

Minutes of 11 May 2020 Committee meeting (public)

Attendees	
The Committee Stephen Gibson – Interim Chair (Chair) Jonathan Cave (JC) Laura Cox (LC) Sheila Drew Smith (SDS) Jeremy Mayhew (JM) Brian Morgan (BM) Andrew Williams-Fry (AWF)	RPC Secretariat Stuart Sarson – Head of Secretariat (HoS) Present for item D: Cathryn Ross (CR) – Chair, Regulatory Horizons Council BRE Chris Carr (CC) – Director

A. Introduction

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

B. Correspondence discussion

2. The minutes of the March meeting were accepted without any changes.
3. A new addition to the Register of Interests was noted.
4. There were no updates to the Gifts and Hospitality Register.
5. There were no points to pick up on the engagement updates circulated by correspondence.
6. The Secretariat reported that the Methodology Sub-Group (MSG) had met the previous month. AWF (MSG Chair) said that it was always useful to receive concerns on methodological issues from Committee members for discussion at future MSG meetings.

C. BRE update

7. CC said that the Reforming Regulation Initiative (RRI) was live on GOV.UK with a low profile but the proposed Business Impact Target (BIT) call for evidence had not yet been launched.

D. Cathryn Ross, Regulatory Horizons Council 13:45 – 14:15

8. CR introduced herself as Chair of the Regulatory Horizons Council (RHC) and gave an overview of her previous roles in regulation. The RHC was created following the White Paper 'Regulation for the Fourth Industrial Revolution'. It was currently recruiting members from a range of sectors including the academic and entrepreneurial communities. It was supported by a team of officials within BRE who would support the delivery of RHC recommendations. CR was interested in where the RHC could add best value. She wanted to discuss the scope for working with the RPC.
9. The following points were made in discussion:

- a. there was a clear link between the RPC and the RHC, particularly in relation to PIRs. The RPC formally looks at how existing regulation is working, the RHC on how it might work better in future,
- b. a significant challenge was that innovation cuts across different sectors and it is under jurisdiction of multiple different regulators. Digital activity also blurs the boundaries between traditional sectors. Sector specific regulation may need to be reviewed in the light of collapsing of pre-existing sector boundaries. Regulators may have to be sectoral or somewhat specific, but could serve as platforms for other regulators in government,
- c. what the international remit of the RHC would be,
- d. the RPC and RHC had overlaps in engagement with the same stakeholders. The RPC was open to jointly approaching stakeholders, particularly civic and voluntary organisations; and
- e. the RPC and RHC could jointly assess standards and where they cut across business. Departments often go straight to regulation as it is a means to an end, rather than thinking about guidelines or standards.

10. Responding, CR said that:

- a. the RHC did not have past dependency and so it could be difficult to deal with interface issues that would be outside of its remit,
- b. the existing regulatory system is predominantly set up in vertical silos. The RHC could undertake a horizontal cross-cutting look without changing the institutional architecture,
- c. the RHC has a remit to look and learn from different countries to identify best practice for the UK,
- d. regulatory competition was often associated with deregulation. Balancing the enabling of innovation with maintaining public trust required a competitive regulatory environment to encourage innovators,
- e. the RHC was open to joint stakeholder engagement with the RPC,
- f. the RHC was taking a broad view of regulation and had not considered whether standards fall inside the BIT; and
- g. the RHC is an attempt to build in an element of forward-looking self-disruption into regulation.

11. The Chair thanked CR for her contribution to the meeting. CR left the meeting.

E. BIT Review update

12. JC said that he had a series of discussions with BRE on the BIT call for evidence. The BIT review had been paused due to the current context.

F. Current Secretariat update

13. Th The HoS said that the Secretariat was currently running at around 75% staffing due primarily to Covid mobilisations. This was sustainable but further reductions may result in some work needing to be paused.

14. The Secretariat said that there had been further work conducted on the Centre of Excellence workstream. The Secretariat had been looking at the use of Twitter and LinkedIn to promote existing guidance documents.

G. AOB

15. The Chair closed the meeting at 14:37.