

Minutes			
Title of Meeting:	Welfare Sector Transparency Board (WSTB)		
Date:	10 July 2014	Time:	11.30 – 13.30
Attendees:	See attached list		
Apologies:	See attached list		

Agenda item 1 – Introduction and Welcome

David Frazer (DF) welcomed everyone to the sixth meeting of this Sector Board, providing a brief background and summary of its role for new attendees.

Agenda item 2 – Previous meeting note and action points

Heather Savory (HS) sought an update on the Health and Safety Executive's progress concerning the release of data sets (item 5. of the last meeting minutes). DF confirmed that in future meetings a data release progress update from the HSE and any other Arms Length Bodies (ALBs) who subsequently attend the Board, would be a standing below the line paper.

AP23: HSE data release progress report to be included for future WSTB meetings.

HS provided an update on the Cabinet Office's (CO's) work to release a national address database (**AP18**). It was confirmed that funding had been agreed by the Transparency Board, to allow the Open Data Institute (ODI) to take forward the development of an Open Address Gazetteer. Additionally, the ODI will be running a Gazetteer based workshop on 8 August, at which DWP would be welcome to participate.

HS also advised that the Open Data Fund was currently awaiting further bids for funding. The next deadline was imminent (16 July) but there may be another opportunity downstream. HS made reference to the previously unsuccessful 'Fit Note' bid and suggested that DWP may wish to resubmit a suitably revised bid. DF agreed to make relevant colleagues aware of the bidding opportunity.

AP24: WSTB secretariat to make 'Fit Note' policy colleagues aware of the open data fund bidding opportunity and relevant timescales.

Keith Dugmore (KD) updated the Board on the Office for National Statistics (ONS) involvement in the Population Census Beyond 2011 debate (**AP21**). KD confirmed that he, DWP and ONS had enjoyed useful dialogue in this area to take this agenda forward. As part of this, it had been agreed that currently, ONS participation on the WSTB was not appropriate but that they should attend a future meeting to provide a progress update.

AP25: ONS to be invited to a future WSTB meeting.

It was agreed that all other Action points from the last meeting had been

cleared. The Board also agreed minutes of the previous meeting.

Agenda item 3 – DWP Statistical Service

Nigel Brough (NB), a senior DWP Statistician, provided an update on the significant changes afoot to DWP's statistical reports. He summarised DWP's significant activity in publishing new statistics relating to its key Welfare Reforms. These included additional data relating to Universal Credit, the Benefit Cap, Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) / Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) sanctions; ESA: Work Capability Assessment (WCA), the Work Programme and Personal Independence Payments (PIP). Some of this new data was released via the Department's Stat-Xplore tool.

NB advised that further data had also been released on National Insurance Numbers for non-UK nationals and that work continues on a 'unified publication database'. Board members would be appraised of further developments on this area as the work progressed.

More information on key DWP statistics can be found at the following link:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions/about/statistics>

KD welcomed the release of this additional data, and asked whether the membership of the 'DWP Open Data Group' chaired by NB, could be expanded. NB confirmed that this Group had recently expanded to include LA reps and academics but he would be happy to increase membership further.

AP26: Open Data Group secretariat to explore an expansion of the DWP Open Data Group. Nominations to be sought from Board members

Gemma Hopkins (GH) expressed interest in the WCA stats and wondered if the outcomes could be broken down by condition? NB agreed to look into this.

AP27: NB to review the format of the WCA stats and consider the feasibility of breaking down results by medical condition.

GH also confirmed her interest in the JSA / ESA sanctions data, and asked whether additional factors such as health conditions and work history could be reflected too. NB advised that this may be possible but that competing priorities may be an issue.

Mark Nicholson (MN) asked whether the data could drill down to post code level. HS agreed that this would be useful. JSA/ESA data did not currently reflect post code data but DF/NB agreed to explore what was possible without compromising privacy.

AP28: NB to consider what level of granularity would be possible for JSA/ESA sanctions data.

Agenda item 4 – Cabinet Office Open Data Update

Suzanne Ter-Minassian (STM) updated the Board on Cabinet Office (CO) preparations for responding to the recent Public Accounts Administration Select Committee report *Statistics and Open Data: Harvesting unused knowledge, empowering citizens and improving public services* which were, published on 17th March, 2014.

Additionally, CO will work with partners to refresh and improve the National Information Infrastructure (NII) The changes would build on existing good practice and also look to develop training in this area, particularly for staff involved in procurement. STM advised that funding had already been made available centrally for Open Data training and encouraged all Departments to participate in these training opportunities.

DF asked how DWP could improve its performance in this area. HS confirmed that DWP was an exemplar in the Open Data sharing space. TSM also confirmed that there was an appetite for DWP data.

Agenda item 5 – The Pension's Regulator

The Pensions Regulator (TPR) had been scheduled to present the Board with an outline of their work, their transparency products and their engagement with key stakeholders. However, travel problems meant that this item had to be carried forward to the next meeting. TPR sent their apologies.

AP29: A representative from TPR to attend and present the next WSTB

Agenda item 6 – DWP's progress on linking data sets

Nicky Tarry (NT), from DWP's Information Governance and Security Directorate, provided an overview of 'the Challenges and Developments in Data Sharing and linking' – see the link to the presentation [here](#)

NT explored the challenges involved in sharing and linking DWP data with OGDs in a safe space solely for policy analysis and evaluation purposes. He shared details of the progress that had already been made and developments on the horizon particularly in relation to, data quality and standardisation to make the outcomes more valuable for accredited data users.

KD welcomed NT's presentation and suggested that there was a need to 'ram-home' the benefits of this development work. He also requested that the slides be shared with WSTB members.

AP30 (cleared): WSTB secretariat to circulate NT's presentation slides to Board members.

HS also welcomed NT's presentation and invited NT to present it to a meeting of her Open Data User Group (ODUG). NT agreed to this request.

DF confirmed that the work had great potential moving forwards but that

resource implications are likely to mean that this activity would need to be targeted at priority areas.

Agenda item 7 – AOB

None

Future Welfare Sector Transparency Board meeting dates

- To be arranged for early 2015

Welfare Sector Transparency Board – 10.7.14	
Attendees	
David Frazer (chair)	DWP Director of Information
Judith Jones	Information Commissioners Office (ICO)
Gemma Hopkins	Employment Related Services Association (ERSA)
Mark Nicholson	Equifax
Heather Savory	Chair of Open Data User Group
Keith Dugmore	Director of Demographics User Group (DUG)
Suzanne Ter-Minassian	Cabinet Office
Nigel Brough	DWP Statistical Services
Nicky Tarry	DWP Information Governance & Security (IGS)
Andy Vickers (secretariat)	DWP Information Governance & Security (IGS)
Apologies	
Kirsty McHugh	Employment Related Services Association (ERSA)
Hugh Strickland	Citizen Advice (CA)
Paul Raynes	Local Government Association
Vanessa Cuthill	Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)
Olivia Burman	Cabinet Office
Chris Opie	The Pensions Regulator
Martin Dillon	DWP Information Governance & Security (IGS)
Michelle Pickard	DWP Information Governance & Security (IGS)