**LOCAL PUBLIC DATA PANEL**
**--- TERMS OF REFERENCE 2013-14 (as at 14 October 2013) ---**

**Background**

1. The Local Public Data Panel has operated since January 2010. It is an independent Panel that advises Government on issues relating to the release and use of local public data.

2. The Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government has renewed the mandate of the Panel for a further period to make a tangible contribution to the Government's efforts to accelerate the open data agenda in local government and other public services.

**Timing**

3. The Panel will report bi-annually to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and Public Sector Transparency Board.

**Objectives**

4. To bring together different interests from citizens, developers, activists, and local and central Government regarding the promotion of local transparency and open data. Public bodies are becoming more transparent, but  it often remains challenging for a citizen to find the information they need to take part in local decisions about the public realm and to assess the value and performance of the services that directly affect them.

5. In particular the Panel will focus on:

   - **encouraging the release of local public data** to put power in to people's hands, support business and growth through re-use of data and help improve local public services.

   - **championing those local public bodies innovating and using open data** to improve their accountability to users and to improve the services they provide.

   - **supporting and challenging DCLG** in releasing information, including contributing to its Open Data Strategy and monitoring progress against it in Government Written Ministerial Statements on transparency.

   - **supporting the work of the Public Sector Transparency Board** in providing a local perspective to fulfilling the Government's transparency and open data commitments.

   - **responding to existing and new issues** that arise in the open data and transparency space, as they relate to local public data.

6. The Panel will seek to challenge, influence and advise. It will recommend tasks that should be taken forward by Government and other public bodies and devise solutions to current problems. The subjects to which the Panel will be expected to engage will include:

   I. Data quality, comparability and accessibility for local people
   II. Data-sharing between local agencies
   III. Barriers within public sector culture or legal framework
   IV. Culture change and data literacy
   V. Open data and productivity.

7. The Panel will set out a project plan for the year ahead, but with sufficient flexibility to take account of any new or emerging issues as they arise – see Annex A.

8. Key outputs will include:

   - Opening up and routine publication of underlying local public service data.
   - Clear understanding of successful implementation of public service information strategies.
   - A growing evidence base on use of open data by public services.
   - Contribution and advice on the Government's transparency strategy.

**Secretariat**

9. DCLG will provide limited secretariat support, in the form of assisting the Chair in organising and hosting meetings, helping to coordinate meeting agendas, circulating relevant papers and taking meeting minutes and assist the Panel in the production of a bi-annual report to the Secretary of State – as well as providing a link between the Panel and central government.

10. Panel members will undertake to carry out specific tasks as decided by the panel themselves.

**Membership**

11. Standing members of the Panel are listed at Annex B. Membership of the panel is unpaid though DCLG will cover travel costs (as required) and provide meeting space.

12. The Panel will meet on an 8 weekly cycle to debate issues and review progress. The Chair may seek agreement for smaller sub-groups of Panel members to oversee specific actions.

**Wider work**

13. The Panel will blog on data.gov.uk to engage with the wider open data community which will also be used to publish meeting minutes and Panel reports and papers.

14. In addition to its own work plan, the Panel will seek to influence and provide advice to other mainstream programmes where transparency and open data would be beneficial. The Panel will work with other "Sector Transparency Boards" concerning crime and justice, transport, health, education and welfare. The Panel will also interact with local practice and sector-led improvement programmes and will engage specifically with the Open Data User Group, as appropriate.

**Review**

15. The Panel will review implementation every six months and, if necessary, seek to amend these terms of reference.

**WORK PLAN 2013-14**

The Local Public Data Panel will seek to undertake the following headline projects in 2013-14, reporting to the Secretary of State on progress made as well as other work completed July 2013 and January 2014.

| | Task | Start date | Finish date | Lead Panel member |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Produce a web page on the benefits of transparency, which includes case studies, which we will keep updated as a living document. (18/7/13 – investigating potential to use proposed 'local' area on data.gov.uk). | January 2012 | December 2013 | Will Perrin |
| 2. | Open data and planning –work with DCLG on better signposting and presentation of information useful for those involved in neighbourhood planning. | November 2011 (brought forward) | July 2013 | Sub-group |
| 3. | Agree a set of principles on open data in the procurement process for National Advisory Group on Procurement. | May 2012 (brought forward) | December 2013 | Sub-group |
| 4. | Work with the National Fraud Agency and DCLG officials on "Open and Safe Guidelines" to help local authorities counteract fraud, without compromising transparency. | August 2012 (brought forward) | December 2013 | Jos Creese |
| 5. | Support and challenge DCLG officials on the Code of Recommended Practice on Transparency. | December 2012 | March 2014 | Nigel Shadbolt |
| 6 | Provide strategic support to DCLG on its corporate transparency, including reviewing completed returns to Cabinet Office for the Written Ministerial Statement, and providing updates to the Department's Open Data Strategy. | March 2013 | December 2013 | Nigel Shadbolt |
| | Review of progress to Secretary of State. | | January 2013 July 2013 January 2014 | Nigel Shadbolt |

**PANEL MEMBERSHIP**

❖ **(Chairman) Professor Sir Nigel Shadbolt FREng FBCS,** University of Southampton

❖ **Baroness Stowell of Beeston MBE,** Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Department of Communities & Local Government

❖ **Dennis Skinner/Gesche Schmid,** Local Government Association

❖ **Jos Creese,** Head of IT, Hampshire County Council

❖ **Roger Hampson,** Chief Executive, London Borough of Redbridge

❖ **Dave Smith,** Chief Executive, Sunderland City Council

❖ **Chris Taggart,** Co-founder and CEO of OpenCorporates, and founder of OpenlyLocal

❖ **Tim Allen,** Visiting Professor, Department of Geography, Birkbeck, London University

❖ **Councillor Tim Cheetham**, Cabinet Spokesperson for Children, Young People and Families, Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

❖ **Annemarie Naylor**, Head of Assets, Locality

❖ **Shane O' Neill**, Chair of ELGIN (Electronic Local Government Information Network)

❖ **Nick Booth**, Podnosh (social media for social good)

❖ **Vicky Sargent,** Boilerhouse

❖ **David Evans,** Information Commissioner's Office

❖ **Dominic Campbell,** FutureGov

❖ **Ex-Officio:   Shehla Husain,** Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)
         **Olivia Burman**, Cabinet Office (CO)