

Transparency Board Minutes 15.09.10

TRANSPARENCY BOARD

Minutes of a meeting held on 15 September 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:

Baroness Hanham (Communities and Local Government)
Lord McNally (Ministry of Justice)
Andrew Stott (Cabinet Office)
Sara Marshall (Secretariat)
Rohan Silva (No. 10)
Laura Fentem (No. 10)
Hannah Meyer (Ministry of Justice)

Datasets

An update on commitments set out in the [Prime Minister's letter](#) on opening up data dated 31 May was given (see paper TB(2)1.ii). This included an analysis of data sets added to data.gov.uk by departments since May 2010 which indicates that some departments are regularly adding data but others are not. (see paper TB(2)1.i)

The Transparency Board also discussed the response to its request to the public for additional data sets that they would like released and their comments (see paper TB(2)1.iii). From this list, the Board will draw up a portfolio of priority datasets which are not available as well as currently charged-for information.

Open Government Licence

The Transparency Board praised The National Archives' development of a UK Open Government Licence which enables the re-use of a broad range of public sector information under a simple licensing process which:

- covers information that is owned by the Crown but is also designed for wider adoption across the public sector;
- does not require registration or charge from the re-user;
- has as few restrictions as possible;
- covers both copyright and database rights;

- is interoperable with widely-used models such as Creative Commons and Open Data Commons;
- supports the inclusion of a machine-readable description of the terms and conditions.

It was agreed that the Open Government Licence should be launched on 30th September 2010 as version 1.0 allowing the concept to evolve and improve with new versions issued in the light of feedback and user experience.

Right to Data

The Coalition's Commitment to "create a new 'right to data' so that government-held datasets can be requested and used by the public and then published on a regular basis" was discussed. The draft Public Data Principles, published by the Transparency Board in June, could provide a practical framework to promote re-use and open standards was tabled along with a number of other possible approaches including:

- Status quo
- Administrative guidance for Whitehall
- Small scale changes to the Freedom of Information Act
- A new duty to promote transparency and re-use of data; with order-making powers for classes of data, or bodies

The Transparency Board agreed to host a roundtable event on the 'Right to Data' to test these options and other ideas.

Transparency in Local Government

The work of the [Department for Communities and Local Government](#) and the [Local Data Panel](#) to deliver transparency and open data was discussed and includes

- Ensuring local authorities and other bodies are part of the journey on transparency, complying with the spirit of open data and engaging in dialogue with developers and others about how best to move forward in a process of continuous improvement;
- Discussions around how to standardise local authority data (and other local data) and which data should be standardised as a priority; and
- Capacity building and work on skills and demand, by encouraging citizens, developers, public and private sector organisations to access and use local data and information.

It was decided that this transformative and ambitious programme should be underpinned by the Public Data Principles being worked up by the Transparency Board.

Trading Funds

The Coalition government has committed to Transparency and opening up data. A number of the High Value datasets identified in the first meeting of the Transparency Board are currently charged for. The basis for this charging was discussed. One approach discussed was based on a model successfully applied in the Ordnance Survey which includes:

- A default position that where data is available, it should be available for free;
- Where public data is charged for it should be on a cost recovery basis with strong contractual and licence terms to make access to the data as liberal as possible;
- Where data is charged for on market basis this should only be where it is processed or particularly high specification (e.g. OS Mastermap);
- The Transparency Board should agree any list of charged data; and
- This split should be publicised, with a clear review process.

It was suggested that a pragmatic approach would be to test the model on some of the high value data sets already identified by the Transparency Board:

- i. Met Office;
- ii. DVLA;
- iii. Environment Agency; and
- iv. Land Registry.

One Trading Fund will be invited to the next meeting to discuss application of the model.

September 2010