



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Department
of Health &
Social Care

Food Data Transparency Partnership

Design Partnership Group minutes

The Design Partnership Group is a stakeholder engagement group that provides input on policy development as part of an open policy design process. These discussions do not reflect agreed government policy.

Date 17 April 2023
Time 11:00-12:00
Venue Microsoft Teams

Attendance

Co-Chairs:

David Kennedy Director General, Food, Biosecurity and Trade, Defra
 Chris Tyas Food Industry Advisor to Defra

Industry

Thirty-seven industry leaders in attendance

Speakers:

Judith Batchelar Eco Working Group co-chair
 Deputy Chair, Environment Agency

Karen Lepper Eco Working Group co-chair
 Deputy Director for Food Data, Standards and Sustainability, Defra

Anne Godfrey Data and Technical Working Group co-chair and GS1 CEO

Julie Pierce Data and Technical Working Group co-chair
 Food Standards Agency, Director of Information and Science

Sean Povey Deputy Director, Diet, Obesity and Healthy Behaviours, Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, DHSC

Item	Description and Actions
1.	<p>Welcome and introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chris Tyas (CT) introduced the meeting and welcomed new members to the Design Partnership Group (DPG), representing Aldi, Domino's and Ocado.
2.	<p>FDTP scope</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> David Kennedy (DK) provided an update on The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) work of the Food Data Transparency Partnership (FDTP) and Sean Povey (SP) provided an update from The Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) on the health strand. <p><u>Sustainability</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DK updated the group that Defra Secretary of State strongly supports the programme. Across the department Defra is focused on delivering its key priorities, including on sustainability in line with the recent Net Zero announcements and the Environmental Improvement Plan. We have also received strong support from industry for the FDTP. We received feedback from the Food and Drink Sector Council (FDSC) that they are supportive of the FDTP but questioned whether there is bandwidth across industry to consider all the areas, suggesting a focus on the urgent issue of and Scope 3 Green House Gas (GHG) emissions to help us reach net zero. Defra will therefore prioritise work on net zero and measuring Scope 3 (GHG) emissions, as well as product level sustainability information. If this is successful, we can replicate the approach for wider sustainability. <p><u>Animal Welfare</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DK explained that animal welfare is important to the government and Defra Ministers. Defra Secretary of State has made a decision to pause the animal welfare strand of the Partnership, with the work to consider an approach to animal welfare labelling to be progressed outside the FDTP. Plans to stand up animal welfare FDTP workstream will be considered at an appropriate time. <p><u>Health</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SP gave an update on the health strand, highlighting that the work on transparent data will help to drive the food system to be healthier. SP explained that establishing the health workstream is a little behind in comparison with the eco and data workstreams as DHSC Ministers are dealing with urgent NHS industrial actions. Government officials soon plan to update members following final decisions from Ministers who are supportive of working with industry in the development of transparent health metrics. The work plan and timings will be kept under review until the Health Working Group is established. SP thanked members for their nominations to the Health Working Group, providing a good representation from all sectors of the food and drink sector.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natasha Burgon has recently returned from maternity leave to take up her role as Director of Diet, Obesity and Healthy Behaviours, replacing Tamsin Cooper who has left the civil service. Natasha will be replacing Tamsin Cooper as co-chair for the Health Working Group, joining Susan Barratt from IGD. DK and SP concluded that the DPG is fundamental to the work of the FDTP, as a forum to share information, listen to members' views and provide operational feedback on the working group proposals. <p><u>Discussion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members asked if nominations were still being accepted to the DPG. Members may continue to nominate representatives to the working groups. These nominations will be added to a pool of interested industry experts that may be drawn upon at a later stage, for example for task and finish groups.
<p>3.</p>	<p>Spotlight on Eco Working Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judith Batchelar (JB) provided an update on the eco workstream and the recently established Eco Working Group (Eco WG). The Eco WG has 20 members across industry, academics, NGOs, practitioners, and international organisations. International representation in this group is very important given our ambition to remain aligned with forthcoming updates to the International Sustainability Standards Board global sustainability and climate disclosure standards; the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board; and the GHG Protocol. The first meeting of the Eco WG took place in March 2023 as an introductory meeting to share practical experience and to agree the workplan for the two areas outlined in the Eco WG terms of reference: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring consistent company reporting of Scope 3 GHG emissions for the food and drink sector, including the methodologies, guidance and underlying data to support this. Applying the same data rules at a product level, ensuring accurate and consistent product-level information is available. The Eco WG will work closely with the Data Working Group (Data WG) to consider how data flows through the system. Julie Pierce (JP), Data WG co-chair, is an active member on the Eco WG to help ensure join up across the working groups. JB emphasised there are no pre-conceived ideas of what the proposals will be, although there is also no desire to reinvent the wheel if there is good existing practice. Therefore, receiving feedback on Eco WG proposals from the DPG, Expert Users Group and wider stakeholders will be essential. The FDTP aims to deliver something that makes life simpler, reduces burden on everyone throughout the supply chain, provides what we need if we are to deliver on targets, measure performance and understand where we can reduce GHG emissions as fast and boldly as we can. JB shared two papers demonstrating the large number of relevant initiatives. Ask to members: Please provide feedback on the papers, in particular identifying any gaps or missing initiatives that have not been captured. JB finished the update by encouraging DPG members and wider stakeholders to take an active interest in the Eco WG and ask questions and challenge the work via those you know in the Eco WG.

	<p>Data Group Update</p> <p>JP and Anne Godfrey (AG) provided an update on the Data WG.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Data WG is deliberately a bit behind the Eco WG. • Membership: Developed a skills matrix to get experience and data capture from everywhere in the system, prioritising a data skillset rather than skills in sustainability for example. Invitations for this group will be sent out shortly. • Similar to the Eco WG, JP and AG have started working on an initial understanding of the existing landscape. • A first stage of the Data WG will be to establish design principles (such as enabling a level playing field and being standards based etc.) <p><u>The discussion covered:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the product information work would be restricted to GHG emissions. JB shared that it won't be restricted to GHG emissions, but the group plans to initially focus on GHGs as this work is more developed. In relation to wider sustainability, the Taskforce for Nature-related Financial Disclosures that is coming later in the year will help with this. • Join up with the FDSC sub-committee on net zero, noting that the Defra officials working on this are the same as the FDTP. Therefore, there will be good join up. • Reflecting on all the different initiatives that are happening and that the landscape is increasingly complex. Members noted that the FDTP and DPG should be the forum to bring that all together to have one single point of focus. • That reference databases need to be constantly improved but can only be done so with continuous improvements in data collection. JB flagged that primary data would be needed to demonstrate the sustainability credentials of a specific product. A data hierarchy is needed to set out what data is required and how improvements should be delivered over time.
<p>4.</p>	<p>Next Steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CT conveyed the high level of interest in the FDTP from industry stakeholders outside of the DPG. The Partnership aims to be fully transparent and encourages wider stakeholder groups the opportunity to feed into the process. Therefore, plans are underway to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Set up a website and / or other digital platform to share key information ○ Provide regular updates via the Defra Agri-Food Chain e-bulletin. To subscribe to the e-bulletin, please complete the following form: Defra (list-manage.com) • CT mentioned that the next meeting will be held in late June. Also, to ensure that proposals are brought to members at the right time to allow for meaningful input and feedback, we will consider whether this DPG meetings need to remain bi-monthly.

Please direct further questions or feedback to FoodDataTransparencyPartnership@defra.gov.uk