



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Department
of Health &
Social Care

Food Data Transparency Partnership

Design Partnership Group minutes.

Date 25 April 2025
Time 14:30-15:30
Venue Microsoft Teams

Attendance

Co-Chairs:

Emily Miles Director General, Food, Biosecurity and Trade, Defra
Tessa Jones Director, Agri Food Chain, Defra
Chris Tyas Non-executive board member, Defra & Chair, GS1UK

Industry

23 industry leaders in attendance

Speakers:

Judith Batchelar Eco Working Group co-chair - Deputy Chair, Environment Agency
Julie Pierce Data and Technical Working Group co-chair - Director of Information and Science, Food Standards Agency

Apologies

Tazeem Bhatia Co-chair of Health Working Group - Director for Health Improvement, Global and Public Health Group, DHSC
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 - CEO, GS1

| Item | Description and Actions |
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| 1. | Welcome and introductions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chris welcomed members and reminded them that the meeting takes place under Chatham house rules and that meetings must be conducted in a competition compliant manner and that although attendees could reflect discussions, they should not attribute comments to particular people. It was set out that the primary focus of the meeting was to update attendees on what has happened in the last year since the election. There would be a chance to hear from DPG members on how the FDTP eco data roadmap was received a year on from publication, cover progress on workstreams and how the deliverables are aligning with Government's strategic priorities. |



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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emily Miles introduced herself as the Defra Director General for Food, Biosecurity Business and Trade. FDTP was one of the policy areas that she was most excited to take on. There has been considerable progress such as eco support from the data group focussing on defining and developing the technical building blocks that will enable more consistent, accurate and transparent data to drive a more sustainable food system. Working in partnership is especially important to reduce carbon emissions in the food industry while feeding the nation. The work on data transparency is essential to supporting the new Food Strategy which is going to be the place where the government sets the outcomes for the food system and bring government, industry and others together to make it happen. |
| 2. | <p>Food Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tessa Jones introduced an item on the Food Strategy which is a priority for the Defra Secretary of State. Tessa highlighted several aspects of this work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It will build on previous strategies and existing evidence. Be action-focussed to deliver a set of agreed outcomes across the food and drink system. Be delivered in partnership. To support this, Defra have set up a Food Strategy Advisory Board would be engaging the F4, would be running workshops and were also working with the Food Foundation and the Food, Farming and Countryside Commission. It is a cross-government strategy with Defra, DHSC, MHCLG, DBT and DFE as core leading departments. The strategy will need to grapple with the synergies and trade-offs with a food system that needs to contribute to economic growth while improving the nation's health, nourishing individuals boosting food security and environmental sustainability and protecting the planet. Data transparency underpins the strategy. Tessa asked for feedback from members on their thoughts about the Food Strategy, the FSAB, and understanding how this would relate to other FDTP groups. <p><u>Questions and feedback:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One member asked what definition of food security the strategy would use and whether it would cover trade and food security and does this fit in with the FAO and there was talk about trade and the opportunity for growth. Trying to understand the balance. Tessa replied that the strategy would use the five measures of food security outlined in the UK Food Security Report published in late 2024 which includes exports and trade and this is key to economic growth. |
| 3. | <p>Place based pilot. Chris introduced Judith Batchelar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judith introduced the project being led by Leeds University that is taking a place-based approach to testing the practicalities of data exchange. This project complements the |



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| | <p>core purpose of the work undertaken by FDTP and will help to show how to operationalise collecting and sharing data all along the supply chain and connect this to consumers.</p> <p>The Leeds University work will build data sets with accurate and consistent data of excellent quality re food content, packaging, and emissions. This is timely for reforms coming through, including new QR barcodes, EU digital product passports and packaging reforms. There is an opportunity for FDTP members to influence what is already happening and Judith specifically sought feedback from meeting attendees on the metrics for testing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further information will follow in the slide pack that was sent after the meeting. |
| 4. | <p>Workstream updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Julie Pierce as Co-Chair of the Data Working Group updated on the progress of the group. In reviewing the group's way of working, it was concluded that it would be much better if there was closer integration of the data work with the health and eco working groups with a flexible pool of data experts flexibly supporting the other work strands as needed rather than operating as a separate work strand and group. This is already happening on the environmental sustainability work. This is not a fundamental change to the importance of integrating data expertise but is an opportunity to make the approach more agile. • Judith updated the group on the work that had been going on in the Eco Working Group in the last year. Focus has been on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Developing consistent information about the GHG impact of food & drink products through standardised company reporting (where FDTP has already endorsed the WRAP v 2 protocols) and product level reporting. Product level reporting is complex, but we are expecting recommendations on this from the Led4Food project is to be published soon. ○ Improving farm level GHG emissions data, which is hugely challenging, but a number of projects are underway across the Devolved Regions of the UK who are now all represented on the eco WG alongside Bord Bia from the Republic of Ireland. ○ Data inter-operability and building trust through clear governance are also important priorities to enable data exchange. ○ Supporting these workstreams we have looked at the skills gaps in the industry and what is needed to drive behaviour change. ○ This is a new way of working, and we have begun a formal evaluation of the approach with external contractors so that we review and learn this in terms of policy, implementation and measuring impact and long-term outcomes. ○ This can only happen with effective communication, and we are collaborating with stakeholders from the eco working group and beyond to develop and disseminate refreshed material on our progress. • We are moving from heavy research work and to implementation mode. The group needs new expertise and so there will be an expressions of interest exercise for new members for the Eco working group. |



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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It was asked if Defra can share the list Eco working group members [this is available online and was shared in the meeting].• A member asked about progress on the health working group. Tessa confirmed that DHSC are seeking Ministerial steers and updates would be provided to this group when there was a clear decision, this would not need to wait for a next meeting. |
| 4. | <p>Next Steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chris summarised that this was the first meeting for a year, but the working groups have been busy, and we had heard from Emily on how important food data was and how vital it was for food strategy. There is no intention of the new food strategy group to start again and is about building on previous strategies. We now must implement much of this work and the place-based pilot provides a great opportunity for testing. Operationalising needs different skills so we want people who would like to be a part of that.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Members were asked to confirm by email their interested in remaining involved in this group and to transmit the work of the DPG to their colleagues.○ Members were asked to look out for the expression of interest exercise for the eco working group EOI, which is due to open in the next few weeks.○ The Secretariat will be in touch with the dates and agenda for the next meeting in due course. The next meeting will take place before the summer holidays. |