

Charter For The Regulatory Horizons Council

This Charter articulates the government's commitment to the establishment of the Regulatory Horizons Council and its work. It sets out the Council's purpose and its principal outputs, accountabilities and duties. The Charter also sets out the balance of responsibility between the government and the Council.

The Council will be required to carry out its work in accordance with this Charter as well as a Framework Document and Remit Letter. The Framework Document will set out the details of how the Council will operate. The Government will publicly issue the Council with a Remit Letter from time to time, setting out any priority areas or limitations of scope. In all other respects, the Council will have complete discretion to independently determine its work programme, methodologies and recommendations.

1. The Council's objective

The Council is an expert committee, and its objective is to provide the government with impartial, expert advice on regulatory reform¹ that should be prioritised to support the rapid and safe introduction of technological innovations² with high potential benefit for the UK economy and society. The Council's prioritisations and recommendations will be informed by strong evidence and/or expert advice. The Council will work closely with departments and regulators and will consider international developments and evidence where relevant.

The Council will:

- scan the horizon for technological innovation and trends, building on existing work and data across departments and regulators;
- prioritise products, services and business models with high potential benefit for the UK economy and society;
- identify broad areas of regulatory reform needed in order to facilitate the rapid and safe introduction of these products, services and business models;
- make recommendations to government on broad priorities for regulatory reform, based on the potential benefit for the UK economy and society while protecting citizens and the environment; and
- monitor the government's progress in delivering reforms that the Council has recommended and evaluating the impact of its recommendations.

¹ In this charter, 'regulatory reform' refers to all activities relating to the reform of regulation, including consulting, trialling, introduction, implementation and evaluation of legislation, rules and guidance by policymakers and regulators.

² In this charter, 'innovation' refers to both process and product innovation – for example in products, services, processes or business models.

2. Compact between the government and the Council

The Council will prepare a report for the Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology, at least every 24 months, setting out its recommendations for regulatory reforms.

In developing ideas and recommendations, the Council will engage openly and transparently with research institutions, business, civil society, policymakers, regulators and other contributors as appropriate. It will draw on a broad range of expertise, help build consensus and ensure recommendations are sufficiently contextualised.

The government will support the work of the Council by:

- aiming to publish the Council's reports within three months of receipt unless the government provides reasons why a delay is necessary, and always publishing within six months;
- publishing a formal response to all the recommendations contained in the Council's reports, stating clearly whether the government accepts or rejects the recommendations;
- giving reasons where it disagrees with the Council's recommendations, and where appropriate presenting an alternative proposal for enabling the proposed innovation; and
- providing timelines for implementation where it agrees with the Council's recommendations, and making clear which commitments are new policies.

The Council will operate independently, at arm's length from government, as an expert committee of the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology. Further details of this working relationship will be set out formally in a mutually agreed framework document.

The work of the Council will be supported by an executive comprising staff from the Technology Innovation Regulation Directorate. This support will include, but is not limited to, the organisation of Council meetings, the organisation of stakeholder engagement, the preparation of draft reports, the publication of reports and other secretariat functions.