

## [News story: Programme: EU-UK Article 50 negotiations Brussels, 22-24 May 2018](#)

### **Tuesday, 22 May 2018**

- Withdrawal Agreement – remaining issues
- Future relationship

### **Wednesday, 23 May 2018**

- Withdrawal Agreement – remaining issues
- Northern Ireland/Ireland
- Future relationship

### **Thursday, 24 May 2018**

- Withdrawal Agreement – remaining issues
- Future relationship

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## [News story: New Chief Executive for defence Non-Departmental Public Body](#)

Neil Swift has been appointed as the Chief Executive of the SSR0, after a rigorous external selection process and agreement by the SSR0 Board. He is currently the Interim Chief Executive of the SSR0. He joined the SSR0 in April 2015 and was previously Chief Operating Officer.

The Chairman of the SSR0, George Jenkins OBE, said that:

This is a vital appointment for the SSR0. The new Chief Executive will drive forward our positive momentum, focusing on the delivery of our statutory functions and ensuring our independence, while engaging meaningfully with all our stakeholders. The Board and Neil share the same vision, and he demonstrated against tough competition that he meets the skills, knowledge and experience criteria we need. I would like to thank my fellow panel members for their significant contribution to the recruitment process, and for arriving at the best decision for the SSR0.

The shortlisting and interview panel comprised: George Jenkins OBE as the SSR0 Chairman; Catherine Little, DG Finance at the Ministry of Defence; Paul Everitt, Chief Executive of ADS; and Marta Phillips, a non-executive Board member at the SSR0. Interviews were held at the SSR0 offices on 1 May 2018 and the panel determined its recommended candidate at that time. The recruitment was undertaken by the SSR0, in conjunction with Odgers Berndtson, which approached potential applicants regarding the role and coordinated the exercise.

The SSR0 was founded under the Defence Reform Act in 2014. It is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Ministry of Defence.

Neil Swift said:

It is a privilege to be appointed Chief Executive, and I am grateful to the panel and Board for considering my application. The SSR0 plays a key role in the regulation of non-competitive defence contracts, providing independent, objective and evidence-based advice, guidance and support. Working with and listening to its stakeholders the SSR0 is well placed to support improvements in defence procurement. I intend to build on the foundations that have been established as the regime further matures – ensuring the SSR0 does its job and does it well.

For further information contact the SSR0 on [enquiries@ssro.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ssro.gov.uk), or by telephone at 0203771 4777.

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## **[Press release: Expert advisory group appointed for the Financial Reporting Council review](#)**

Sir John Kingman, the head of an independent review into the audit, accountant and actuary regulator the Financial Reporting Council (FRC), has today (Friday 19 May) announced details of the independent advisory group that will support the review.

The review aims to make the FRC the best in class for corporate governance and the advisory group brings together expertise from a range of sectors and backgrounds, with members including representatives from the investment community, senior business leaders, and leading figures in accountancy, governance and regulation.

[Launched in April 2018](#), the review is assessing FRC's governance, impact and

powers, to ensure it is fit for the future, and is due for completion by the end of 2018.

In accordance with the [review's terms of reference](#), the advisory group will be responsible for scrutinising and challenging the review's findings and recommendations, as well as advising on the direction of the review and sources of evidence.

The review will include a consultation, asking for views on the FRC's role.

The advisory group will be comprised of:

- Lucinda Bell: Formerly CFO at British Land; Non-Executive Director and Audit Chair, Rotork plc
- Mark Burgess: Deputy Global Chief Investment Officer, and Chief Investment Officer EMEA, Columbia Threadneedle
- John Cridland: Chair, Transport for the North, leading the State Pension Age review; formerly Director-General, Confederation of British Industry (CBI)
- Dame Amelia Fawcett: Deputy Chair of Swedish investment firm Kinnevik; Non-Executive Board Member at HM Treasury, and Non-Executive Director at State Street Corporation (US); formerly Chair, Guardian Media Group
- Amelia Fletcher: Professor of Competition Policy, University of East Anglia; Non-Executive Director, Financial Conduct Authority, Payment Systems Regulator, and Competition and Markets Authority
- Simon Fraser: Chair of F&C Investment Trust and the Investor Forum; formerly Chief Investment Officer of Fidelity International Ltd
- Sir Peter Gershon: Chairman, National Grid plc. Formerly Chair, Tate & Lyle plc, and Chief Executive, Office of Government Commerce
- Teresa Graham: Chair, Salix Finance; Chair, HMRC Administrative Burdens Advisory Board; previously Deputy Chair of the government's Better Regulation Commission (BRC), and a Partner at accounting firm Baker Tilly (now RSM)
- Dame Mary Keegan: Former chair, Accounting Standards Board; previously PWC's first female audit partner; founding member, International Forum on Accountancy Development, and HM Treasury's former Managing Director for Government Financial Management
- Nikhil Rathi: Chief Executive Officer, London Stock Exchange Plc at London Stock Exchange Group plc
- Anne Richards: Chief Executive Officer, M&G Investments

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**[Press release: £1 million of Home Office funding to boost fight against](#)**

# knife crime

The successful community groups will receive up to £30,000 each to help support the vital work they do to educate young people about the dangers of carrying weapons.

Last year, hundreds of charities bid from an initial £765,000 worth of funding. By investing a further £1 million this year in early intervention initiatives the Home Office will provide critical support to local communities to help tackle knife crime.

This additional funding forms just one of over 60 measures announced in the [Serious Violence Strategy](#) which stresses the importance of early intervention to tackle the root causes of serious violence, backed with £40 million of Home Office funding.

Minister for Crime, Safeguarding and Vulnerability Victoria Atkins said:

I have seen the fantastic work charities have delivered with the community fund and I'm thrilled the next round will allow us to build on these successes.

Knife crime has devastating consequences for families and local communities and we are determined to provide necessary support for those most at risk.

Our Serious Violence Strategy places a new emphasis on early intervention and steering young people away from crime in the first place.

Already, 47 charities across the country have benefited from the [Community Fund](#), including the London-based Ben Kinsella Trust and the Coventry-based Positive Youth Foundation.

CEO of the Positive Youth Foundation, Rashid Bhayat said:

Knife crime is a serious issue that the youth-work sector has been addressing sensitively for many years. Whilst not all areas have the same level of challenges, even one incident is one too many.

As an organisation, we are working very closely with young people, voluntary sector groups, the local authority and the police to ensure that young people in Coventry have a safe place to learn about the devastating consequences of carrying weapons.

The funding from the Home Office provided the opportunity to have these meaningful conversations. I would encourage organisations to apply to this funding round, as it will allow for much needed

support and interventions for young people most at risk.

The Serious Violence Strategy recognises the importance of preventing often hard-to-reach young people from becoming involved in serious violence.

Alongside the strategy the Home Office launched #knifefree a communications campaign which helps share information on social media about the risk of carrying a knife, its effects and how to make the right decisions.

By investing in early intervention and education we will help give critical support for young people to provide them with the tools and opportunity they need to live violence-free lives.

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## [Speech: Matt Hancock speaking at the launch of Tech Nation](#)

Good morning.

It's a great pleasure to be here and it's a very exciting day to mark Tech City UK and Tech North evolving into Tech Nation and the launch of this fourth Tech Nation report .

The name says a lot. This rebranding shows Tech Nation's commitment to being the sort of dynamic organisation that we've got used to round here in east London, but also spreading the benefits right across the country as a whole.

I warmly welcome this move and the progress you have been making in recent years.

Today's milestone is a great opportunity to step back and think about what we're doing, and to keep up this momentum for the UK as a place to start and grow a tech business.

Because it is as vital now as it's ever been. The impact over the last decade has been huge.

The tech sector has been growing over two-and-a-half times faster than the rest of the economy; but there is much more to do. There are challenges we must face and people snapping at our heels.

And along with Tech Nation, we are working regionally, nationally and globally so the UK is ready for these challenges that lie ahead.

### **Regional**

Tech Nation and its predecessors, have been championing regional tech

clusters since 2014.

And I am thrilled with the ambitious plans to help 40,000 entrepreneurs and 4,000 start-ups to scale and to deliver this support directly into a dozen key cities around the UK.

And the crucial Government aim, stated clearly in our Digital Strategy, is making sure that the benefits of growth and the tech sector work for everyone in our country.

We are committed to encouraging investment and developing tech clusters right across the UK.

It is easy, especially here in the centre of London, to focus on the prosperity that we see here in London, and of course this is mission critical. Nobody gains by doing down our world beating capital.

But we need to have a full-spectrum approach, so everybody can participate and get the benefits. And so far, there have been some brilliant results.

London is a fantastic haven for European tech investment. But did you know this? Nearly 70 per cent of investment into the UK tech sector last year was in regional clusters beyond the capital.

The benefits of digital for local economies are incredibly clear – 16 towns now show a higher proportion of digital tech employment than the UK average.

And over 1.5 million people across the country belong to more than 3,000 informal tech meetup groups.

That's people up and down this country working together to develop their businesses, and as they do so, powering their local economies.

So I'm really encouraged that Tech Nation is going to take this work to the next level and provide some of that entrepreneurial juice to expand their programmes even further, to truly connect right across the cities of the UK.

## **National**

As a nation, our digital tech sector is in great shape, supported by the fantastic work Tech Nation has done and the engagement with all of you here.

But to attract more investment and support, we need to fly even higher in the future, and we need to shout loud about this success.

After all, the tech sector nationally is booming and the numbers speak for themselves.

Over £100 billion added to the UK economy in 2016 and real opportunities for investment. After Silicon Valley, London ranks as the second most connected place for tech in the whole world.

And you can rest assured we are firmly committed to maintaining this thriving

tech sector and this energy.

Because we want the UK to be the location of choice for tech innovation and investment – so we can build our world-leading digital economy.

Our Digital Strategy, launched about 15 months ago, sets out the key pillars of how we are putting that into practice.

It's about making sure that nationally there's great infrastructure. This means rolling out the existing infrastructure, but also unlocking the potential of full fibre and 5G.

Second, making sure the skills needed are there to fully engage with the digital world.

A full spectrum approach, from people getting on the internet for the first time, which now includes over 90% of the population, all the way through to the highest end skills and capabilities and beyond.

From making coding in the curriculum compulsory at school age, through to supporting a more flexible labour market and expanding digital training for adults, so we have a far-reaching programme to support digital skills.

Third, making sure the UK is the safest place to live and work online. Not least through the National Cyber Security Programme and it is great to see people from the upcoming London Cyber Innovation Centre here.

All of these things mark us out as an incredible destination for tech.

Part of our task is to pull off the tricky balance between ensuring we make the UK a safe place to be online, whilst also being unambiguous about our enthusiasm and support for innovation.

And for making sure that we use the freedoms that this amazing technology brings.

And I want Tech Nation to be both conveners and cheerleaders – encouraging investment and also telling the world what our tech sector can do.

I want everybody here to talk to the Government about what more we can do to make the UK a great place to grow a digital business.

As someone who started in a tech company, I know that answers to this questions are not only to be found in Whitehall but are to be found in conversations with you as you grow your businesses.

Asking the questions. What can we do to make your lives easier? And how can we help you to expand?

## **Global**

The Tech Nation report has quickly been established as an invaluable industry resource.

And this year's report confirms we are well placed to achieve our goal of making the UK the best place in the world to start and grow a digital business.

It has also been helpful in identifying where our strengths lie.

One of those important strengths is in Fintech and AI. We and Tech Nation are doing a huge amount to cultivate AI.

And travelling to America and India in the last couple of weeks, people have already noticed the effort and cold hard cash we have put into driving its development.

The nature of tech is collaborative. But having said all that I still want the UK to be the leader..

So we'll work with you and Tech Nation to make sure this happens.

I'm sure you all know that research already ranks the UK as the most AI ready country in the world.

That's to say we're the best prepared to seize and exploit the amazing potential of this transformative technology.

But we are a medium sized country and the US, China, India and other larger countries are working hard to make sure they too are leading.

This is not an opportunity we are prepared to let slip. The investment from Government is deadly serious and crucially it can only be done in partnership, with you, in the private sector.

You may have seen last month brought the fantastic news that the British cybersecurity company, Darktrace, whose "immune system" is powered by AI, have become the latest unicorn, when they hit a valuation of over a billion dollars.

We should all take confidence from Darktrace and its success.

And we are seeing this dominance in FinTech too. There are now more people working in UK Fintech than in New York – or in Singapore, Hong Kong and Australia combined.

We have real strengths in bitcoin, cryptocurrencies and in crowdfunding.

And this spirit of innovation and enterprise is exactly what we need. To work with other nations at a time when agreements and frameworks on new technologies will become more important than ever.

And especially as we leave the EU, we are determined to seize many opportunities around the world, as part of becoming a truly Global Britain.

Open and outward looking. Engaging with the world and gregarious.

And to do that, we need the best tech talent from home and abroad. Making

sure that we train people here at home, but also attracting the brightest and best.

We have doubled the number of exceptional talent visas. We have met with technology experts to make sure the processes are as efficient as possible.

While we are updating immigration rules so that world-leading scientists and researchers endorsed as 'exceptional talent' can apply for settlement after three years in this country.

The countries and economies that succeed in this digital world are those that are outward-looking and forward-looking and that is the approach we will take as we leave the EU.

## **Conclusion**

I am determined that the UK will be the best place in the world to become a digital citizen.

Because tech is a real force for good.

It makes our services better and our products faster.

It creates wider benefits for communities across the UK.

We can't do this alone in Government, just as private companies can't do it alone either.

The answer lies in working together to create the conditions for success and that's why Tech Nation is such an asset.

You've been driving the creation of jobs. The development of skills and improvement of productivity.

It's great for our economy and it is great for our society too.

And every single person in this room has their part to play.

You're part of a Great British renaissance and it's a joy and honour to be part of it too.

Thank you very much.