

PRIME MINISTER'S COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

VIRTUAL MEETING - 10 and 11 March 2021: Meeting Summary

Attendees: Patrick Vallance, Nancy Rothwell, Chris Bishop, Philip Bond, Julia Black, David Cannadine (Day 1 only), Muffy Calder, Suranga Chandratillake, Anne Johnson, Josh Fleming, Jim Hall, Saul Klein, Ottoline Leyser, Max Lu, Jim McDonald, Dervilla Mitchell, Fiona Murray, Paul Newman, Brooke Rogers, Jo Shanmugalingam, Adrian Smith, Nick Stern, Paul Stein.

Apologies: Charles Roxburgh

Guests: Rt. Hon. Oliver Dowden, MP Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, Rt. Hon. Kwasi Kwarteng, MP, Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Prof Paul Monks, Chief Scientific Adviser, BEIS; Louise Dunsby, Deputy Director, Critical and Emerging Technology, Cabinet Office; Tom Wells, Deputy Director for Foresight and Strategic Futures, GO-Science; Tom Child, Director, Business Growth, BEIS; Philippa Sharma, Deputy Director, Technology Strategy and Security, BEIS; Cathryn Ross, Chair of the Regulatory Horizons Council; Sir Robert Lechler, Emeritus Senior Vice-President (Health), King's College London.

Day 1

- Members received an update on the Chancellor's Budget announcements with regards to science and technology and work across government to support the plan for growth (Build Back Better), including development of strategies in the areas of Innovation and Space and establishing a new unit and fund to help boost the economic impact from public-sector knowledge assets.
- 2. Rt. Hon. Oliver Dowden, MP, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, introduced the Government's Digital Strategy including the Government's Ten Tech priorities and support for digital skills and infrastructure announced as part of the plan for growth. Members highlighted the importance of linking work up across Government to align with the Digital Strategy and discussed digital infrastructure, skills, scale-up and standards. CST members agreed to consider what further advice they could offer on AI, digital and data as part of

the 2021 work programme.

- 3. Rt. Hon. Kwasi Kwarteng, MP, Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy discussed the ambition for an Innovation Strategy. Members discussed questions on how to foster innovation and where to focus effort and agreed to offer further advice to inform development of the Strategy.
- 4. Professor Paul Monks, Chief Scientific Adviser to the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) gave members an update on his current priorities.

Day 2

- Members discussed current projects to develop advice on levelling up and the health system. Max Lu gave an update on the recent conversation with Minister Vicky Ford to discuss CST's previous advice on educational attainment.
- 6. Members received an update from officials in Cabinet Office, BEIS and GO-Science on the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy and considered work across Government to improve insight on emerging technologies and inform approaches to ensure access to strategically important technologies.
- 7. Cathryn Ross, Chair of the Regulatory Horizons Council (RHC), gave an update on the work of the RHC and the current areas where it is developing advice to Government on potential changes needed to regulation to support rapid and safe introduction of promising areas of technological innovation.
- 8. Members considered areas for future CST work and agreed to work on advice to focus on Advice to support development of the Innovation Strategy and to realise the ambition of 'Global Britain' and the Prime Minister's vision for Britain to be a global science superpower.
- 9. Members noted this was Professor Dame Nancy Rothwell's final meeting as independent co-chair of CST and her term was completed at the end of March 2021. Members thanked Dame Nancy for her service.

CST Secretariat
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