Public Data Group (PDG)
Tuesday 10 Sept 2013 -
Published agenda and minutes

Attendees:
Claudia Arney CA, (Chair, Public Data Group)
Greg Clarke GC, (Chair, Met Office)
Tim Moss TM, (CEO, Companies House)
Brian Landers BL, (Chair, Companies House)
Mark Boyle MB, (Chair, Land Registry)
Vanessa Lawrence VL, (CEO, Ordnance Survey)
Ceri Smith CS, (Director for PDG, Shareholder Executive)

Additional attendees:
Kirsty Pearce KP, ShEx PDG policy lead
note taker, PDG secretariat
Heather Savory HS, Chair, Open Data User Group (ODUG)
OB, a presenter, Cabinet Office Transparency team
BIS press officer

Apologies:
John Hirst (CEO, Met Office)
Ed Lester (CEO, Land Registry)
Sir Rob Margetts (Chair, Ordnance Survey)

Agenda:

1. **Welcome, introductions and minutes from last meeting** *(5 minutes)*	**Claudia Arney**
2. **Chair update** *(10 minutes)* • *Update on Chair's activity.*	**Claudia Arney**
3. **Policy update** *(10 minutes)* • *Update from Data Strategy and Services team*	**Kirsty Pearce** **Laura Hart**
4. **Open Data architecture** *(35 minutes)* • *ODUG update and forward look* • *Public Sector Transparency Board update* • *Followed by discussion*	**Heather Savory** **Olivia Burman**
5. **Comms Update** *(10 minutes)* • *Update from PDG Comms group*	**Ed Smith**
6. **Vesting** *(25 minutes)* • *Sharing information about vesting.*	**PDG members**
7. **Data environment** *(20 minutes*) • *Discussion Improving data linkages, data structures, indexing*	**Claudia Arney**
8. **Conclusion / any other business** *(5 minutes)*	**Claudia Arney**

Note of discussion:

Item 1: Welcome, introductions and minutes from last meeting
1. CA opened the meeting and welcomed Ceri Smith, Director for PDG in ShEx to the Board. CS had already met those around the table on a one to one basis.

Item 2: Chair update
2. CA then continued with her regular update stating that she had sent a letter to Michael Fallon (also copied to PDG Board) and had received a positive response from the Minister to say that he welcomed the update and agreed with the direction of travel.

3. CA then mentioned the action from the previous PDG meeting to develop a PDG Open Data strategy. She suggested that due to the numerous changes within the Open Data architecture (e.g. the abolition of the DSB) she felt that now was not the right time to pursue this action. **The Board agreed.**

4. She then went on to report back on the Public Sector Transparency Board (PSTB) meeting which she attended on Mon 9 Sept. This Board is the amalgamation between the existing PSTB and the DSB and is chaired by Francis Maude. She stressed that this Board was looking at the wider open data agenda and not just the PDG trading funds. She also added that from a business perspective the current representation is from Experian (who provided good questions and challenge at the meeting) but that the PSTB had recognised the need to increase business representation and would increase this in forthcoming meetings.

5. CS asked how the MiData initiative was linked into the PSTB. It was suggested that Matthew Hancock's presence on the Board covered this.

6. CA continued to say that Cabinet Office (CO) is pulling together a Data Inventory over the summer of published and unpublished datasets. The intention is then to discuss with the public what data is seen as a priority, so far interaction with the public has been very slow.

7. GC asked whether they [CO] understood the size of the task that they have taken on. He undertook a similar exercise whilst in a previous role and after three years of trying gave up!

8. The Board acknowledged this view and CA suggested that PDG should offer help where they could to organise and structure this work.

Item 3: Policy update
9. KP updated on City labs; they are intended to be bases for developers to create a mixture of for-profit and not-for-profit apps. The precise business

model is yet to be decided. There will be a pilot in two UK cities with a current timeline to launch the pilot in April 2014. City labs are to receive access to an increased amount of open data which include data from companies, local authorities and trading funds.

10. JP updated on the Data Capability Strategy; The Information Economy Strategy contained a commitment for the Government to work with industry and academia to produce a data capability strategy by 31 October 2013. Against a backdrop of ever-increasing amounts of data being produced and stored, the strategy will set out plans to ensure that UK is well-positioned to be at the forefront of extracting knowledge and value from data.

11. The strategy will be published alongside the Government's Open Government Partnership National Action Plan, and will include:
    o Measures to build capability in the commercial and academic sectors;
    o Support and collaboration opportunities for UK businesses through channels such as the Open Data Institute, or the Technology Strategy Board;
    o Action to strengthen skills focused at schools, higher and further education, and continuing professional development.

12. There have been a range of recent reports on data and data analytics over the last year and the strategy will pull together the findings from these reports into one coherent document.

13. Following discussion it was agreed that the PDG should have been involved with this piece of work and so requested that the Data Capability Team in BIS be informed of their interest.

Item 4: Open Data Architecture
14. CA invited a presenter from the CO Transparency Team, to provide an update on the recent changes within the open data architecture.

15. OB updated the Board on four key areas of work; the changes to the PSTB; development of a National Action Plan, Data Inventory and upgrading data.gov.uk.

16. Taking each of these in turn the following summarises the discussion;
    o PSTB – OB summarised the changes as per CA's update above.
    o National Action Plan – A draft was produced in April 2013 (http://www.opengovpartnership.org/countries/united-kingdom) and sets out the public sectors policy around openness, this is about open government not just open data. This will be published on 31 Oct 2013 in line with the Open Government Partnership summit that will take place on 31 Oct to 1 Nov 2013.

o Data Inventory – CO have requested a list of datasets from each Government Department. They have released this list of approx 10,000 datasets on the web (http://www.data.gov.uk/blog/government-data-get-involved-0) and have requested the public to rank the datasets in order of importance. A priority list will then be included in the National Information Infrastructure which will also be published on 31 Oct 2013.

o Upgrading data.gov.uk – this will make it more intuitive and user friendly.

17. The following comments were noted;

o PDG would be keen to help with the development of the Data Inventory.

o The purpose of the National Information Infrastructure is still a little unclear and greater clarity would be helpful.

o The National Information Infrastructure should also look at what is required for the future too.

18. CA then invited Heather Savory, Chair ODUG, to update the Board on the latest ODUG work. HS circulated an update paper (attached to the email for these minutes) to the Board. HS also added that ODUG sits between Whitehall and the data community, it advises the PSTB and includes a membership of vibrant volunteers. HS also gave special thanks to LR for their data releases.

19. HS explained that a recruitment process for new members had recently been undertaken and this new revitalized group will also support the development of the National Information Infrastructure.

20. HS made a request to PDG to;

o Flesh out some of the good news stories about how PDG helps to release data and grow business.

o Consider making data cheaper.

o Reconsider short term licenses as they were not helpful to business as they did not provide the continuity and stability for business (particularly SMEs) to gain investment.

Item 5: Comms update

21. CA invited Ed Smith, BIS press officer, to report back on the recent PDG communication group meeting hosted by BIS.

22. ES reported that following the action point from the previous meeting on comms the trading fund comms leads met on 20 August to discuss how to work better and be more proactive with co-ordinated publicity.

23. Collectively it was decided that a press notice was not the most effective way of reaching the right audience for PDG activity. While a handful of niche trade journalists may pick up on new data releases, on the whole they were largely uninterested and PDG activity is unlikely to be front page news.

24. There is a lot more interest when the data is linked to tangible applications, infographics or analytical conclusions instead, so it was decided that the best opportunities were to be found in social media and more specialist press.

25. For example on twitter with simple hashtags @ mentions (#opendata, #linkeddata) and linking in with CO work and the Information Economy strategy, data related news spreads quickly, with positive sentiment and is targeted to those with a genuine interest in the field.

26. It was also suggested that CA was well-placed to provide a powerful independent voice to support PDG.

27. A number of actions between BIS and the trading funds were agreed in order to progress this. These were:
    o Developing a programme of possible opportunities (including speaking engagements and online articles) for CA to raise the profile of PDG and highlight the work of the trading funds. *(BIS Press Office lead working with Trading Fund comms representatives)*
    o Developing an easy to use forward look, including relevant comms opportunities from each trading fund, updated initially on a monthly basis (with frequency of updates to be kept under review). BIS Press Office to make effective use of it to plan PDG communications and to share with CO when appropriate. *(BIS Press Office to coordinate, Trading Fund comms representatives to supply updates)*.
    o Trading Funds to reference PDG when appropriate on their twitter feeds and retweeting each other's tweets when appropriate. *(Trading fund comms representatives)*

28. The Board thanked ES for this presentation and agreed with the actions to be taken forward by the PDG comms group.

Item 6: Data Environment

29. CA then suggested revising the agenda order so that the Board covered Data Environment item next.

30. CA reminded the Board that a key focus of the PDG should now be around how members can promote their datasets and make them more open and user friendly. CA was keen to hear from the Board how this could be done and suggested that a meeting of the technical experts within each trading fund may be a way forward.

31. The Board agreed that this was a good idea but also sort clarity on what the expected end result was.

32. It was suggested that Nigel Shadbolt and Francis Maude were invited to attend a future PDG board meeting to set out the wider Government aims.

33. The Board agreed to a meeting of technical experts, which CA would lead, and that it should also include some open data users who would be able to provide a user's perspective. MB also suggested that representation from private sector consultants could add another helpful perspective.

Item 7: Vesting

34. CA suggested that this item was deferred to the next meeting in Dec when the members would be in a better position to provide an update. **The Board agreed.**

Item 8: Any Other Business

35. There was none.

Meetings:

36. As per the agreed direction of travel for the PDG the next meeting will be the first in the new format where all CEOs will be required to attend and for Chairs it will be optional, however they will be notified of all future meetings.

37. There will be an annual meeting where both CEOs and Chairs will be required to attend.