MINUTES			
Title of Meeting:	DWP Open Data Group		
Date:	18.11.16	**Time:**	11.30 – 13.30
Attendees:	See attached list		
Apologies:	See attached list		

Agenda item 1 - Introduction and Welcome

Tom Davies (TD) welcomed existing and new members to the seventh meeting of the Group and explained he was chairing as Nigel Brough was ill.

Agenda item 2 – DWP data landscape

TD provided a session recapping what data DWP puts into the public domain and our developments over the last 18 months since the last Open Data Group meeting.

He outlined:
- What we publish, including large number of PQs & Freedom of Information disclosures in addition to publications under Open Data and Transparency
- The range of statistics publication formats we use (1st release PDF summary headlines, standalone spreadsheets, Stat-Xplore, maps)
- The increasing use of interactive data visualisation tools to make our statistics more accessible to a wider range of users, and
- Additional information now released (UC stats covering conditionality breakdowns, ESA Mandatory Reconsiderations) and plans for new information.

Robert Barr (RB) and Paul Bivand (PB) commented on Office of National Statistics (ONS)'s statistical publications which are layered, e.g. links leading to underlying data so that it doesn't interfere with the simplicity of the report, but users can still drill down to the underlying data. Adam Pearce (AP) confirmed that we can look at implementing a similar interaction as part of the data visualisations being developed but DWP is limited by the restrictions on what can be published on Gov.uk (policy issue rather than technical issues). ONS are exempt from having to publish on Gov.uk, so can move at greater speed and with more flexibility in the data visualisation/dissemination of data.

Agenda item 3 – Stat-Xplore developments

Adam Pearce (AP) provided an update on Stat-Xplore including:
- Ongoing work to improve the Stat-Xplore API (Application Programming Interface)
- The migration of legacy benefit statistics from DWP's Tabulation Tool to Stat-Xplore; the Tabulation Tool will be decommissioned in February 2017
- Server re-hosting

- Plans to contact registered users for feedback
- Annual upgrade due to start w/c 28 November

The server re-hosting should also allow us to work with the owners of Stat-Xplore to:
- publish interactive maps
- publish survey data via a new model.

Paul Bivand (PB) commented that the NOMIS website is a lot easier to use than Stat-Xplore, which would benefit from additional functionality. AP advised that, as part of the Stat-Xplore annual upgrade, an interactive tour function will be available to help users.

AP commented that our goal is to improve Stat-Xplore to make it as useful, intuitive and powerful as possible, so feedback is always welcome from any user and can be sent to STAT.XPLORE@DWP.GSI.GOV.UK. TD confirmed that we can contact registered users to consult on statistical developments, so he encourages users to register.

Agenda item 4 – Data Visualisation

Adam Pearce (AP) provided an overview of developments in data visualisation and how DWP are using it for statistics releases in the following ways:
- Interactive web-based data visualisation which aids user exploration to find the data they actually want
- Lots of work with ONS who have excellent data visualisation tools available on their website as well as JSON and PDF options
- Training DWP analysts in producing good quality information releases
- Shared dashboards, e.g. Personal Independence Payment (PIP): the original plan was for the dashboards to work off the Stat-Xplore API but they are currently hard coded
- National Insurance number (NINo) registrations: interactive maps are currently at a region level but hopefully will eventually show Local Authority (LA) level/office registered level when the API becomes more useable
- Fraud & Error data visualisation: production of interactive pages which are easy to digest and interact with as opposed to previous huge tables.

RB commented that LAs need sub-national data; LA and wards are particularly important. PB reminded that the census boundaries need to be borne in mind; they will need to be regularly updated. Seasonal adjustments are also an issue. AP confirmed that we can work on including ward data; it may be possible to show current wards as an overlay.

PB noted that technologies and accessibility are an issue that need to be kept in mind; most people's chosen method is their smartphone browser.

AP then demonstrated our gamification quiz tool, based on similar ONS tools

on their website. PB asked if there was a timeline for its release; AP confirmed that DWP Data Engineers are being consulted to make sure it complies with Gov.uk's accessibility requirements, but the hope is to release a prototype in the next few months on the back of DWP's Data Science work.

Pete Watson (PW) commented on the accessibility issues immediately apparent but that it was a good direction of travel.

Agenda item 5 – Data Science

Ryan Dunn (RD) provided background to DWP's Data Science function/team.

Stuart Mackay (SM) provided an overview and demonstration of Churchill, a DWP Data Science project, aimed specifically at providing DWP policy makers with a more self-service product to make the cycle of questions back and forth between policy makers and analysts more productive.

Future enhancements are hoped to include:
- Pulling data across from Stat-Xplore and NOMIS; an improved Stat-Xplore API will help this
- User feedback function, including discussions between policy makers and analysts who have different perspectives, which is key to getting the right visuals.

RD confirmed that once Churchill is fully functional within DWP, the cross-governmental data sharing uses will be considered.

Nick Halliday (NH) commented that this is a good use of data which is already out there. It is important to demonstrate that open data is in demand and is used, and foreseeing where we want to link our data to is important. NH suggested that this would be a great example for a Cabinet Office Data Group Show and Tell. NH to put RD in touch with relevant people in Cabinet Office (**AP28**).

Paul Malyon (PM) asked when Churchill will be released for public use. RD confirmed that there are Gov.uk restrictions but work is underway to try to resolve issues.

Agenda item 6 – Summary and AOB

TD said he would be the chair of this group in the future as responsibility for this area was moving into his command. He asked for thoughts on the Open Data Group moving forward. Gillian Hall (GH) to gather opinions via short questionnaire as per the Welfare Sector Transparency Board (**AP29**).

PB asked for further details about draft Open Data Case Study 4 (data labs). GH will ensure the case study owner provides an update before case studies are finalised in readiness for publishing (**AP30**).

PB asked about Universal Credit and statistics on the flow of conditionality groups. TD advised that he would add this to the Statistics Strategy consultation due 2017, for consideration (**AP31**).

Future DWP Open Data Group meeting date

- To be arranged (May 2017 approx.)

DWP Open Data Group - meeting 18.11.16	
Attendees	
Tom Davies (chair)	DWP Digital, Head of Client Statistics
Paul Bivand	Associate Director of Statistics & Analysis, LWI
Peter Watson	Corporate Management Information, Citizen Advice
Julie Hewitt	Equifax
Professor Robert Barr	Manchester Geomatics
Nick Halliday	Cabinet Office
Nic Gates	Experian
Paul Malyon	Experian
Adam Pearce	DWP Digital
Ryan Dunn	DWP Digital
Stuart Mackay	DWP Digital
Gillian Hall (secretariat)	DWP Digital, Open Data and Transparency
Apologies	
Iain Sterland	Senior Portfolio Analyst, Sainsburys
Lee Thomas	Decision Analytics Manager, EON
Jacqui Taylor	CEO, FlyingBinary Ltd
Nigel Brough	DWP Digital, Head of Fraud and Error Measurement Analysis
Gemma Kirk	DWP Digital, Open Data and Transparency