**Thursday 18th July, call with Sym from Democracy Club**

They have been exploring gathering data on councillors using two methods:

1. Using their data on who gets elected. This requires keeping track of elections over time which is feasible but a little complicated. However seats with multiple candidates that are not elected at the same time are problematic as they can’t tell which councillor is being replaced. There are also issues like councillors switching party. They gather this data but don’t currently publish a regular cut of this data.
2. Scraping council websites. They do this every day. They also keep a version history. When candidates stand for election they do so for specific parties, but the groupings listed online don’t necessary have to match these. They have not yet linked this up to their own data and published it. But are happy to share a minimum viable product version for our September event.

Could councillor data be more easily available on council sites?

* Most of the work is about discovery, rather than format
* Wary of standards first approach – should be led by behaviour/use case
* Would like to see a machine-readable way of locating content
* Getting uptake can be an issue. Has managed this in the case of candidate data because it allowed democracy club to create a service that councils wanted.

Actions:

* ~~Share with Sym the HoC handbook I found~~
* Open Council Data person is based in Manchester. Invite them to September event.
* Share with Sym details of our September event (and November one)
* Invite, Ian Warren, political data scientist from Bolton to our event