief the trustee board at a meeting. The Department estimates total familiarisation costs to be £4.5 million. The RPC is satisfied that the assumptions made by the Department are reasonable.

In addition, a small number of charities will face the costs of bringing a decision review or appeal to the tribunal where the Charity Commission wrongly exercises its compliance powers. The estimate, based on historic data, has been adjusted to take account of the Commission's recent more proactive approach. For the purposes of the assessment, the Department estimates that the rate of decision-reviews will be 15% (16 cases) and for tribunal appeals, 5% (5 cases). The analysis assumes a success rate against the Charity Commission of 20%. The IA estimates these investigation costs at £300 per decision review and £10,600 per charity tribunal appeal. The Department consulted the Charity Commission on these estimates. The RPC considers these estimates to represent a fair reflection of the Commission's regulatory activity going forward.

The principal benefit of the measures, which has not been monetised, is in maintaining public trust and confidence in the regulation of charities.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Gibbons", with a long horizontal line underneath it.

Michael Gibbons, Chairman