



30 January 2023

Dear SROs,

## **MY ROLE AS THE PORTFOLIO SPONSOR AND ROLE RESPONSIBILITIES IN RELATION TO SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OWNERS (SROs)**

I am writing in regard to my role as the Portfolio Sponsor for the Net Zero Buildings Portfolio, and how I will work with you as Senior Responsible Owners (SROs) for individual projects and programmes within the Portfolio.

As an SRO, you have formal accountabilities to the Permanent Secretary and Parliament as a whole so you can deliver your programmes in a timely manner and to budget. However, last year's Critical Friend Review of the NZB portfolio raised the tension that exists in balancing your personal accountabilities that are set out in your SRO Osmotherly letters with managing the overall priorities and needs of the Net Zero Buildings Portfolio.

After consulting with the Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA), they have recommended formalising my role as Portfolio Sponsor, and setting out the key responsibilities of the role as a solution to this challenge. As set out in the IPA's guidance, the Portfolio Sponsor should act as the higher-level authority for the Portfolio and is accountable to the Permanent Secretary in her role as the Principal Accounting Officer. In my role as Portfolio Sponsor, I act as the driving force for the Portfolio, creating the link between BEIS objectives, portfolio strategic objectives and the Senior Responsible Owners. The key responsibilities of the Portfolio Sponsor are as follows:

- To provide top-level endorsement for the Portfolio and its rationale and objectives.
- To provide direction to the SROs by monitoring progress, providing support, and addressing escalated risks and issues.
- To create a transparent working environment to communicate honestly and effectively about the deliverability of programmes an SRO is responsible for.
- To take decisions, or refer decisions, for the benefit of the Portfolio that are above the delegated authority of the SRO.

We must continue to build on your efforts to support wider Departmental challenges and priorities from this year. As we move towards our goal of achieving Net Zero buildings by 2050, it is inevitable that the priorities and resources of the Portfolio will continue to change, as new evidence and innovation emerges and is factored into the work of the Portfolio.

Where possible, I know that in your capacity as an SRO you will endeavour to work collaboratively with other SROs and the Portfolio Management Office. Here, you will oversee dependencies, resources, schedules, and funding to support the totality of change required to achieve the strategic objectives. However, sometimes the priorities of the wider portfolio will take precedence over individual and project and programme level priorities. Where I am required to make a portfolio-wide decision in my capacity as Portfolio Sponsor which impacts your SRO responsibilities, this will be documented by the Portfolio Board and those accountabilities set aside in deference of supporting the overarching priorities of the Portfolio. I hope that this will reassure you about your individual accountabilities when portfolio-wide decisions are required, and clarify how your work will be protected in those circumstances.

I'd like to thank you all for your present dedication to your respective programmes. I am certain that we can continue to foster more efficient delivery of the portfolio's strategic objectives.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Rimmington". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

**BEN RIMMINGTON**  
Director General for Net Zero, Buildings & Industry