Minutes			
Title of Meeting:	Welfare Sector Transparency Board (WSTB)		
Date:	19 February 2015	**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 seventh meeting of this Sector Board and explained that the meeting will aim to bring everyone up to date with what we are doing and our plans for the next six months.

David also updated members on upcoming organisational changes - his directorate will move to a new 'Technology' command from 1st April led by Mayank Prakash a new Director General. This will bring together key expertise on designing IT, acquiring and using data, statistics and analytics and improve data integration, customer insight and business value

AP 31 (19.2.15) – To consider inviting Mayank to the next meeting to set out his CIO vision

Agenda item 2 – DWP progress Update

Neil Mcivor (NM) provided an update on the Department's statistical landscape including new welfare reform datasets

- **Universal Credit** (UC) – now released monthly and split across 'in' and 'out' of employment. Also includes 'claims made' live up to 3 working days before publication (real time). Latest release (yesterday) included an interactive map for every Jobcentre allowing users to identify which offices have rolled out UC. Good feedback has been received on this with over 500 tweets already. A prototype digital UC service is also being trialled.
- **Benefit Cap** – released quarterly via Stat-Xplore
- **Work Programme Statistics** - released regularly – now in a new format and National Stats accredited
- **NINOs for overseas nationals** – linked to Home Office migration stats from the latest release on 26 February 2015
- **Personal Independence Payment** (PIP) – regular release by Stat-Xplore and includes underlying medical conditions. Clearance times due to be added in March 2015
- **Employment Support Allowance** (ESA) / Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) Sanctions – released yesterday and for the first time includes 'mandatory reconsiderations'
- **ESA Work Capability Assessment** (WCA) – Stats to be revamped to include the lifecycle of WCA. A new publication is due to be released during summer 2015 in 'excel' initially and then via Stat-Xplore
- **Disability Living Allowance** (DLA) – currently trialling the potential to release DLA data (legacy benefits) via Stat-Xplore. If successful this will allow comparisons to be made against DLA and PIP and analysis of gainers and losers

- **API / Data Cube** – DWP has produced a point-in-time Housing Benefit data cube but its size is a challenge for GOV.UK hosting. Exploring how to resolve this including potential for hosting by the Stat-Xplore provider.

Mark Nicholson (MN) raised the question of digital by default and if there were any figures on how this was progressing

AP32 (19.2.15) DWP to check and feedback any figures on digital uptake

Heather Savory (HS) was surprised that data size was a problem for GDS as she understood that capacity was scaleable. Keith Dugmore (KD) and Pete Watson (PW) queried whether a data cube was the right option as opposed to an on-line service or a cloud based solution. DWP will explore this further as part of the development of the API. (HS) indicated that GDS capability for high volume data sharing across government should be on the radar for the new Cabinet Office Chief Data Officer

Fit Note Data – Good news. DWP had secured funding for the set up and running costs for publishing fit note data. The Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) will gather and release the data on behalf of DWP and make it available via their own tabulation tool (similar to Stat-Xplore). They aim to have this data available to the public at CCG level during summer 2015.

AP 33 (19.2.15) DWP to provide Liam Murphy (LM) with contact details for the HSCIC rep

- **Data Sharing** - Nicky Tarry (NT) provided an update following his session at the last Board meeting on the challenges and developments in data sharing and linking. Since then DWP has worked closely with Cabinet Office refining the details and a further paper is due out shortly via the *datasharing.org* website, see www.datasharing.org.uk

AP34 (19.2.15) NT to provide members with the website link when the paper is published (cleared see link above)

- The Admin Data Research Network (ADRN) is gearing up and DWP is preparing to receive their data requests including working through procedures, capability building and security assurance to ensure any products developed will fit with requirements

(KD) suggested DWP's data sharing to tackle fuel and water poverty were good examples of government collaboration with the private sector and should receive more publicity.

AP 35 (19.2.15) – DWP to provide a summary of such examples and use it to highlight successful data sharing activities which improve public services

Agenda item 3 – Data Visualisation

Ryan Dunn (RD) provided an overview of how data visualisation can enhance transparency by making information more accessible. This was illustrated by taking on board feedback from last year's consultation on Work Programme (WP) stats which had led to a new use-friendly format. See the data visualisation presentation.

WP data releases are now provided through Google Public Data Explorer and based on a 'journalistic' structure. Supporting narrative is in plain English, and is more intuitive and interactive. Lower level detail is still accessible enabling users to customise the stats as appropriate.

The new format had been accredited by the Government Statistical Service (GSS) who considered it 'excellent' for its use of visuals and storytelling to explain complicated data to the non-expert citizen.

Members agreed this was an excellent product and commented as follows:
- Good narrative provided as well as still having the underlying data, allows for wider independent analysis resulting in richer data
- Welcomed as a powerful new format
- Good for academics as well as local analysis which citizens can find easier to engage with
- Demonstrates how user feedback can enhance openness

Members agreed that a high level objective interpretation was helpful.

To support continuous improvement (NM) asked members to feedback any examples of poorly presented DWP data so it could be addressed collectively.

Agenda item 4 – The Pensions Regulator

Chris Opie (CO) provided an overview of the role of The Pensions Regulator (TPR). TPR regulate occupational pension schemes by working with pension scheme trustees, scheme managers and employers. Their focus is split between workplace auto-enrolment, defined contribution and defined benefit schemes.

Currently auto-enrolment was a priority (especially take-up by small employers) alongside their compliance role which includes section 89 reports (see more on this here)

(HS) asked about the TPR's compliance regime. CO referred to the TPR memorandum of understanding with the FCA – see here
Judith Jones (JJ) asked about pensions early release schemes and the TPR role in ensuring advice is available to pensioners before they draw down their pension funds. CO explained that TPR worked closely with the Pensions Policy Institute in this area.

(DF) thanked (CO) for attending and updating members on TPR's role etc

Agenda item 5 – Cabinet office Update

(LM) updated the group on the development of the second stage of the National Information Infrastructure (NII) framework. The first NII iteration focused on providing a list of key government datasets. The new NII proposition is more demand led and will focus on providing standards and improved central governance, including the appointment of a chief data officer. Cabinet Office are working with three Departments (DEFRA, DfT and DH) to pilot how the new NII will be delivered in practice.

The revised NII launch is scheduled for the 24th March 2015. During the summer, Departments will start populating their NII using experience gained from lessons learned from the pilots mentioned above.

(HS) updated members on the Open Data User Group (ODUG) perspective on the NII. ODUG are calling for a single set of open government identifiers including an open address list. ODUG's paper aims to reach out to a wider public audience and explains what the NII is and why and how it matters. ODUG also highlight the importance of appointing a chief data officer, http://data.gov.uk/library/odug-national-information-infrastructure-nii

AP 36 (19.2.15) – DWP will alert key internal colleagues to ODUG's report (cleared)

(HS) announced that the Release of Data Fund has closed. A final report will highlight how the fund has delivered more open data via the 30 funded projects. One project is developing an 'open address database' populated by crowd sourcing – to avoid third party licensing restrictions such as those attached to the Royal Mail Postcode Address File.

(MN) asked if the open address database was pre-populated with any details and whether ODUG had engaged with the credit reference agencies, as they hold one of the biggest sources of data for addresses. (HS) highlighted that Companies House data had been used but there was a need to ensure the data remains free from contamination.

AP37 (19.2.15) (HS) and (MN) to discuss separately the further potential for using credit reference data

Agenda item 6 – Admin Data Research Network

Melanie Wright (MW) provided a session on progress with the Admin Data Research Network (ADRN)

The network is made up of 4 centres, Southampton, Belfast, Edinburgh and Swansea and is governed by an independent board chaired by the UK Stats Authority

There are 4 key stages to the ADRN process:

- Stage 1 – Researchers develop their application
- Stage 2 – An Approvals Panel which meets monthly to assess applications against a range of criteria such as ethics, feasibility,

- scientific merit, public benefits etc. Once approved by the panel, researchers need accreditation training
- Stage 3 – The ADRN negotiate with departments on whether they can provide the data and then prepare the data for access by the researcher. For example by de-personalising it, and identifying links with other Departments etc
- Stage 4 – The accredited researcher can then access the data in a secure location or remotely using a secure pod.

Since launch ADRN has received 76 initial queries (8 related to DWP) of which 17 are now proposals in the development stage and 9 have been accepted by the Approvals panel.

ADRN's role and rules of engagement are fully transparent and their independent of government status had been well received by the public in managing privacy concerns. The work of the ADRN fits with the government's wider transparency agenda by enhancing third sector research using public sector data. Commercial uses are not on the agenda at present.

The ADRN is helping to change the perception that government data, including DWP's, is no longer difficult to get hold of subject to the above approvals process.

(KD) highlighted that as industry cannot access this they may welcome the potential to utilise a researcher to do this on their behalf. (MW) confirmed that could be feasible if the public value test was met.

(PW) highlighted the value of ADRN research outputs if managed correctly, for example cross-government data matching could help Citizens Advice predict the need for access to homelessness services

(HS) indicated that demand should increase incrementally and that this could be a challenge. (MW) confirmed that the process of 'considering what is required and why' should help limit demand.

AP 38 (19.2.15) (MW) to send details about the ADRN to (HS) for her to include in her blog on DGU

Agenda item 7 – AOB

(KD) asked whether a change in government would have an impact on the work of this transparency Board. (DF) confirmed that the Board would continue

(JJ) suggested that providing bespoke training in data sharing across government would help more staff better understand the benefits and challenges. Cabinet Office would have a cross-government role here and (LM) and (JJ) would discuss this aspect separately

Future Welfare Sector Transparency Board meeting dates
- Thursday 8th October 2015 between 11.30 – 13.30pm at Caxton House London

Welfare Sector Transparency Board – 19.2.15	
Attendees	
David Frazer (chair)	DWP Director of Information, Exploitation and Security
Neil Mcivor	DWP Statistical Services
Judith Jones	Information Commissioners Office (ICO)
Maeve McGoldrick	Employment Related Services Association (ERSA)
Mark Nicholson	Equifax
Heather Savory	Chair of Open Data User Group (ODUG)
Melanie Wright	University of Essex
Pete Watson	Citizens Advice (CA)
Keith Dugmore	Demographic User Group
Liam Murphy	Cabinet Office
Chris Opie	The Pensions Regulator
Nicky Tarry	DWP Information Exploitation & Security (IES)
Ryan Dunn	DWP Information Exploitation & Security (IES)
Martin Dillon	DWP Information Exploitation & Security (IES)
Michelle Pickard (secretariat)	DWP Information Exploitation & Security (IES)
Apologies	
Vanessa Cuthill	Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)
Antonio Acuna	Cabinet Office