

## **Open Government Partnership - UK 2013 Draft National Action Plan**

### **“From Open Data to Open Government”**

***June 2013***

***First draft plan open for public consultation and wider participative engagement***

***The new final UK Action Plan will be published by 31 October 2013***

## **Introduction**

Open government provides an essential foundation for economic, social and political progress, by strengthening the transparency of institutions.

Access to information allows people to work together more effectively, collaborating with each other, with policy-makers and with service providers to improve governance, public life and public services to make more informed decisions. Releasing key information on public services also contributes to growth of new businesses and ensures accountability of government. This transparency and accountability helps to ensure that resources are used effectively and that government, business and civil society operate in the public interest.

Since entering Government in May 2010, the Prime Minister and Minister for the Cabinet Office have repeatedly stated their commitment to be “*the most open and transparent government in the world*”<sup>1</sup>. The UK Government’s commitment to this objective has not dimmed.

By making and implementing commitments on open government – on transparency, participation and accountability – the UK Government is transforming the relationship between government, business and citizen, opening up our society, with benefits for all. We are not only doing this domestically, but also in our work with partners across the world: committed to supporting transparent, accountable and effective governance where we spend aid money, where UK companies are investing, trading or operating, and in the institutions we work with.

The first UK National Action Plan focused on our commitments to open up government data. Since September 2011, we have continued to press forward with an ambitious programme to make government data available online: refreshing Data.gov.uk; setting up the Open Data Institute; creating Sector Transparency Boards and departmental

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/pms-podcast-on-transparency/>; <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/francis-maude-speech-to-mark-the-launch-of-new-government-transparency-commitments>

open data strategies across government; and setting up the Open Data User Group (ODUG) to work with government to identify valuable new datasets to release. This is just the beginning. Whilst the UK holds the co-chair of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) and the Presidency of the G8, we will lead by example to make data on all areas of government available, wherever this does not conflict with the rights of individuals. We want to support a culture of open-by-default, as highlighted in the UK Government's 2012 Open Data White Paper<sup>2</sup>, in which data is shared and used to drive improvements in service delivery and choice, both inside and outside of government. We will look to promote a similar approach with our partners through the G8. At the same time, we must continue to protect the privacy of citizens, respecting the boundary between personal data and public sector information.

Open data is just one part of a wider vision of open government and in this new draft National Action Plan we show how we are continuing to build on our commitments to open data to support wide reaching transformations. Transparency, supported by citizen participation, generates accountability. We want transparency to enable individuals and organisations to understand the decisions being made and to see the flows of funding to different parts of the public and private sectors. We want individuals and organisations to have the information they need to understand what happens in their community and be empowered to get involved, whether contributing views in a consultation, developing neighbourhood plans, taking on the running of local services, or holding providers of public services to account. We want to support all governments to become more responsive, breaking down silos and barriers, so that citizens can see clearly how they operate.

From a strong domestic open data agenda, our exploration of open policy making, the development of social media guidance for civil servants, to the digital strategies and the single domain, we have many building blocks of open government in place. In our work on the international stage, we have also recognised the importance of openness through our leading role in the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI), our support for the Extractives Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), our work on anti-corruption, and our role in the post-2015 development agenda.

The forward agenda will link these themes and presents a vision of transparency and participation driving economic growth, well-being and prosperity, as already set out in the UK OGP co-chair vision<sup>3</sup>.

The focus of the first National Action Plan will be maintained, on the Grand Challenges of:

- Improving Public Services; and
- More Effectively Managing Public Resources.

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/open-data-white-paper-unleashing-the-potential>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/open-government-partnership-uk-co-chair-vision>

In addition, this new plan will broaden to include:

- Increasing Corporate Accountability; and
- Implementing the highest standards of professional integrity throughout our administrations.

This draft interim 2013 UK National Action Plan is the result of open government and open policy making in action. It has been developed through the active collaboration of experts in open data, transparency, participation and accountability drawn from civil society and government departments.

Through regular meetings at the Open Data Institute and online collaboration, the draft action plan, and subsequently the commitments, has been drafted with extensive participation from civil society, with notes of meetings and working documents published along the way to ensure transparency and facilitate engagement.

During the development of this document, members of the UK Open Government Partnership Civil Society Network identified a number of other priority areas where they would like the UK Government to consider making commitments - these are included at Annex A. The UK Government has not at this time committed to these but has agreed to look at them in the next few months and, where possible, make commitments in the final version of this plan, which will be published by 31 October 2013.

Alongside this, we will look at widening and strengthening the levels of participation, to ensure that, as this draft develops into a final National Action Plan, it will also reflect the society we serve which may bring to light further thoughts for consideration

This draft action plan was developed prior to the 2013 G8 Summit which took place on 17 and 18 June at Lough Erne, Northern Ireland, at which the UK government made a number of open government commitments as set out in the 2013 Lough Erne Leaders' Communiqué and the G8 Lough Erne Declaration. In the interests of publishing the document for consultation, it does not currently include the commitments made at Lough Erne.

In the G8 Leaders' Communiqué, members made a collective commitment to the open data agenda by announcing an Open Data Charter. They also endorsed eight core principles that are fundamental to the transparency of ownership and control of companies and legal arrangements. Furthermore, the G8 agreed to make progress towards common global reporting standards to make extractive industry payments more transparent and to work with resource-rich countries to help them better manage their extractive revenues, so as to provide a route out of poverty and reliance on aid.

The UK will build on the principles and agreements contained within the G8 Leaders' Communiqué and its subsidiary documentation as we develop the final Open Government Partnership UK National Action Plan.

## Consultation

A condition of being a member of the Open Government Partnership is for the draft National Action Plan to be open for public consultation. We therefore welcome views on the commitments made in this plan, ideally supported by evidence wherever possible.

The closing date for consultation responses is 19 September. Please note however that this is an iterative process and views and comments will be taken into consideration as we develop the draft plan over the coming months into a final version, ready for publication in October. Views that are supported by evidence will be given more standing than those without. Members of the OGP Civil Society Network will analyse the responses in collaboration with Her Majesty's Government.

Comments on the draft National Action Plan can be submitted through a variety of means:

Email: [transparencystrategy@cabinet-office.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:transparencystrategy@cabinet-office.gsi.gov.uk)

OGP Civil Society Portal: <http://www.opengovernment.org.uk/draftactionplan>

data.gov.uk: <http://data.gov.uk>

## Content

In the body of this draft, we focus on four key areas:

1. Open Data and Transparency
2. Participation and Responsiveness
3. Accountability
4. Global Partnerships

### 1) Open Data and Transparency

The Minister for the Cabinet Office, Francis Maude, has described open data as the “*raw material of the 21st Century*”<sup>4</sup>. It is being used by developers to create new applications to help improve public services, better hold governments to account and add value to the economy by creating new businesses.

The Transparency Team in the Cabinet Office leads on work across government to open up government data, increasing the number of data sets available through the world-leading data.gov.uk and improving their quality and timeliness. The Transparency Team also leads this agenda, on behalf of the UK Government, on the international

---

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/public-leaders-network/2012/apr/18/francis-maude-data-raw-material>

stage, through the UK's participation in the Open Government Partnership (OGP) and through the Transparency and Open Data elements of the UK's Presidency of the G8. This international work is opening up world markets to British industry and providing the tools for citizens in developing countries to better hold their governments to account.

For effective open government, the public must be provided with easy access to accurate, credible, high value information in a format that can be easily read and understood. Through our open data agenda we have put in place the foundations for 21st century transparency and accountability. Through our investment in the Open Data Institute we are stimulating an entrepreneurial economy around data, enabling individuals and organisations to build tools and services that make data accessible, to innovate, to improve public services and to unlock the value of data to generate social, economic and environmental benefits.

We know we need to go further to fully appreciate the democratic dividends of open data, including increasing citizen voice and participation and ensuring that, as our public services are reconfigured to deal with contemporary challenges, their transparency and accountability are maintained and extended. Where possible, open data should apply to all decisions and revenue flows, from before a deal is agreed, through contracts, implementation and to results.

A natural extension of promoting open data is to allow anyone to be able to re-use the data in new and innovative ways in the context of information based products and services. This approach is underpinned by the removal of barriers to re-use, for example through the use of the Open Government Licence<sup>5</sup>.

The UK Self-assessment report of the 2011 National Action Plan highlights our efforts and successes to date.

With regards to our Open Data objectives going forward, our default position is for data to become open where it represents value for money for taxpayers, unless there are robust legal (including Freedom of Information (FoI) Act), security, or financial complexities. We will be enriching this plan with further commitments from the Cabinet Office Transparency Team and from other government departments. Our relentless focus will be on maximising the amount of data released in this way. In the relatively few areas where public open data publication is not possible there can still be benefits to sharing this information under strict conditions, a subject on which the Administrative Data Taskforce has recently reported. We anticipate that most of our focus will be on:

- **Getting high quality open data released by government**
  - Defining the National Information Infrastructure in response to the Shakespeare Review of Public Sector Information (PSI)
  - Increasing the number of datasets and linked datasets that are released
  - Helping others create transformative open data applications
  - Bringing the power of open data to a wider audience

---

<sup>5</sup> At present 7959 datasets are published on [www.data.gov.uk](http://www.data.gov.uk) under the Open Government Licence

- Maintaining Britain's global position as a leader on open data
- **Protecting privacy** in all the work we do on open data, and respecting the balance between the personal elements of data and public records.
- **Opening up Data** - In 2013 the UK Government began its move towards releasing records that are 20 years old, rather than 30 years. This will see a wealth of historical material available to the public much earlier. The aim is to provide greater openness and accountability, strengthening democracy through more timely public scrutiny of government policy and decision making.
- **Local Government Transparency** - To encourage local transparency, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) published a Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency in September 2011. The code lists data which councils should provide and sets out three principles that should guide local authorities on transparency: open, demand-led, and timely. By publishing this information, local people can hold councils to account over how taxpayers' money is spent - they can highlight examples of inappropriate spend, and suggest ways of providing better value services which meet local needs.

The Government consulted in late 2012 on updating the Code and making it mandatory, and will publish in Government Response later this summer.

- **Opening up council executive meetings** - The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, which came into force in September 2012, introduce greater transparency and openness into meetings of the executive, its committees and sub-committees. There is now a clear presumption that these meetings must be open to the public except in very limited, specifically defined circumstances. The Regulations require councils to provide reasonable facilities, where practicable, for any person who wishes to report the proceedings of public meetings, including the use of social media.

With regards to wider transparency objectives:

- **Natural Resource Transparency** - On 22 May 2013, the Prime Minister announced that the UK government intended to sign up to the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). The EITI is a coalition of governments, companies and civil society that provides a standard for companies to publish what they pay and for governments to disclose what they receive from oil, gas and mining. EITI shines a spotlight on the revenues that a country generates from its extractives riches. It gives citizens, parliament and media the information they need to hold governments and companies to account for how their country's resources are used, to determine whether revenues are going astray and governments are getting a good deal.

In addition, the UK government will transpose the EU Transparency and Accounting Directives into UK law and develop plans to make the data useable and accessible according to open data principles.

- **Aid Transparency** – the Cabinet Office will continue to work with Department for International Development (DfID) to ensure that all government departments who spend overseas development assistance (ODA) will publish aid information in line with the International Aid Transparency Standard (IATI). In addition, we will work to improve the quality of DfID's IATI data in line with its open data strategy and we will require all organisations receiving and managing DfID funds, including sub-contractors and sub-agencies, right through the Aid chain, to report according to IATI.
- **Tax Transparency and Illicit Financial Flows** – The UK Government has three priorities on tax and development: building capacity in developing countries to establish and maintain effective tax systems of their own; improving exchange of tax information; and increasing transparency in the extractives sector to address corruption.
- **Endorse, promote and implement greater openness on corporate transparency and company ownership** – this commitment follows from the Prime Minister's speech at the World Economic Forum in Davos on 24 January 2013, in which he said: *"the third big push on our G8 agenda is transparency: shining a light on company ownership, land ownership and where money flows from and to."*<sup>6</sup>
- **Open Infrastructure** – the UK government will support the Construction Sector Transparency Initiative (CoST) to promote transparency and efficiency in infrastructure development. Greater transparency in the Construction Sector has been shown to reduce costs, increase value for money and improve government procedures.
- **Records Management** – the UK Government will strengthen the management of digital records and improve the integrity of open government data. Trustworthy and accessible government records are the basis for demonstrating transparency and accountability through Open Data and Freedom of Information and allowing the public to make an informed contribution to the governance process. In the digital environment, records are highly vulnerable and must be managed to ensure that they remain accurate, reliable, accessible and usable for as long as required to provide the basis for open government. The UK will, with direction from The National Archives, ensure that good practice identified in international standards is understood and applied appropriately by government. The goal of this initiative will be to create a records management framework that allows users to find records easily and use them for as long as they are needed. It will also facilitate the extraction and release of credible data from reliable records in line with transparency

---

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/prime-minister-david-camerons-speech-to-the-world-economic-forum-in-davos/>



and open data objectives.

- **Register of Lobbyists** – The UK Government will establish a statutory register of lobbyists that will increase transparency without placing disproportionate burdens on those affected. Lobbying plays an important role in the policy making process, ensuring that Ministers and senior officials hear a full range of views from those who will be affected by Government decisions, but it must be conducted in a transparent and open way.

## 2) Participation and Responsiveness

Open government is a two-way dialogue. It builds on transparency and responsiveness to meet the needs and expectations of citizens.

The participation of citizens in policy making, governance and public services is critical to ensuring a healthy and vibrant democracy, good decision making, and responsive and trusted institutions. Many of the challenges that we face today will require the collective knowledge, creativity and energy of government, civil society, business and citizens to overcome. We have already taken steps to give citizens greater control over decisions that affect their lives, but we can and need to do more, ensuring that the voices of all citizens are heard at every level of government.

Efforts to date:

- The government has piloted a range of open policy making approaches, including the one to create this National Action Plan.
- The government has provided training for over 500 community organisers, and has developed a network of thousands of others, working with local communities to listen to their concerns and to take local action to address issues that matter to local citizens;
- The government's new *social media guidance* for civil servants provides an opportunity for civil servants to engage directly with the public.
- The government has developed the "Inside Government" web pages, making policy information clear and accessible.
- The government's [Sciencewise Expert Resource Centre](#) has opened up policy making by supporting, funding, and providing advice and training, on over twenty topics critical to the UK's prosperity. These include Synthetic Biology, Nanotechnology, Stem Cells and Sustainable Energy Pathways to 2050, and have happened at both national and local level.
- DCLG is working with local authorities and their partners to encourage them to release their local data to enable their residents and local communities to reuse data to support greater accountability, choice and more cost effective local public services.



#### Areas for future commitments:

- **National Action Plan Development** – the UK Government and civil society will work to broaden, in size and diversity, the network of organisations and individuals involved in developing future iterations of this National Action Plan. This version has benefitted significantly from the collaborative process used so far, using the expertise and energy within the civil service and civil society in a demonstration of open policy making. There is still more that we can do to open up the process, so over the coming months we will actively engage with organisations and citizens around the country, online and through face-to-face events, to ensure this plan will reflect the wide community we wish to serve.
- **Developing open policymaking approaches** – The UK Government will ensure that officials understand the full scope and potential of open policymaking, what it means for their work, and the tools that are available to support this work. Open policymaking, unlike opening up of data, has no clear "product" at the end - it is instead an inherently iterative process; a process of change in behaviors and actions.
- **Clearing Barriers to Participation** – the UK Government will work with civil society to ensure that deeper participation reduces, rather than increases, inequalities in influence. This means encouraging peer-to-peer democratic education and citizen-level networks, so there are more capable and informed citizens engaging with government. The government will support its officials and others in measuring the representation and reach of the consultation and open policymaking activities undertaken.
- **Public Involvement in Policy for Innovation** – the UK Government will identify innovative and effective ways to engage the public in policy involving complex scientific and technological innovation (through the Sciencewise Expert Resource Centre). Such innovation can have profound social, economic and cultural impacts and it is critical to reflect public perspectives.
- **Public participation in the budget process** – the UK Government commits to reaching the highest standards on budget transparency, public participation, oversight by parliament and audit institutions, which will be measured through the Open Budget Survey in 2014. The Open Budget Survey 2012 ranked the UK third in the world for budget transparency and accountability, with a score of 88 out of 100. This is a significant achievement but we can, and want to do more.

Working with the voluntary sector, DCLG has already tested public demand for better access to budget, spend and contract information. Through the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency, we will be requiring local authorities to make data more open and accessible.

### 3) Accountability and anti-corruption

Transparency is an essential aspect of open government, but it is not sufficient in itself. Open government requires robust accountability mechanisms and strong enforcement of anti-corruption legislation. It is about ensuring that public resources are used for public goods and service delivery, and not siphoned off through embezzlement, bribery or tax evasion.

Amongst the achievements to date, the UK Bribery Act 2010 is a landmark piece of legislation: it reforms the criminal law to provide a new, modern and comprehensive scheme of bribery offences. In particular it requires companies to have procedures in place to prevent bribery, demonstrating the UK's commitment to tackle corruption, both at home and abroad.

- The challenges inherent in such fields cannot be solved by one country alone and we **commit to collaborating with international partners to increase accountability and tackle corruption across a range of sectors**. For example, the UK government will work with the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies to support them in signing up to anti-corruption conventions such as the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Anti-Bribery Convention and to bring in anti-bribery legislation that covers companies incorporated in these jurisdictions.
- The UK was a founding member of the **Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI)** over ten years ago and commits to supporting implementation of a strong revised (EITI) standard which goes beyond revenues, for example to include: project-level reporting, licence transparency, information about state-owned enterprises. EITI and other stakeholders will provide targeted support for civil society participation in the initiative to turn transparency into accountability across EITI countries.
- **Anti-Money Laundering Enforcement** – the UK government will share best practice and collaborate with international partners to demonstrate anti-money laundering enforcement activity. The UK will take this opportunity to push for commitment and resources to coordinate intelligence sharing and law enforcement, both inter-government and between governmental bodies and financial institutions.
- **Publication of Commitments and Performance** – the Cabinet Office will publish a record of all specific OGP commitments centrally on the Cabinet Office website, with a regularly updated indication of progress in implementation.

#### 4) Global Partnerships

International cooperation is essential to achieve consistently high standards of transparency and accountability in an increasingly interconnected world. The UK has championed openness and participation domestically and in the EU and will work with others to establish a global level playing-field that benefits governments, business and citizens.

The UK's Presidency of the G8 this year presents us with an opportunity to further the transparency agenda on a global stage and we recognise the role of civil society who were instrumental in the early development of this policy agenda and who will be integral in its implementation. The UK will build on the principles and agreements contained within the G8 Leaders' Communiqué and its subsidiary documentation as we develop the final Open Government Partnership UK National Action Plan.

The UK has played a significant role in working with other member states in Europe to deliver effective transparency legislation through the Transparency and Accounting Directives, which requires the extractive industries to report on payments made to governments at project level. We will also encourage other countries, where extractive industry companies are registered, to build on the US Dodd-Frank Act and the EU's Transparency and Accounting Directives and implement similar laws to require extractive industries to report payments made to governments and their agencies.

The UK Government will work with other countries to endorse the principles and disclosure requirements of the Construction Sector Transparency Initiative (CoST) and to encourage and support additional countries to implement the initiative.

With regards to Aid Transparency, the UK Government will work with international donors and partner countries to better link aid budget data with partner country budget data, through the development of the IATI budget identifier.

Through the OGP, the UK Government will support other countries to reach the highest standards in budget transparency, citizen participation, oversight by parliaments and audit institutions, as measured by the Open Budget Survey

## ANNEX A: CIVIL SOCIETY PRIORITY AREAS

**This Annex contains a number of priority areas from members of the Open Government Partnership Civil Society Network where they would like the UK Government to consider making commitments. The UK Government has not at this time committed to these but has agreed to look at them in the next few months and, where possible, make commitments in the final version of this plan, which will be published by October 2013.**

The Open Government Partnership Civil Society Network that has contributed towards the development of this plan came together in response to the Government's first National Action Plan, submitting a collaborative analysis of the action plan<sup>7</sup> and signing an open letter to the Minister for the Cabinet Office, Francis Maude, calling for greater civil society engagement<sup>8</sup>, to which Francis Maude subsequently responded<sup>9</sup>.

The UK Open Government Partnership Civil Society Network is open to any representative of a UK civil society organisation or any individual citizen, and we are committed to increasing the membership of the network ever further. It has no formal structure and no individual or organisation speaks on its behalf. The network is currently coordinated by Involve, a charity working to embed public participation in government, having been asked by organisations within the network to take on the role in September 2012.

Over the past months we have been working closely with government officials to scope out and develop the contents of this plan. We are pleased with the progress made so far on a number of important issues and feel that this first draft of the new UK Action Plan is a positive step towards open government.

However there are still areas where we believe the UK Government can and needs to do much more, in particular if it is to fulfill its aspiration of becoming the most open and transparent government in the world. In the coming months we will continue to push departments to consider a number of critical issues and develop new commitments.

The civil society priority areas:

### **1. Open data and transparency**

**Open data** – The UK Government should further develop the open data agenda:

- Domestically, through the release of core reference data, and embedding a presumption to publish through policy and culture – using the civil service reform

<sup>7</sup> Available from: <http://www.opengovernment.org.uk/civil-society-perspectives-on-uk-national-action-plan/>

<sup>8</sup> Available at: <http://www.opengovernment.org.uk/open-letter-to-francis-maude/>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.opengovernment.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/MCO-response-to-CSOs-letter-to-UK-OGP.pdf>

plan to support departmental officials with the attitudes and skills needed to deliver and make the most of open data.

- Globally, through working with international partners to develop technical standards and clear open licenses that promote the adoption of open data. Including IATI, GIFT and Open Contracting.

**Open Contracting** – the UK government should endorse and implement a system of ‘Open Contracting,’ which would ensure public disclosure and monitoring of contracting, from procurement to the close of projects. This would mean the publication and updating of key documents related to all major projects associated with contracting and delivery, including details of the bidding and evaluation process, contract awards, terms and conditions, technical specifications, contract summary and amendments and beneficial owners of all contract parties. Information should be available as standardised data, including open corporate identifiers.

**Tax Transparency and Illicit Financial Flows** – The UK Government should commit to amending the Finance Bill to require UK taxpayers, including companies, to report their use of tax avoidance schemes which affect developing countries. Tax is a vital source of income for developing countries and the OECD estimates that poor countries lose three times more to tax havens than they receive in aid each year. The UK should commit to leading the way in taking action to combat tax evasion.

**Opening Company Data** – the UK Government should commit to the publication of full details of companies registered at Companies’ House, including company accounts and shareholder registers (both of which are already collected as data), and the creation of an open register of company beneficial ownership. Clear and accessible data on companies, including on beneficial ownership, is essential to ensure good corporate governance, accountability, and to combat illegal financial activity. Two cost benefit analyses (one in 2002 by the UK and one in 2007 by the European Commission) concluded that including beneficial ownership information in existing business registers would be cheaper than the status quo.

**Lobbying Register** – The UK Government should establish a statutory lobbying register that applies across the board, including in-house corporate lobbying. By delivering the UK’s existing commitment to introduce a statutory register of lobbyists in a comprehensive and effective manner, applying to all influential players, the UK would lead good practice on this vital aspect of policy formulation and help to ensure that undue influence over public officials does not undermine public trust in government.

**Freedom of information** – The Government should widen the scope of the FoI Act to apply to any organisation delivering public services. An effective FoI Act that applies across all organisations in receipt of public funds and with low barriers to use by citizens, the media, civil society and other interested parties is a critical element of open government.

We are concerned to find FoI rights being weakened at precisely the time that the open government proposals are developed. The public's rights to information should not be reduced when a contractor assumes responsibility for providing a public service nor should the level of disclosure depend on the terms of each individual contract. As public service delivery is increasingly outsourced, it is essential that the public and parliamentarians have access to all the information they need to scrutinise the delivery of services.

The Government should not proceed with its proposals to restrict access by reducing the threshold at which FoI requests can be refused on cost grounds. Nor should the time that officials expect to spend considering whether to release information count towards this limit. This would make it less likely that requests raising new or complex issues would be answered. Charges should not be introduced for appeals to the Information Rights Tribunal. Instead, the time limits allowed for responding to FoI requests should be tightened, as recommended by the Justice select committee.

## **2. Participation**

**Open policymaking** – The UK Government should establish, in collaboration with civil society and other interested participants, a model of open policymaking that enables policy makers to understand the full scope of open policymaking, what it means for their work, what tools are available to support this work and the standards of openness and evidence to which they should adhere. This process should be used to seed a community of officials, citizens and organisations who are interested in supporting openness in policymaking and, in turn, lead to the development of five open policy prototypes, of differing scale and on different issues. Open policymaking is a process of change in the behaviours and actions of policymakers, resulting in the inclusion of a wider and more representative range of voices in the policymaking process and at an earlier stage. It is inherently an iterative process, with new voices, new ideas and new ideas entering at every stage, and being incorporated into a new understanding of "the way we do things here". It is, therefore, critical that the model is itself developed in an open and collaborative way.

**5 Stars of Open Data Engagement** – the UK government should support individuals, community groups and the voluntary sector to make effective use of open data by adopting the 5 stars of open data engagement and developing programmes and resources that promote the use of open data in particular settings - such as neighbourhood planning, health service governance, and overseas aid.

This is important because the majority of funding for open data use has gone to the private sector, and the social value of data remains locked up because the tools and skills to use it are not yet widespread. Civil society is already active in developing training, tools and ideas for promoting open data engagement, but needs the buy-in and support from government to take this to scale.

**Public participation in the budget process** – The UK Government should commit to significantly raising its public engagement score in the next Open Budget Survey. It is important for good governance, accountability and democratic legitimacy that budgetary decision making processes are informed by an in depth understanding of the priorities, views, values, experiences and lives of citizens across the country.

### **3. Accountability and anti-corruption**

**Whistleblower Protection** – The UK Government should put in place robust protection for whistleblowers and commit to close the loopholes in the Public Interest Disclosure Act, in particular relating to the categories of workers covered, the provisions relating to gagging clauses, protection against blacklisting and the role of regulators, among others. This will help to ensure that whistleblowing is seen as an effective and positive activity that protects individuals, promotes transparency and accountability, and protects society at large.

**An Anti-Corruption Strategy** – The UK Government should initiate a cross-Whitehall anti-corruption strategy that outlines how different departments and agencies will work to tackle corruption and how anti-corruption is being prioritised in different international fora (e.g. OGP, G8, G20 etc). An Anti-Corruption Champion (whose role will cover both UK and overseas corruption) should have the remit to bring coordinate and implement the strategy, and annually report to Parliament on progress. This will enable greater sharing of information across Government departments and increased scrutiny by parliament and civil society.

**Implementing and Enforcing the UK Bribery Act 2010** – The UK Government should ensure sufficient resourcing for the implementation and enforcement of the UK Bribery Act 2010, in order that UK companies do not fuel or facilitate bribery. In particular, support should be given to investigation and prosecution agencies and to the diplomatic posts that support UK businesses overseas to comply with the Act.

### **4. Global partnerships**

**Budget Transparency** – The UK Government should work with others through the OGP to strengthen the budget transparency eligibility and reporting requirements for countries joining the initiative so that all OGP countries commit to publishing “significant” budget information (as per the Open Budget Index criteria) and reaching a high standard on public participation as well as strengthening oversight institutions. The UK Government should work with others to endorse and encourage other OGP members to endorse, engage with and implement the principles of the Global Initiative on Fiscal Transparency as well as to support the roll out of the World Bank’s BOOST data tool to a wider range of countries.



**Tax transparency and illicit financial flows** – The UK government should:

- Endorse, promote and implement greater openness of public data on companies, corporate transparency and beneficial ownership, to prevent money laundering, fraud, corruption, organised crime and stolen assets, all of which use corporate structures. This should include the free and open publication of statutory company data (e.g. publishing company registers as open data), transparent and detailed financial reporting (e.g. using the XBRL accounting data standard), and information on company ownership and officers. The UK should promote this agenda at the G8, G20, EU and other international organisations, through the EU Anti-Money Laundering Directive, Financial Action Task Force, and other initiatives.
- Drive progress towards the automatic exchange of information between revenue authorities
- Work with other governments to encourage tax havens to sign the Multilateral Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters, which requires countries to share information with each other about hidden wealth and assets.
- Explore ways of extending country-by-country reporting beyond the extractives sector

**Open Contracting** – The UK Government should work with other countries to endorse, engage with and implement open contracting, which would ensure public disclosure and monitoring of contracting, from procurement to the close of projects. Open contracting refers to principles, disclosure standards, capacity development, tools and learning for increased transparency and monitoring.

**Use of Information for Accountability** – The UK Government should work with other governments to strengthen initiatives, such as ‘Making All Voices Count’, that increase the capacity of parliaments, audit institutions, media outlets, citizens’ organisations, academic institutions and affected communities to use information to improve policies, increase accountability and ensure efficient use of resources. In coordination with other donors, the UK government should incorporate into existing aid programmes assistance for the development of comprehensive systems for public reporting (contracting, revenues, spending, savings, etc.) and the management of the digital records and data necessary to achieve accurate reporting.

## **ANNEX B: UK OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP CIVIL SOCIETY NETWORK MEMBERS**

Representatives from the following organisations are members of the UK OGP civil society network:

CAFOD  
Campaign for Freedom of Information  
Construction Sector Transparency Initiative  
Democratic Society  
Development Initiatives  
Development Research and Training  
Global Witness  
Institution of Civil Engineers  
Integrity Action  
International Records Management Trust  
Involve  
ONE  
Open Corporates  
Open Rights Group  
Practical Participation  
Public Concern at Work  
Publish What You Fund  
Publish What You Pay UK  
Save the Children  
Tearfund  
Transparency International UK