

Welfare Sector Transparency Board minutes			
Title of Meeting:	Welfare Sector Transparency Board		
Date:	13.6.13	Time:	12.00 – 13.30
Attendees:	See attached list		
Apologies:	See attached list		

Agenda item 1 & 2 – Demonstration of Stat-Xplore / Welcome

Members were provided a demonstration of the latest version of the new on line tabulation tool Stat-Xplore which was launched with housing benefit data on 15th May 2013. The tool meets open data commitments providing aggregated data downloads under the open government license, see link: <https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk>

Gill welcomed everyone to the fourth meeting of the Board providing a brief background and summary of its role for new attendees

Agenda item 3 – Project update – Bi-laterals

David Frazer summarised the background for setting up the Bi-lateral groups and provided a progress update on the items being taken forward under the following key themes (A slide pack with full updates was issued to members):

Aggregate / administrative data – The recent launch of Stat-Xplore had provided lower geographical data to census output area level, meeting the requirements for bi-laterals 1 and 3. Overall initial feedback on Stat-Xplore was positive and over 380 individual users have already accessed the tool with over 130 registered users

Research data – DWP continue to be actively involved in the work being taken forward by the Administrative Data Task Force (ADTF) The Economic and Social Research Council, who lead on this, are presently meeting with bidders for organisations who may want to create an Admin Data Research Centre (ADRC). Discussions will be based on a set of proposals the technical group, which includes DWP, have developed outlining what the ADRC's could look like and Government data that could be included. DWP's view is that the ADRC's should extend beyond academics i.e to other organisations for research purposes and so open up the market in a safe environment

Wealth and Assets Survey data – The end user license is now available at UK Data Services and Keith Dugmore has been informed, see link: <http://discover.ukdataservice.ac.uk/catalogue/?sn=7215&type=Data%20catalogue>

Personal / Record level data – Although this is outside the remit of open data it was originally raised by Equifax as a member of this Board. Work is now being taken forward separately as part of the Department's Data Access Processing and Analytics (DAPA) framework for sharing data with third parties

The group discussed the need to have a clear view on what constitutes data

sharing and what is open data / transparency including bulk downloads of data which smaller developers may be interested in. It was highlighted that the Open Data User Group (ODUG) has a small budget for this financial year which is available to help departments fund the release of new data

Outcome

The Board acknowledged the work done in exploring members own data needs in the early bi-laterals which had related to data sharing as well as transparency / open data. These Bi-lateral discussions had now been concluded or the activities mainstreamed as part of the external stakeholder group or Stat-Xplore. The Board now has the opportunity to re focus its attentions on two key work streams - open data / transparency activities and more limited data sharing activities using data labs or secure IT environments.

AP 14 – To formally close the bi-laterals and develop a new reporting suite split into two distinct work streams between open data / transparency activities and wider activities which will include data sharing and the growth review measures

Agenda item 4 – Current Open Data Landscape

Paul Maltby (Cabinet Office) acknowledged DWP’s transparency / open data achievements so far including the launch of Stat-Xplore. He went on to provide an overview of his team and the following three main themes they will be focusing on to move transparency / open data forward.

- Getting more data out to help economic growth
- Spreading the benefits of open data to a wider audience, and
- Actively engaging with like-minded international partners in the Open Government Partnership (OGP)

The Shakespeare Review provides a basis to build on the good work so far and move open data / transparency to the next level. It provides some key recommendations including the development of a national data strategy across government and defining national core reference data sets. The Government response to this review was published on 14 June – see the link [here](#) which includes guidance to help departments assess and prioritise their top level core reference datasets (excluding personal data).

Cabinet office will be working with departments to take this forward and it will form part of the refresh of all Departments’ Open Data strategies being developed for the end of October 2013

Outcome

The group welcomed and agreed that a national data infrastructure would help innovative data users identify top level core reference datasets held by Government, which they might be usefully able to exploit commercially.

The Department’s user engagement strategy was likely to meet the majority of our users data needs, say 80%, but it was recognised that we need to ensure we also engage with more small business developers / entrepreneurs etc.

Inevitably most resource would be devoted to meeting the needs of 80% of our users but the Department would also aim to engage with more small business developers to help identify some of the more varied needs of the remaining 20%.

AP15 – To invite a number of small business developers to be members of the external stakeholder group. DWP would also actively engage with requests for DWP data received via the ODUG stakeholder community.

Agenda item 5 – DWP Official Statistics Consultation exercise

Stuart Grant provided feedback from the DWP Official Statistics consultation exercise (see link [here](#)) and outlined the emerging plans on what the future DWP statistical landscape will look like

Overall the feedback was positive from the consultation exercise there was wide support for the proposal to set up a unified customer data base for future reporting. Currently DWP benefits, programme, sanctions and tax credit data is published separately with few links. In future these benefits would be integrated into a unified customer database. This unified approach will allow wide cross sectional; longitudinal and transactions analysis; whilst still maintaining statistics on individual subjects.

Timescales for producing this is still being worked through but it is envisaged we may be able to start releasing some unified data by the end of this year, then build on this during 2014 and beyond as Universal Credit is implemented.

Outcome

The Board supported the development of the unified approach and agreed this would be useful for external data users. They discussed how the data would be released and the geographical level. This would be delivered by Stat-Xplore, which can be used to meet a bespoke request to meet individual developers needs represented on the Open Data User Group (ODUG).

AP17 – Mike Payne to arrange with Heather Savory a demonstration of Stat-Xplore with ODUG.

AP18 – Stuart Grant to inform Heather Savory when we start to release the unified data so she can communicate to the smaller developers community represented via ODUG

Agenda item 6 – Open Data Refresh Strategy

Martin Dillon summarised the emerging themes for inclusion in the refresh of the Department’s Open Data Strategy based on the handouts provided to members

Engaging with key stakeholders and data users – This will help inform what demand there is for our data and enable us to prioritise timings for

release.

Such feedback will be generated from various sources including this Board, an expanded External Stakeholder Group, Data.gov.uk analysis of popular data sets, Stat-Xplore registered users, ODUG stakeholders, horizon scanning of DWP's FoI landscape. We will work with Cabinet Office to identify our core datasets to be included in the new national data infrastructure and will explore other potential datasets for release, such as DWP estates information on building locations / numbers etc.

Stat-Xplore – We will add new mapping software to improve the user experience and analyse user feedback to identify priorities for adding new data sets as well as combining client data into the unified data format for release

Key releases on the horizon – These include further work programme performance data, Welfare Reform claim data on UC and PIP and Fit Note. In addition wider data sharing activities will be explored and delivered such as the Electoral Reform Transformation Programme (ERTP), Beyond 2011, Census and the Warm Home discount etc.

Outcome

The Board agreed the approach and high level themes including how the Shakespeare Review will help us to identify the main DWP core datasets to include in the refresh.

Agenda item 7 – AOB

Gill Aitken invited feedback from members on the usefulness of these meetings.

Board members confirmed they found the meetings useful and wanted to continue holding them on a six monthly basis around more regular external stakeholder group meetings. Comments included:

Heather Savory – The meetings kept her updated on DWP progress and provided her with a balanced perspective on what's possible by when which she can usefully feedback to her ODUG.stakeholders.

This moved onto a general discussion around the need for government to promote more about what they are doing, for example the data sharing activity ERTP, Beyond 2011 census etc

Paul Maltby – Explained that moving forward Cabinet Office would develop more of a programme focus to showcase open data / transparency activities and wider activities such as data sharing. Need to ensure data users continue to be plugged in via this Board and the External Stakeholder Group

Agenda item 8 – AOB

Heather Savory flagged up that ODUG had now received 8 DWP data requests for action / response. It was noted these may also be useful when looking at core datasets for inclusion in the refresh of the Open Data Strategy

Future Welfare Sector Transparency Board meeting dates

- To be arranged for November 2013

Welfare Sector Transparency Board – 13.6.13	
Attendees	
Gill Aitken (chair)	Director General Professional Services (DWP)
David Frazer	DWP Director of Information
Judith Jones	Information Commissioners Office (ICO)
Katie Shaw	Citizen Advice (CA)
Melanie Hosker	Equifax
Roger Horne	Employment Related Services Association (ERSA)
Heather Savory	Chair of Open Data User Group
Paul Maltby	Executive Director Open Data & Government Transparency Team Cabinet Office
Stuart Grant	DWP Information Governance & Security (IGS)
Nicky Tarry	DWP Information Governance & Security (IGS)
Mike Payne	DWP Information Governance & Security (IGS)
Martin Dillon	DWP Information Governance & Security (IGS)
Michelle Pickard (secretariat)	DWP Information Governance & Security (IGS)
Apologises	
Paul Boyle	Economic & Social Research Council (ESRC)
Ed Parkes	Cabinet Office – Account Manager for DWP
Keith Dugmore	Director of Demographics User Group (DUG)
Paul Raynes	Local Government Association