



The second instalment of the RBCC Russo-British Conference Series took place at Jesus College, University of Cambridge on 26-27 February 2020. The event Building the Future Together was held in partnership with the Skolkovo Foundation.

The conference brought together leading experts in the fields of smart city technology and digital health from the UK and Russia. These areas have been identified as vibrant sectors of innovation suitable for cooperation projects between the two countries. The conference delivered high-level dialogue between experts in each field and made suggestions for further cooperation.

The conference outlined three key spheres of recommendations to take cooperation further:

Many examples of best practice were exhibited at the conference. Participants identified the need to develop further mechanisms for the sharing of expertise. The conference itself provided a forum for this knowledge exchange and it was suggested that this dialogue should continue.

In both health and smart city technology there was a call to put humans at the centre of technological change, from patient-centric technologies in health innovation to the role of citizens in the design of smart cities. Developing a shared understanding of how to achieve this goal is a key area of cooperation between UK and Russian actors.

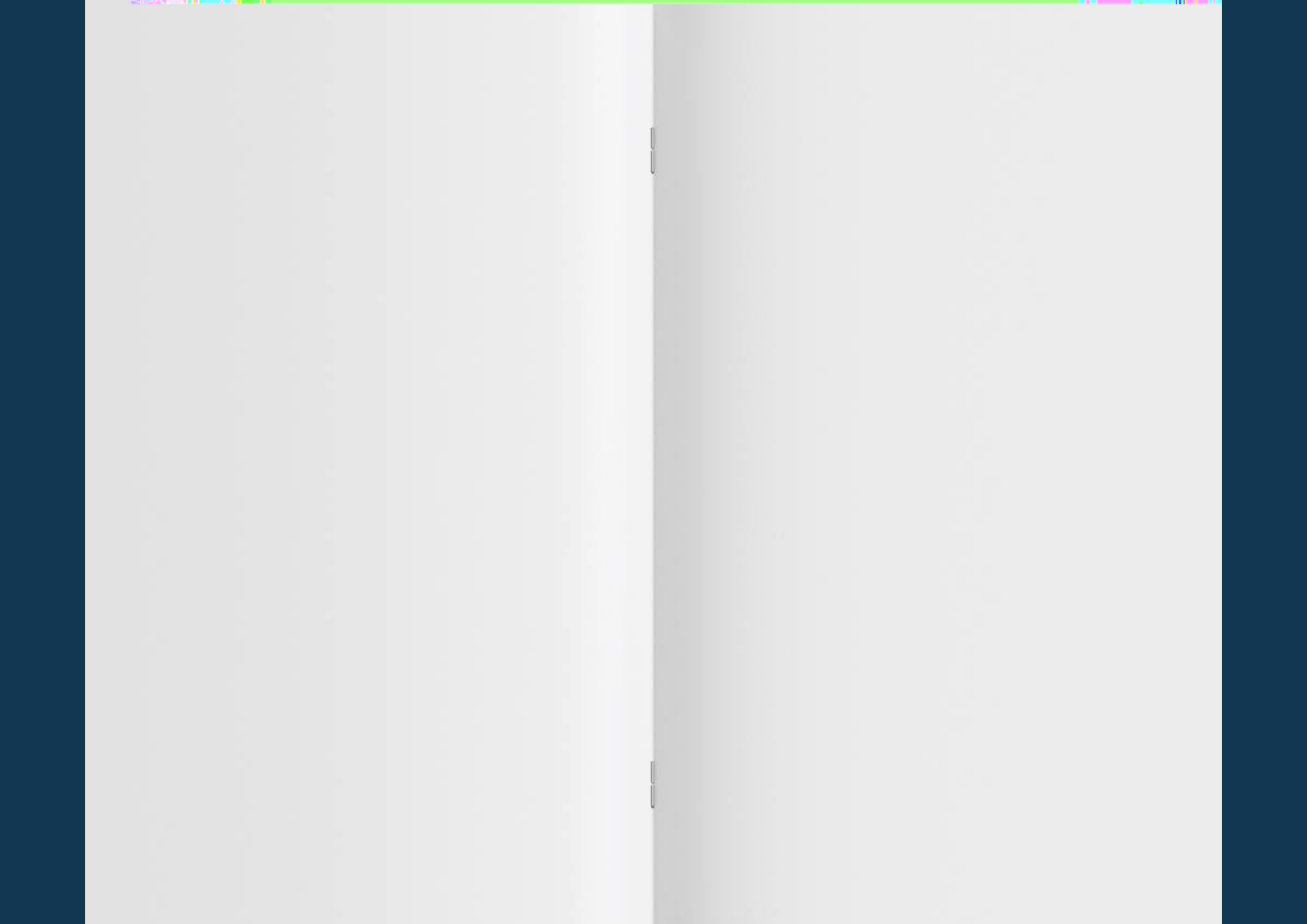
Conference participants would welcome more international cooperation in shaping the regulatory environment for both digital health and smart cities. It was also suggested that unifying standards between countries would be beneficial in terms of cooperation.

Additionally, participants agreed that the conference added new energy to business links between the UK and Russia. In addition to providing a forum for knowledge exchange in the areas of smart cities and digital health technologies, the event was seen by many as building bridges of cooperation. It was agreed by participants that the conference should be used as a platform to cultivate further mutually beneficial business relationships between the UK and Russia. It was suggested that this agenda would be enhanced by arranging a future conference to develop these conversations.



The intended outputs were:

- Continued high-level dialogue between UK and Russian participants
- This conference report containing recommendations for future actions
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- There was a shared appreciation that digital health solutions should be patient-centric. Many participants shared views on how this might be achieved, from a more holistic approach to patient domains (diagnosis, treatment, etc.) to better communication between strands of healthcare provision.

There was discussion about how AI could be used to achieve this. It was highlighted that scale is very important in the use of data; the more available data the more useful the insights. It was also noted that there have been attempts to incentivise people to take their health seriously, encouraging check-ups and removing barriers to health services.

- Many participants drew attention to the implications which digital technology high2 (entionple t)-7.ple t•

- There was an extended discussion about the limits to smart city technology. Given the success of some case studies, what holds back other cities from following suit? Could it be the age of the city and its existing infrastructure? Local governance? National strategy?

A number of potential barriers were identified. Specifically, the combination of available funding dedicated to digital solutions as well as clear city leadership were seen as crucial factors. It was argued that regulatory barriers are relatively low and that some of the largest constraints are financial. Moscow provides a clear example of what can be achieved with the necessary funding.

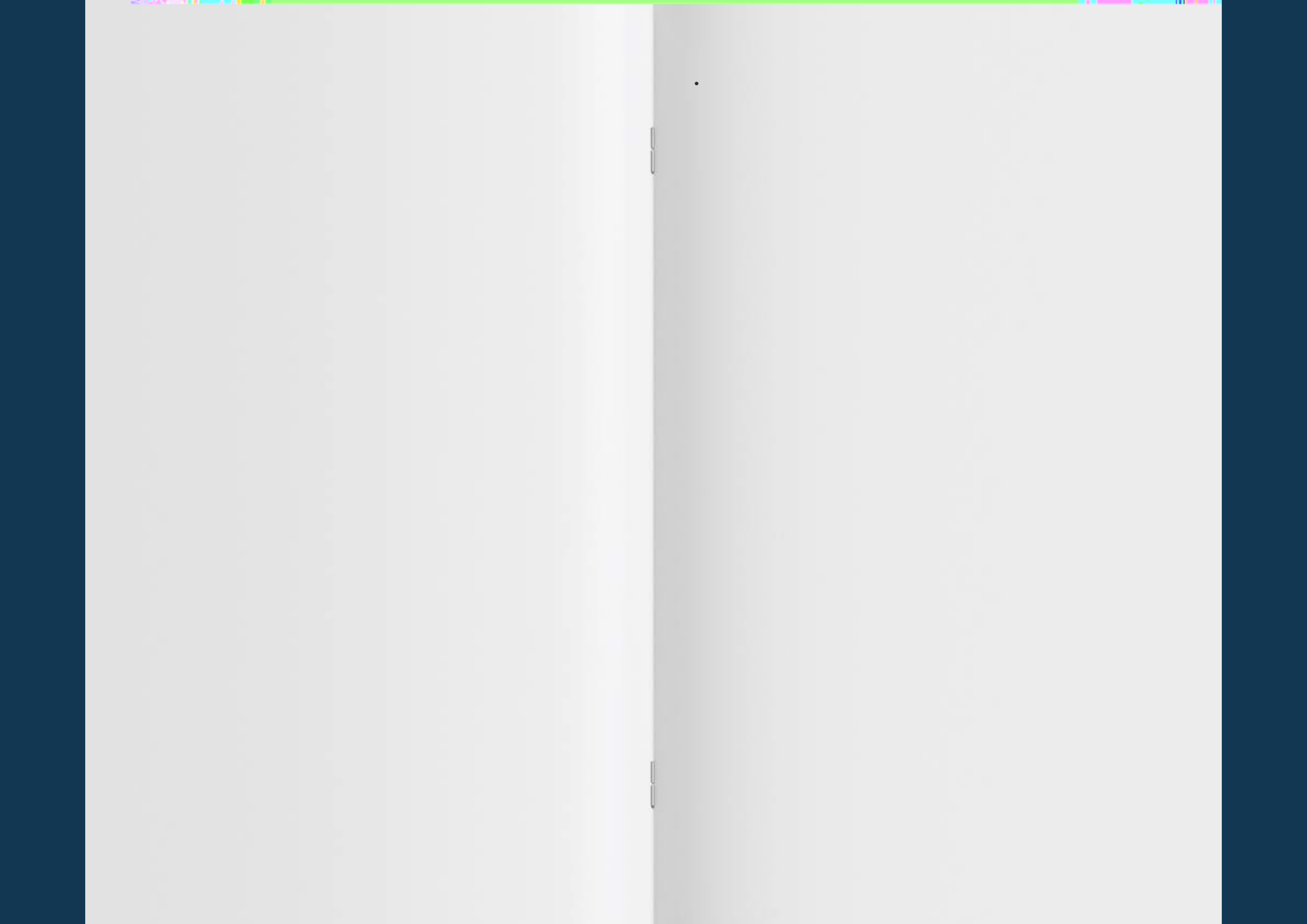
- The cutting-edge smart city solutions enacted by the city of Moscow led many to question how such successful interventions can be spread more widely. It was noted that some forums do exist which bring together city governments and companies, although it was questioned how this sharing process might operate for smaller cities and towns.

The notion of sharing the intellectual capital associated with smart cities across international borders was also a theme of discussion. It was noted that cities rarely compete to attract the same citizens and thus competition should not limit the sharing of smart technologies. Others highlighted that successful cities actively seek to share the successful deployment of technologies.

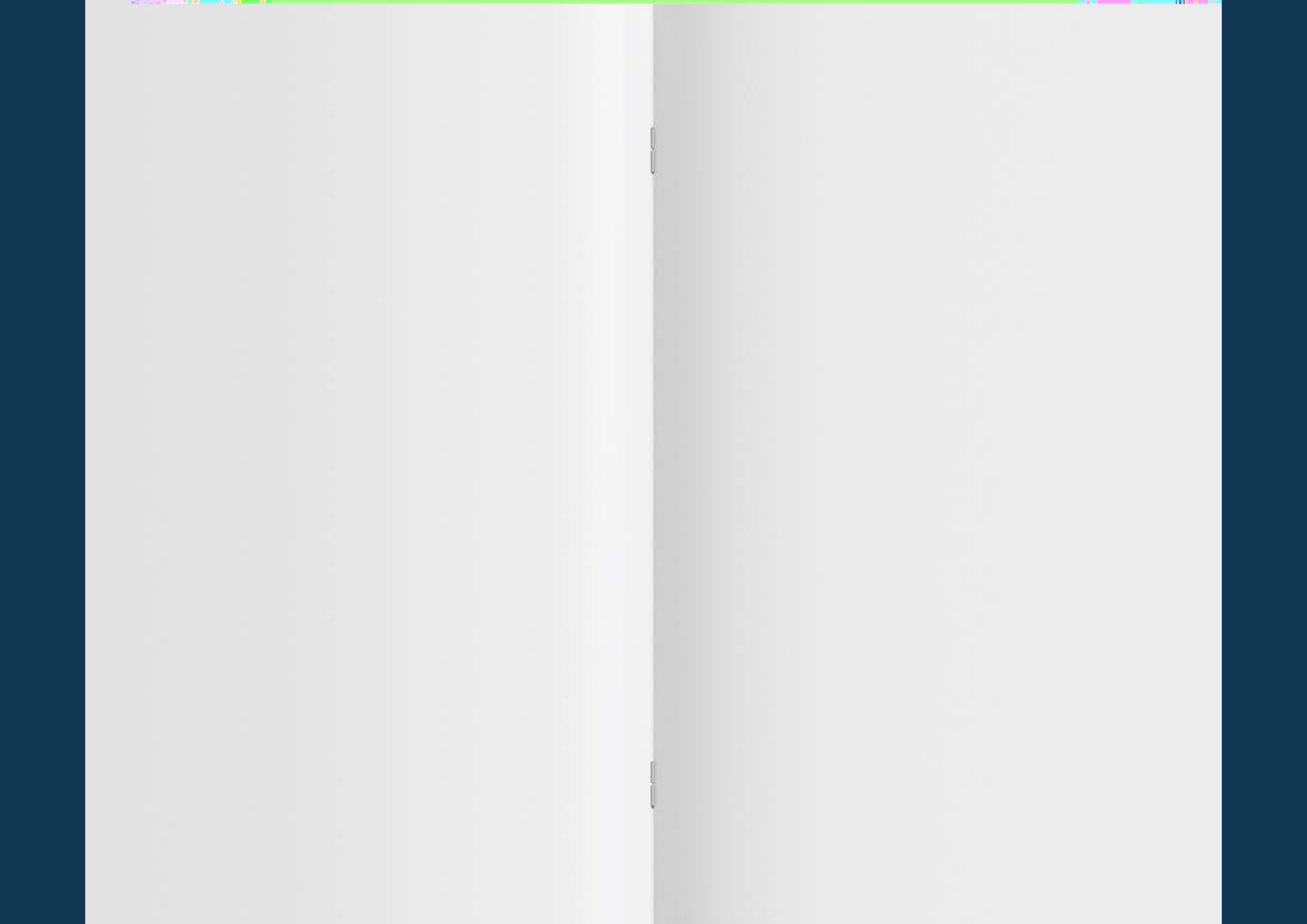
Another important point was made that cooperation in this area has the support of the UK and Russian national governments. Despite political tensions, both countries are motivated to pursue business links, especially in the sphere of smart cities.

- Many participants pressed the need to place humans at the centre of smart cities. As one participant put it, "to make the citizen the client". One potential way of achieving this is to actively engage with citizens about their experience of the city. For example, the "Active Citizen" feedback which is sought of Moscow citizens in evaluating successes and failures of the city administration.

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