



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Terms of Reference of the Hazardous Substances Advisory Committee

Date: November 2020

Aim of the Committee

The HSAC is an independent scientific advisory body providing expert advice on protecting the environment, and human health via the environment, from potentially hazardous substances, articles, and wastes.

Terms of Reference

To advise officials, UK Ministers, including Ministers in the Devolved Administrations, and other relevant bodies, on request or otherwise:

- On matters of relevance at a domestic, European and global level, relating to the protection of the environment, and human health via the environment, from potentially hazardous substances, articles and wastes, including advanced materials; including on future issues of concern, on new innovations, on impacts and on wider strategic linkages;
- On the assessment of risks associated with potentially hazardous substances, articles and wastes, including advanced materials;
- On research needs and other evidence gaps relating to potentially hazardous substances, articles and wastes, including advanced materials; including analysing, interpreting, and assessing the quality and relevance of, evidence.

To advise officials and UK Ministers, including Ministers in the Devolved Administrations, on request or otherwise, on policy development and evaluation, including the impact of different policy options; the assessment of new regulations and deregulation, and the development of voluntary initiatives, best practice advice and formal guidance, which are relevant to its remit.

HSAC's relationship with Defra

Protocol on the relationship between The Defra Chief Scientific Advisor and the Hazardous Substances Advisory Committee:

- To report to, and engage with, the Defra Scientific Advisor and through them the Defra Science Advisory Council;
- To support the Defra Chief Scientific Adviser, as necessary, during emergencies;
- To operate in line with the Government's Principles for Scientific Advice and the Code of Practice for Scientific Advisory Committees.

Protocol on relationship between the lead Defra Minister and the Hazardous Substances Advisory Committee:

The lead Defra Minister will:

- Set Terms of Reference for the committee;
- Agree strategic work plans, receive reports and advice;
- Receive periodic reviews of the committee's functions and value for money;
- Consult the Devolved Administrations and other Departments as appropriate, about the committee and its work.