

Minutes			
Title of Meeting:	DWP Open Data Group		
Date:	26.9.13	Time:	11.15 – 13.30
Attendees:	See attached list		
Apologies:	See attached list		

Agenda item 1 Introduction and 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>

Nigel welcomed existing and new members to the third meeting of the Group providing a brief background and summary of its role for new attendees

Agenda item 2 – National Information Infrastructure

Martin Dillon provided an overview of the Government’s commitment to improve transparency of public data and the Cabinet Office plans to develop a National Information Infrastructure. This will include departments own data inventories at :<http://data.gov.uk/data/search?publisher=department-for-work-and-pensions&q=&unpublished=true>

DWP’s Data Inventory includes 111 unpublished datasets in addition to over 100 already published and routinely updated. The next stage is ‘assessment’ by users of these unpublished datasets, based on their potential economic and social impact, accountability etc. This assessment stage has been slow but data users are now actively engaging.

A general discussion ensued which is summarised as follows.

Department’s should identify their core reference data sets in the inventories on data.gov.uk. This is being addressed by the Open Data User Group (ODUG) developing a tracking platform to make the inventories more visible

Dataset terminology standardisation / harmonisation of metadata was important to enable effective re-use and cross government data sharing. The need for international metadata standards was also raised. Cabinet Office will address standardisation of metadata but the first stage is about building the appropriate platform to ensure visibility of the datasets for the user community.

ODUG has already identified barriers which prevent effective use of data on data.gov.uk including licensing, inconsistencies in the description of the data, and a lack of updating. However the key aim from this phase is to secure the supply of raw data and the metadata will be looked at in the future.

It was acknowledged that the biggest challenge will be to ensure privacy is not

compromised when raw data is anonymised. Pilots are taking place to look at this, including one in NHS England where companies pay a fee of a £1 which legally ties them in. As part of the evaluation the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) will focus on DPA compliance risks including the likelihood of any detriment if there's a security breach.

The discussion moved on to the work being done by the Admin Data Taskforce (ADTF) and their recommendation of secure safe facilities when using raw data for research purposes.

It was acknowledged that Open Data was split into two distinct strands

- Raw data which has been anonymised and any user can access via on-line tools such as Stat-Xplore, producing tables etc to a low geographical level
- Raw identifiable linked data which can be used by researchers in a safe and secure environment.

Agenda item 3 – Impact of welfare reform on the DWP data landscape

Nigel Brough explained that DWP currently releases official statistics on legacy benefits (JSA, ESA etc) via the department's tabulation tool. Since May 2013 Housing Benefit data has been released via an enhanced version called Stat-Xplore.

New benefit statistics from the welfare reform changes including Universal Credit (UC) and Personal independence Payment (PIP) will be released via Stat-Xplore. As part of the transition, DWP legacy benefit statistics will migrate from individual level client data to household data as UC (which will absorb housing benefit and tax credits) is rolled out to 2017.

The plan for new releases includes:

- Work Programme data – 26th September 2013
- Spare room subsidy data – 13th November 2013
- Benefit sanctions data – 6th November 2013
- UC data - some initial outputs from Pathfinder offices including transition to household data (absorbing housing benefit and tax credits) – end of 2013
- Benefit Cap national roll out data – end of 2013
- PIP data – Spring 2014

The group discussed the following:

- Timings for release of the data – the aim is to release quarterly data quicker than now, moving to 2/3 month release after the quarterly period rather than the current 6 months
- Publication of assumptions / projections data – confirmed that historical data will be published. Local Authorities are projecting impact on services 5 / 10 years ahead and combining DWP forecasting data may be helpful.

(AP: 11) To invite Tim Knight DWP Model Development Unit to the next meeting

- The data on Stat-Xplore is currently at an individual level, meeting the majority of user requirements. Following user feedback DWP is also exploring the provision of raw aggregate data that sits behind Stat-Xplore in the form of a data cube. However there are technical challenges to be resolved due to the size of the files
- In the meantime the plan is for existing legacy benefits to continue to be provided by the department's tabulation tool until they are phased out. However any specific legacy benefit data requests received from members / external users can be considered for release via Stat-Xplore
- The group agreed that the Government's data landscape needs to be underpinned by common data standards including URL links, terminology etc as this will ensure any risks are managed

Agenda item 4 – Stat-Xplore

Mike Payne provided a progress update on the ongoing development of Stat-Xplore since it's launch on 15th May 2013, including potential new datasets which have been identified for release

- Stat-Xplore now has over 550 registered users and over 3,000 data tables have been built by them.
- Dedicated email address available on the website for users to provide feedback on the product. Regular users include central government departments, Local Authorities, journalists, academics
- Feedback already provided by registered users has resulted in improvements, including an increase in the size of data tables guest users can build, a new hierarchy built into the geographical breakdown and monetary values being rounded from the nearest £1 to the nearest pence.
- Members discussed the lower level geographical output and the disclosure software which protect claimant's privacy. Users would not be alerted to the impact of the disclosure mechanism on data they were manipulating
- NI NO registration for overseas nationals - New data release via Stat-Xplore at the end of August 2013 to be updated quarterly. Since it's release there has been over 350 tables built.

Stat-Xplore supports the National Information Infrastructure as DWP's on-line tool for releasing new datasets and meeting open data requirements. Other new releases planned include:

- Spare room subsidy data – November 2013
- New sanction regimes for Jobseekers Allowance – 6th November 2013
- Universal Credit Official Statistics on the pathfinder areas – end of 2013

Fit note data was discussed including whether this would be published via

Stat-Xplore. A brief update was provided with a view to a written update going out with the minutes.

AP12 To arrange a fit note session for the next meeting

The group agreed that Stat-Xplore was a good on-line tool for meeting open data requirements and would be of potential interest for other departments. The merit of DWP participating in the UK Government Linked Data Group chaired by DEFRA was discussed. This group was set up via the Government ICT Strategy, and is a pan government group + private sector expertise to support the publication of public data to the 5* openness standard.

AP13 Paul Davidson to provide contact details for the UK Government Linked Data Group (cleared)

Agenda item 5 – DWP Official Statistics Consultation exercise

Nigel Brough provided background information on the DWP Official Statistics Consultation paper issued earlier this year, see link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/changes-to-statistics-showing-claims-for-universal-credit-and-pip>

As a result of the consultation, DWP will be moving to a unified customer data base for future reporting. This unified approach will allow wide cross sectional, longitudinal and transactions analysis, whilst still maintaining statistics on individual subjects. Full details on the outcomes from the exercise are currently being signed off for publishing on the website during October 2013.

DWP will use the above webpage and www.statsusernet.org.uk to monitor any further feedback as well as communicating details of when the unified data will start to be released.

AP14 – To provide members with the link to the DWP Official Statistics Consultation paper for them to provide any comments (cleared)

Agenda item 6 – Terms of Reference

The group agreed the revised Terms of Reference subject to the following change:

- To rewrite the 5th bullet point under the header 'purpose' and include reference to the adoption of common standards, harmonisation, sustainability and re-use across government
- Members to check their details and inform the secretariat of any changes

AP15 - Nigel Brough to contact Jil Matheson (National Statistics) for an update from the cross government group dealing with data harmonisation, sharing etc

Members agreed to change the name of the group from 'External Stakeholder Group' to 'DWP Open Data Group'

Agenda item 7 – Summary

The group discussed and agreed the following:

- **AP16** - External members to provide a brief summary at the next meeting of their role and interest they have in DWP data
- To meet quarterly and that some meetings could be held via tele-kit as an alternative to face to face

Agenda item 8 – AOB

A written update on the development of the growth review item fit note data would be provided with the minutes

Future DWP Open Data Group meeting dates

- To be arranged for January 2014

DWP Open Data Group	
Attendees	
Nigel Brough (chair)	DWP Information Governance & Security (IGS)
Paul Davidson	CIO Sedgemoor DC
Peter Elias	Employment Research University of Warwick
Lee Thomas	Decision Analytics Manager EON
Nicholas Harper	Strategic Technical Account Manager Experian
Professor Robert Barr	Chairman Manchester Geomatics
John O’Connell	Taxpayer’s Alliance
Iain Sterland	Senior Portfolio Analyst Sainsburys
Peter Watson	Corporate Management Information Citizens Advice
Jacqui Taylor	CEO FlyingBinary Ltd
Mike Payne	DWP Information Governance & Security (IGS)
Martin Dillon	DWP Information Governance & Security (IGS)
Michelle Pickard (secretariat)	DWP Information Governance & Security (IGS)
Apologies	
Paul Taylor	Innovation Coach Bromford
Paul Bivand	Associate Director of Statistics & Analysis CESI
Richard Hopper	MI Manager SERCO
James Angel	Analytics & Solutions Division Equifax
Rachel Smith	Centre for Cities