

Westminster Business Forum policy conference:

Next steps for the UK subsidy control regime

Timing: Morning, Friday, 14th November 2025

Taking Place Online



Draft agenda subject to change

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 9.05 **The evolving UK subsidy control framework - priorities for reform, delivery, and long-term direction**
Tessa Robins, Deputy Director, Subsidy Control, Department for Business and Trade
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.30 **Next steps for implementing reforms - streamlining routes, raising thresholds, and improving case handling efficiency**
assessing new statutory guidance / impacts of raising the subsidy control threshold / implications for case volumes and referral decisions / strategic use of mandatory and voluntary referrals / issues for audit, assurance and internal governance processes / reducing reporting burdens while maintaining third-party scrutiny / providing clarity for enterprises and encouraging uptake by public authorities / alignment with the UK Trade Strategy and the Modern Industrial Strategy / coordination between government, regulators, and public authorities / implications of the newly adopted EU State Aid Framework for the UK
Jonathan Branton, Partner, Head, EU/Competition, and Head, Government and Public Sector, DWF
Hana Hammouda, Senior Consultant, NERA
Senior representative, public authority
Senior representative, assurance
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.20 **The role of subsidy control in supporting local growth, net zero, and international competitiveness**
Professor Michelle Cini, Professor, European Politics, University of Bristol
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.45 **Chair's closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 10.50 Break
- 11.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 11.05 **'Litigation challenges - domestic and international issues'**
Professor Suzanne Rab, Barrister, Matrix Chambers
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.30 **Implementing the new streamlined route for arts and culture - opportunities, consistency, and early uptake**
Senior representative, creative industries
- 11.40 **Key issues for delivering the subsidy control regime in practice - capability, local delivery, and supporting broader policy ambitions**
resourcing and delivery challenges across public bodies / assessing local authority capacity for administering subsidies / design and implementation of the new streamlined route for arts, culture, and regeneration / potential for additional streamlined routes / options for embedding environmental and value-for-money principles / role of subsidy control in supporting net zero targets / minimising reputational and legal risk / responding to evolving transparency requirements and impacts on internal processes / consistent application by local authorities and cultural bodies / clarifying enforcement expectations and lessons from recent and pending tribunal outcomes / future direction of the framework across sectors and regions / links to Industrial Strategy priority sectors and UK Trade Strategy objectives, including smart trade facilitation and export support
Senior representative, local authority
Senior representative, sustainability
Senior representative, legal
Senior representative, regeneration
- 12.00 Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.30 **Next steps for the Subsidy Advice Unit in monitoring the effectiveness of the subsidy control regime**
Adam Land, Senior Director, Office for the Internal Market and the Subsidy Advice Unit, Competition and Markets Authority
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 **Chair's and Westminster Business Forum closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
Thomas Howard, Westminster Business Forum