Public Data Group Board
10am – 1pm, 25th September 2014,
BIS, 1 Victoria Street, London
Published agenda, minutes and papers

Attendees:
Claudia Arney CA (Chair, Public Data Group)
Ann Lewis AL (Director of Operations and Customer Delivery, Companies House)
Ed Lester EL (CEO, Land Registry)
Mark Boyle MB (Chair Land Registry)
Rob Varley RV (CEO, Met Office)
Neil Ackroyd NA (Acting CEO, Ordnance Survey)
Rob Margetts RM (Chair, Ordnance Survey)
Ceri Smith CS (Director, Shareholder Executive)

Additional attendees:
Matthew Hancock MP MH (Minister for Portsmouth, Minister of State for Business
and Enterprise and Minister of State for Energy)
Andrea Young AY (Director, Information Economy, BIS)
Harvey Lewis HL (Research Director – Analytics, Deloitte)
Leo Geddes LG (ShEx PDG policy lead)
Iain Rolfe IR (ShEx PDG)
Kirun Patel KP (ShEx PDG)

Apologies:
Brian Landers (Chair, Companies House)
Tim Moss (CEO, Companies House)
Greg Clarke (Chair, Met Office)

Agenda:

1.	**Welcome, introductions and minutes from last meeting** *(15 minutes)*	**Claudia Arney**
2.	**Chair update** *(15 minutes)* • *Update on Chair's activity.*	**Claudia Arney**
3.	**Update on Digital Task Force** *(30 minutes)*	**Andrea Young**
4.	**Ministerial introduction** *(30 minutes)*	**Matthew Hancock MP**
5.	**Data work streams update** *(15 minutes)* • *Update on progress.* • *Followed by discussion.*	**Iain Rolfe**
6.	**Horizon Scanning** *(30 minutes)* • *Thoughts on key issues/challenges of data policy.* • *Followed by discussion.*	**Harvey Lewis**
7.	**Discussion of future PDG Board Structure** *(40 minutes)* • *Discussion of Future of PDG paper*	**Claudia Arney and Ceri Smith**
8.	**Conclusion / any other business** *(5 minutes)*	**Claudia Arney**

Notes of the discussion:

Item 1: Welcome, introductions and minutes from last meeting

1. Minutes of the last meeting were agreed and most actions were ongoing or had been completed. NA and John Dodds are yet to arrange a meeting.

Item 2: Chair update

2. CA noted the PDG summer statement had been well received within the centre as well as receiving reasonable coverage including the FT and Guardian even though it coincided with the Ministerial reshuffle. It was noted the Summer Statement had helped change tone of the debate.

3. CA had met with Matthew Hancock and PDG was also discussed at the ShEx Board.

4. CA invited the four organisations to provide an update to the Board.
    *   Neil Ackroyd noted Ordnance Survey was currently clarifying its strategic direction around open data in response to a request by No. 10 and was also working towards moving to a GovCo. OS are also looking at options to provide full access to all data for all uses up to a certain threshold limit.
    *   Ed Lester shared Land Registry was currently in a stabilising period and focussing on a new executive team. This follows the Government decision to not pursue enabling legislation and take no decision on a change in commercial model. It was noted that this does not rule out reviewing the commercial model in future. LR has released large amounts of data.
    *   Rob Varley updated the Board on Met Office. Large amounts of data is already available through Met Office's data platform, Datapoint. To take open data to the next level, huge amounts of data would need to be organised to increase its accessibility. However, it was noted there had never been customer demand for this, and a decision would need to be made on what should be charged-for data and what should be free.
    *   Ann Lewis stated Companies House was moving to a fully open, freely available data model in Spring and that their accounts data was a very rich source of data.

Item 3: Update on Digital Task Force

CA introduced AY, Director of the Digital Economy Unit who provided an introduction to her team and their work. The unit is a joint BIS and DCMS unit that was created in July, with Ed Vaizey the responsible Minister.

5. AY also updated the Board on the Ministerial Taskforce, chaired by Francis Maude and bringing together a number of Ministers to drive forward delivery of a digital economy.

6. The importance of the broader context was also highlighted with a focus on growth, and it was noted many companies are willing to pay for high quality data. The UK was deemed to be one of the most productive global markets according to Cisco with strengths in 5G and Big Data Analytics. However, it was felt that stimulating the SME market has been difficult – for example, following a large Met Office data realise, there was limited entrepreneur innovation and small companies were often bought by big market leaders.

7. CS noted that there was a valuable opportunity to demonstrate the importance of PDG by contributing to the work of the Digital Economy Unit. AY suggested a short paper on the role of the PDG organisations, highlighting key facts and initiatives in promoting digital growth would be helpful.

8. CA thanked AY for the helpful insights, and agreed to have a further session at a future PDG Board.

Item 4: Ministerial Introduction

9. CA welcomed MH to the PDG Board and introduced the Minister to the PDG members.

10. MH declared himself a passionate supporter of open data, although clearly stated a right balance needed to be struck between commercial activity and open data opportunities.

11. MH concluded by giving his support to PDG, noting the value in being able to share capability and best practice. He recognised the optimum position for each organisation would be different, and the challenge was to find the 'sweet spot' for each.

Item 5: Data work streams update

12. IR provided an update on the workstreams previously agreed by the Board. IR drew attention to the progress to date and noted specifically the launch of the joint OS/LR GeoVation challenge on housing and the positive reception of the PDG summer statement within BIS and how that showed the value within the Dept. and CO of co-ordinating announcements.

13. IR also flagged to the Board the planned launch of a survey on PDG data that would seek to build an evidence base on awareness, usage and issues with PDG data to inform later proposals on how PDG data could be made more available and be reflected in improved Developer

Licences. The process is supported across BIS with the view to tap into the various BIS networks to reach out to as wide a section of the business and user community as possible. The Board agreed to encourage engagement and support from within their organisations.

14. IR also raised plans to better link BIS SME financial support and InnovateUK schemes with PDG developers. NA mentioned that OS intends to create a Geospatial Innovation Hub in Shoreditch to provide a base for engagement with developers and to act as a catalyst for wider use of OS data. The Board expressed interest and enthusiasm for the idea and NA signalled that the Hub could also be useful for other PDG members.

Item 6: Horizon Scanning

15. CA introduced HL, Research Director of Analytics from Deloitte. HL is a former member of ODUG and has recently joined the Public Sector Transparency Board (PSTB).

16. HL stressed the most important factor for businesses when working with data was to understand provenance. He suggested businesses can deal with quality issues if they are aware of the issues. CS noted that maintaining quality would inevitably require investment, making it difficult to always provide data freely. HL agreed and suggested many large organisations are happy to pay for the data – he highlighted the challenge would be in meeting the needs of big business as well as SMEs and individuals.

17. HL also raised the lack of understanding around business and societal needs for data as another issue, with the current debate around open data very polarised, and often driven by people with limited understanding of the data, with a lack of genuine users currently informing the debate. It was flagged many people are talking about the same issues but using different languages. HL stressed the need to mobilise a more effective voice from users to inform the debate.

18. NA appealed to business to approach the PDG organisations with the problem, rather than with a pre-empted solution. Working together to solve the problem was echoed across the Board, with some organisations suggesting problem solving with customers was a key factor in retaining motivated and skilled staff. HL agreed that a debate starting with data is the wrong starting point. The issues of whether PDG members could do more to share their expertise and experiences across the public sector was discussed with the importance of bilateral engagement noted.

19. Core reference data was also discussed, including the approach that data on the National Information Infrastructure (NII) should be open by default and closed by exception, such as for privacy reasons. Linked

data is also important to maximise opportunity and help meet the needs of multiple users.

20. CA thanked HL for his insights, and offered continuing engagement with the trading funds individually or PDG collectively.

21. NA invited CA and HL to an upcoming geospatial forum for insurers.

Item 7: Discussion on future PDG Board structure

22. CA introduced a discussion on the future of PDG. This covered a variety of areas including what was going well, and what could be improved. The distinction between the sponsorship role ShEx traditionally played and the more policy role that PDG generally played also took place.

23. A number of specific comments were raised which will be taken into consideration in a distilled version of the paper. It was agreed the revised paper should also clearly set out the vision and objectives.

Item 8: AOB
24. There was no AOB.

Item 5: September PDG Board: Stock take of work streams

> **Purpose: The Board is asked to note achievements so far, the work underway, consider the proposed action for the Board and flag any concerns or areas for prioritisation.**

Work stream	Current work and achievements	Status - Action for Board	
Collaborating to maximise support for the developer community:			
1) Create a 'PDG Challenge' programme focused on ideas utilising multiple PDG data sets.	• Joint LR/OS challenge on housing launched on 15th September • PDG connected to Nesta Open Data Challenge series • Further collaborations under consideration	On-going - Consider scope for new challenge events	
2) Offer 'pump priming' support to developers to enable them to grow ideas into products.	• 2nd GeoVation alumni event planned to include developers using PDG data and attended by advisors from BIS SME finance and InnovateUK • BIS SME finance and InnovateUK being lined up to support LR/OS Housing Challenge • Work in development on signposting financial support	On-going – Encourage identification of developers/SME using your data for invitation	
Exploring opportunities for collaboration to deliver efficiencies within PDG:			
3) Assess the status of the previous IT work streams	• IT lead discussion group still running on Huddle. No further work intended.	Complete - Agree to close	
4) Explore the possibility for greater co-operation in managing technical staff.	• Initial HR conversations took place. No next steps identified and no further work intended.	Complete - Agree to close	
Using the collective strength of PDG to develop a refined approach to Open Data with greater emphasis on understanding users and their use of Open Data:			
5) Create a 'PDG offer' on data – covering both Open and value added data.	• PDG Summer Statement published on 15th July alongside CH free data announcement and BIS Open Data Strategy – received coverage in City AM, Guardian and FT	Complete - Agree to close	
6) Create a common approach to using forums to engage with users and create links through them across PDG.	• Commitment in Summer Statement for all PDG members to create a forum. Work on-going in CH and LR.	On-going – No action required	
7) Commit to progressing linking of core PDG data sets, up to 5* Linked Data where feasible.	• Commitment in Summer Statement for PDG members to work with the Public Sector Linked Data Working Group to collaborate and run a public engagement exercise to identify best approach. • Thomas Reuters to be invited to workshop in October.	On-going – No action required	
8) Engage with Data.Gov.UK and Cabinet Office strategically as PDG.	• Data.Gov.UK publishers group formed with remit to provide challenge and advice to CO on operations of Data.Gov.UK • PASC response supports PDG position	On-going – No action required	
9)NEW –Better understand and improve SMEs and developers usage of PDG data.	• As announced in the Summer Statement work is underway to launch a consultation exercise aimed at understanding awareness and usage of PDG data by SMEs and developers. This will inform a development of a recommendation by a panel on how Developer Licences and general access can be improved.	On-going – Encourage engagement and support for process such as feedback, contacts and details on current developer licence use	