

BEIS Policy Sponsorship of Post Office

UKGI currently oversees all aspects of HMG's relationship with Post Office Limited (POL). POL does not currently have a policy sponsor within its owning Department of BEIS. The proposed scope below outlines those duties that would be best undertaken by BEIS rather than UKGI.

It is worth noting that the majority of the work would still reside with UKGI, who would offer significant support to the BEIS policy sponsor in key areas where UKGI's knowledge of the business is central to responding to requests or putting forward policy positions.

The scope below provides an initial view of the role, however a more comprehensive scoping out of responsibilities would have to take place with the proposed policy sponsor and their team once they have been nominated.

Strategic role

The role would involve acting as key point of contact for the UKGI shareholder team on policy related matters (e.g. network size and access requirements, funding):

- Formally owning the key policy remit of minimum network size, access criteria, path to commercial sustainability
- Driving the delivery of the forthcoming Cabinet Paper on POCA, financial inclusion and cash and working capital funding
- Critiquing and supporting UKGI advice to the Secretary of State during key events such as Spending Reviews (the SoS has historically wanted a BEIS view on UKGI's advice), advocating the funding proposals once the position is settled.
- Acting as two-way conduit for BEIS related issues that may affect POL, or vice versa (e.g. employment policies, industrial strategy, business rates and living wage)
- Reviewing and providing clearance on UKGI advice before it goes to Ministers. In some exceptional cases, advice may instead come directly from BEIS officials, with support from UKGI
- Supporting UKGI's lead in establishing improved funding / budgeting flexibilities to better accommodate the needs of what is now a profit making commercial business, and longer term considering ownership options
- Working with UKGI to consider key strategic ownership issues, at the appropriate time
- Meeting with UKGI on a monthly basis to horizon scan for areas which may impact the Department

Operational Role

Policy team to take responsibility for drafting PQs, UQs, and correspondence (with support from UKGI and POL).

Separately, the execution of the daily POL Working Capital Facility (including day to day calculation and approval, liaising directly with POL) is something that is not particularly appropriate for UKGI to undertake. We would ideally seek that this be returned to BEIS – most likely not in any “policy team” but dealt with by BEIS Finance.