Public Sector Transparency Board – Minutes, 24th June 2010

Here are the minutes of the Transparency Board meeting held on 24 June at the Cabinet Office:

Present:

Francis Maude (Chair)
Sir Tim Berners-Lee
Professor Nigel Shadbolt
Tom Steinberg
Dr Rufus Pollock
Amalie Kjaergaard (Secretary)

Also present:

Andrew Stott (Cabinet Office)
Rohan Silva (No. 10)
Laura Trott (Cabinet Office)

Terms of Reference

The draft Terms of Reference were discussed. It was noted that the Transparency Board should not only work on defining the "public task" of Trading Funds but should also then work with Departments and Trading Funds to ensure that the agreed public tasks were effectively implemented; the Transparency Board should also contribute to discussions on the regulation of Trading Funds and on charging models more generally. With this understanding the Terms of Reference were <u>approved</u>.

Work programme and priorities

Professor Nigel Shadbolt's letter of 14 June was discussed.

An extended version of the proposed public data principles had been drafted taking in further points from members of the Board. It was agreed that these principles should be published as a draft for comment from the wider community of interest in transparency and open data. In due course each principle should be extended with an FAQ.

In discussion on taking forward the work programme set out in Nigel Shadbolt's letter it was noted that:

(1) the programme of data release required both "push" of data sets with obvious transparency, economic and social value and "pull" by the public to ensure that they get the other data which they want.

(2) speed could trump accuracy or consistent standards initially where necessary, and corrected data or more standardised format could then follow.

(3) change in behaviour would lead to change in culture.

(4) there was an need to incentivise and celebrate good behaviour and data release

Right to Data

In advance of consideration of legislative options it was essential that government departments treated requests for data with the presumption of transparency as set out in the Prime Minister's letter of 29 May. The Transparency Board should champion the release of key datasets sought by the public.

It noted that frequently requested datasets included:

* Land Registry
* Companies House
* Integrated Business Register
* Transport Data include timetables, fare and real time running information
* Weather information including observations and forecasts
* Environment Agency data
* Address register
* Footpaths

The Transparency Board should actively seek suggestions of other priority datasets from the wider open data, business and developer communities – it would be important to have a portfolio of priority datasets, including data which was not available at all at the moment as well as currently charged-for information.

Cabinet Office
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