Consultation and How it Relates to Parliamentary Committees

Prof. Chris Johnson

Pro Vice Chancellor, Engineering and Physical Sciences

January 2021, UKCRC Workshop.

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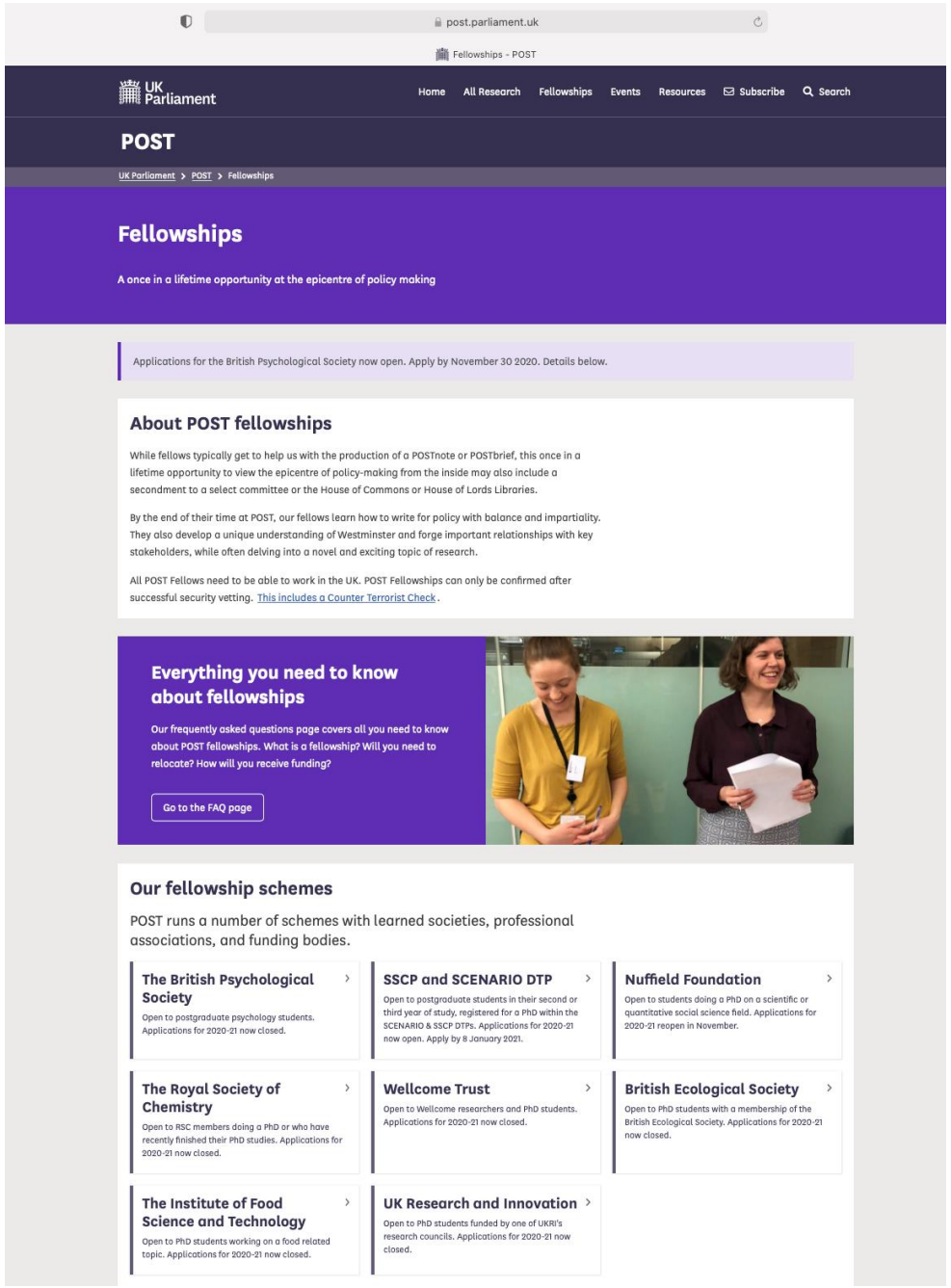

- Why host this event?

  - ❖ Other learned societies are more active than us;
  - ❖ More funding will be hypothecated;
  - ❖ Much public policy depends on computing;
  - ❖ Few politicians/civil servants have technical background.

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Overview

- Introduction to Parliamentary committees.
- Review of what we have done.
- Case study exercise:
  Lords Committee on Risk Assessment and Risk Planning
- Summary and feedback.
- Next steps…

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Intended “Take-Aways”

By the end of the session:

1. Increase chance of responses being accepted by Parliamentary committees;
2. Identify ways to highlight your research, consistent with objective 1;
3. Understand wider importance of consultations for UK CS.

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Jeremy Hunt @Jeremy_Hunt · 7 Mar 2019

Great to be at @UofGlasgow this morning - an institution that's been changing the world since 1451. I'm visiting their school of computing to discuss why we need a new doctrine of deterrence to stop malign cyber activity.

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Jeremy Hunt @Jeremy_Hunt · 7 Mar 2019

Great to be
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activity.

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Rinne CASE Atweetáil

Queen's University Belfast @QUBelfast · 11 Lún 2020

Today we welcomed @AlokSharma_RDG to Queen's. Mr Sharma met with sustainability researchers & saw how our experts are moving towards a #CircularEconomy, utilising plastic waste & creating clean energy from renewable sources. Well done everyone for all your vital work. #LoveQUB

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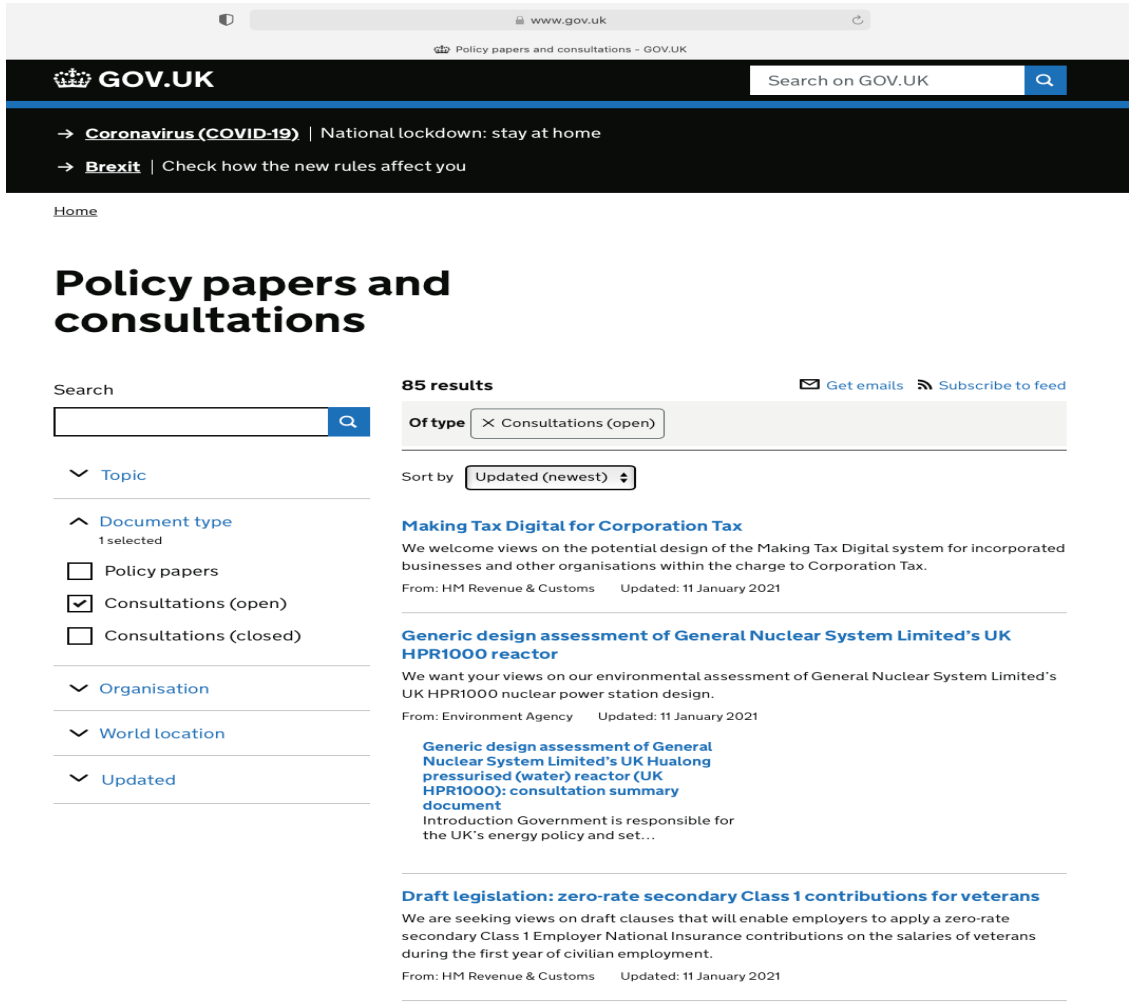
Introduction to Parliamentary (and other) Committees



"There may be a number of reasons to consult: to garner views and preferences, to understand possible unintended consequences of a policy or to get views on implementation.

Increasing the level of transparency and increasing engagement with interested parties improves the quality of policy making … and identifies unintended effects and practical problems".

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/255180/Consultation-Principles-Oct-2013.pdf

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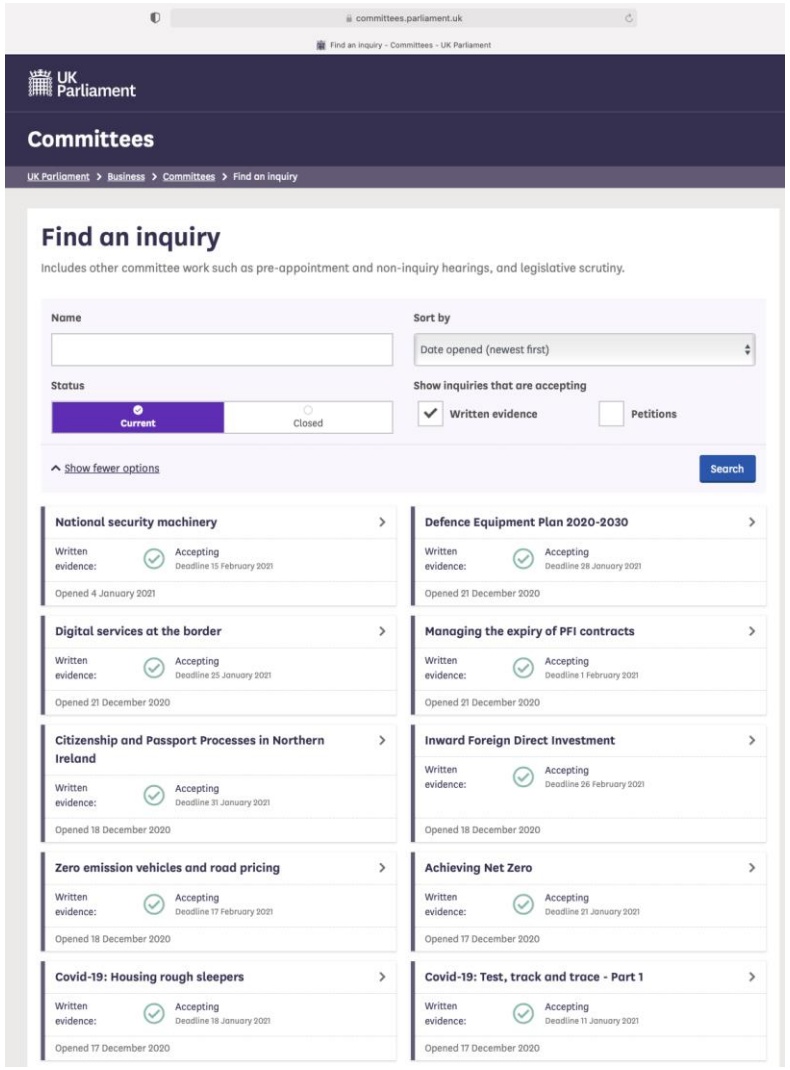
Introduction to Parliamentary (and other) Committees



"(Parliamentary) committees consider policy issues, scrutinise government work, expenditure, and examine proposals for primary and secondary legislation."

https://committees.parliament.uk

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What Have We Been Doing?

2021	
	Lords Committee on Risk Assessment and Risk Planning
2020	
	Joint Review of Defence, Security and Intelligence
	DCMS Proposals for Regulating Consumer Smart Product Cyber Security
	RAEng call for evidence/case studies on safer complex systems
	Commons Science and Technology Committee: A new UK research funding agency
	UKRI Open Access Review Consultation
	Developing Scotland's Artificial Intelligence (AI) Strategy
	DCMS Open Consultation on Proposed Changes to the Cyber Security Breaches Survey

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What Have We Been Doing?

2019
DCMS Call for Evidence on Cyber Security Incentives and Regulation Review 2020
Law Commission Open consultation on the Regulation of Highly Automated Road Passenger Services
DCMS Open Consultation on Reforming Consumer Advocacy in Telecoms
Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy Inquiry into Access to “Safe” Technology: The UK’s 5G Infrastructure and National Security
DCMS Consultation on regulatory proposals on consumer IoT security
DCMS/Home Office On-line Harms White Paper
DfT/BEIS Consultation on Code of Practice for the Trialling of Automated Vehicles
Commons Science and Technology Committee, Commercial and Recreational Drone Use in the UK Inquiry
HMRC. Consultation on Electronic Sales Suppression
HMRC Consultation on Digital Service Tax

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What Have We Been Doing?

2018
Dept for Education, Improving adult basic digital skills
HM Treasury, Digital Competition Expert Panel: Call for Evidence
Ofqual Regulating Basic Digital Skills Qualifications
Parliamentary Science and Technology Select Committee on Digital Government
Commons Science and Technology Committee Consultation on Balance and effectiveness of research and innovation spending
DCMS, Developing the cyber security professional in the UK
House of Commons Education Select Committee, Consultation on the Forth Industrial Revolution
Department for Transport, Future of mobility
House of Lords Select Committee on Communications Internet Regulation
DCMS, Code of Practice for a ‘secure by design’ Internet of Things
DCMS, Security of Network and Information Systems Directive
HEFCE, Knowledge Exchange Comparison Framework

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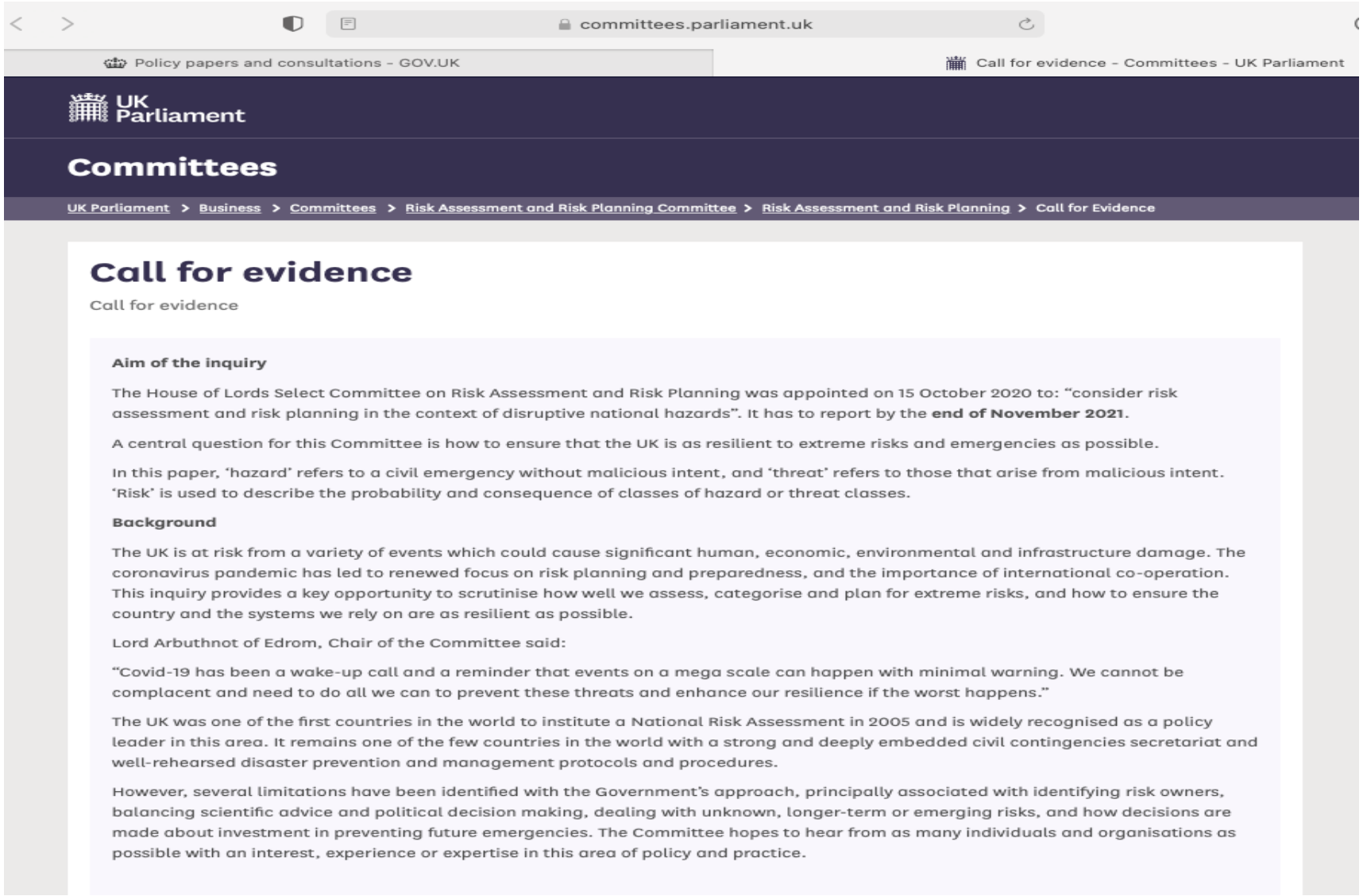
Case Study



committees.parliament.uk

Policy papers and consultations - GOV.UK

Call for evidence - Committees - UK Parliament

UK Parliament

Committees

UK Parliament > Business > Committees > Risk Assessment and Risk Planning Committee > Risk Assessment and Risk Planning > Call for Evidence

Call for evidence

Call for evidence

Aim of the inquiry

The House of Lords Select Committee on Risk Assessment and Risk Planning was appointed on 15 October 2020 to: "consider risk assessment and risk planning in the context of disruptive national hazards". It has to report by the **end of November 2021**.

A central question for this Committee is how to ensure that the UK is as resilient to extreme risks and emergencies as possible.

In this paper, 'hazard' refers to a civil emergency without malicious intent, and 'threat' refers to those that arise from malicious intent. 'Risk' is used to describe the probability and consequence of classes of hazard or threat classes.

Background

The UK is at risk from a variety of events which could cause significant human, economic, environmental and infrastructure damage. The coronavirus pandemic has led to renewed focus on risk planning and preparedness, and the importance of international co-operation. This inquiry provides a key opportunity to scrutinise how well we assess, categorise and plan for extreme risks, and how to ensure the country and the systems we rely on are as resilient as possible.

Lord Arbuthnot of Edrom, Chair of the Committee said:

"Covid-19 has been a wake-up call and a reminder that events on a mega scale can happen with minimal warning. We cannot be complacent and need to do all we can to prevent these threats and enhance our resilience if the worst happens."

The UK was one of the first countries in the world to institute a National Risk Assessment in 2005 and is widely recognised as a policy leader in this area. It remains one of the few countries in the world with a strong and deeply embedded civil contingencies secretariat and well-rehearsed disaster prevention and management protocols and procedures.

However, several limitations have been identified with the Government's approach, principally associated with identifying risk owners, balancing scientific advice and political decision making, dealing with unknown, longer-term or emerging risks, and how decisions are made about investment in preventing future emergencies. The Committee hopes to hear from as many individuals and organisations as possible with an interest, experience or expertise in this area of policy and practice.

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Case Study

The target date for submissions is 28 January 2021.

1. What are the most significant extreme risks that the UK faces? Are these kinds of risks discrete, linked or systemic? What do you understand the term 'extreme risk' to mean?
2. Are there types of risks to which the UK is particularly vulnerable or for which it is poorly prepared? What are the reasons for this?
3. How could the Government's approach to risk assessment be strengthened to ensure that it is rigorous, wide-ranging and consistent? Your answer could refer to any aspect of the risk assessment process including, for example, its governance, the evidence base, or the degree to which it is open to scrutiny and the input of experts.
4. Given the range of possible national risks, and the need to achieve a balance between efficiency and resilience, what level of assurance should the Government be seeking on the UK's resilience to hazards? What would effective national risk management achieve, and how could its success be measured?[1]
5. How can the Government ensure that it identifies and considers as wide a range of risks as possible? What risks does the inclusion criteria for the National Security Risk Assessment exclude and what effect does this have on long-term resilience?
6. How effectively do current ways of characterising risks (for example, the use of a five-point scoring system of a 'reasonable worst case scenario') support evidence-based policy decisions? What other information would be useful?

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Case Study

ANNEX: GUIDANCE FOR SUBMISSIONS

Submissions should be made through the form online at: https://committees.parliament.uk/submission/#/evidence/339/preamble

If you do not have access to a computer, you may submit a paper copy to:

Clerk to the Select Committee on Risk Assessment and Risk Planning, Committee Office, House of Lords, London SW1A 0PW.

The Committee invites interested individuals and organisations to submit written evidence by 28 January 2020. Short, concise submissions are preferred. Submissions longer than 6 pages should include a one-page summary. Paragraphs should be numbered. Please ensure the submission is free of logos and signatures. Submissions should be dated, with a note of the author's name, and of whether the author is acting in an individual or corporate capacity. Submissions with a university or college address should make clear whether they are submitted in an individual capacity or on behalf of the university or college. All submissions made through the written submission form will be acknowledged automatically by email.

Submissions become the property of the Committee which will decide whether to accept them as evidence. Evidence may be published by the Committee at any stage. It will normally appear on the Committee's website and will be deposited in the Parliamentary Archives. Once you have received acknowledgement that your submission has been accepted as evidence, you may publicise or publish it yourself, but in doing so you must indicate that it was prepared for the Committee. If you publish your evidence separately, you should be aware that you will be legally responsible for its content.

In certain circumstances the Committee may be prepared to accept submissions but not to publish them, in whole or in part. If you would like to submit evidence on this basis you should first discuss this with the Clerk to the Committee.

You should be careful not to comment on individual cases currently before a court of law or matters in respect of which court proceedings are imminent. If you anticipate such issues arising, you should discuss with the Clerk to the Committee how this might affect your submission.

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Case Study: General Questions for Discussion

1. Who is the intended audience for your response?
2. What do you need to know before answering these questions?
3. What benefits are there for (i) yourself (ii) UK Computing Science from engaging?

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Case Study: Specific Responses for Discussion

Question 2: Are there types of risks to which the UK is particularly vulnerable or for which it is poorly prepared? What are the reasons for this?

Question 8: How well are national contingency plans communicated to and understood by those at a local level, including emergency responders? What could be changed to increase the capability of local responders to effectively plan for and respond to emergencies?

Question 10: What challenges are there in developing resilience capability? Your answer could refer to critical infrastructure, but also to systems and networks beyond those elements. What is the role of exercising to test risk preparedness, and are these methods utilised effectively in risk assessment and risk planning in this country?

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Summary and Feedback

1. Who is the intended audience for the response?
2. What do you need to know before answering these questions?
3. What benefits are there for (i) yourself (ii) UK Computing Science from engaging?

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Summary and Feedback

Question 2: Are there types of risks to which the UK is particularly vulnerable or for which it is poorly prepared? What are the reasons for this?

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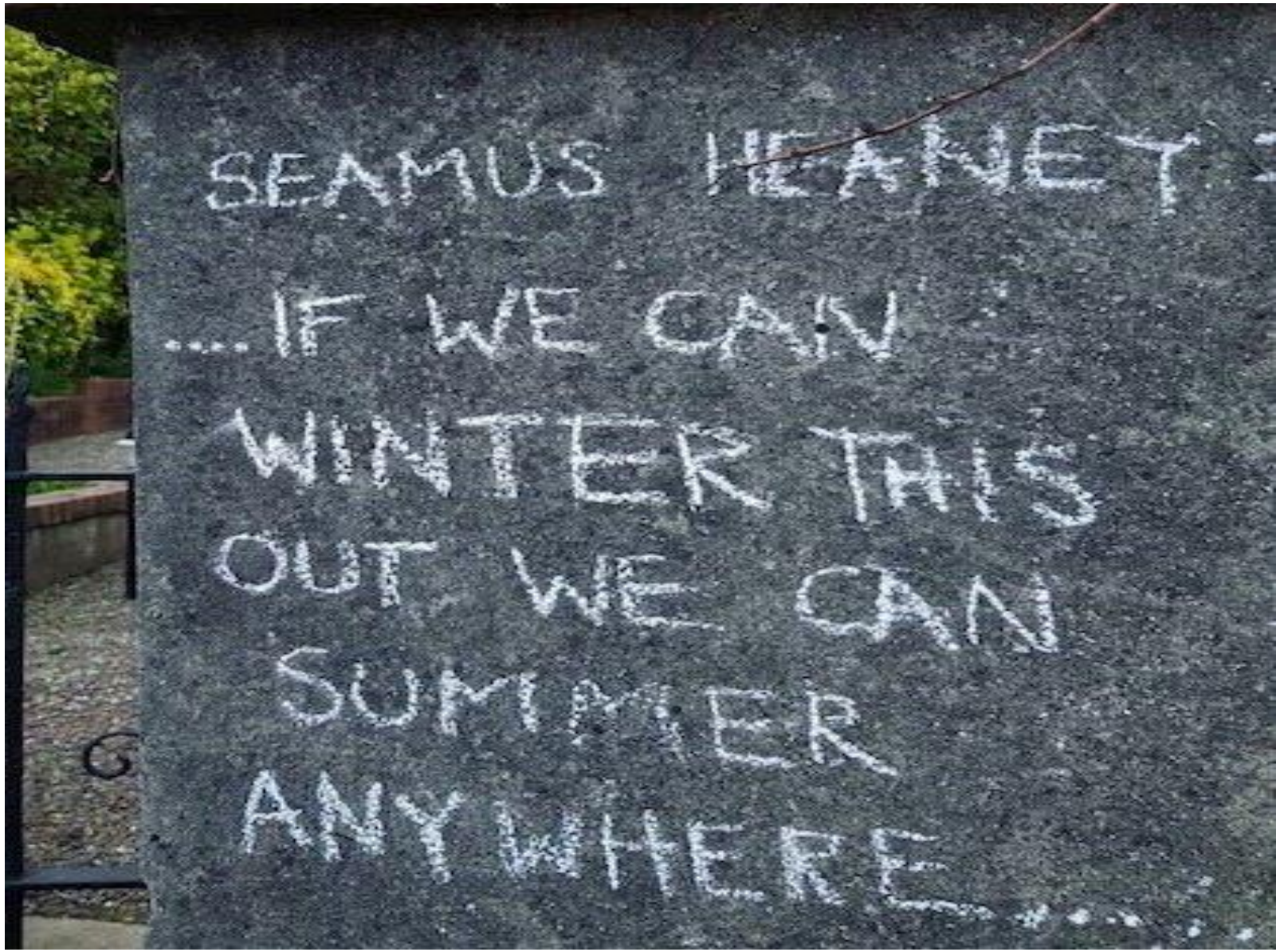
Next Steps



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