**Open Data User Group - Minutes**

**17th meeting**

**18th October 2013, 14:00-17:30**

**Deloitte 1 Little New St, London, EC4A 3TR**

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| **Attendees** | **Officials** |
| Heather Savory (Chair) (HS) | Krisztina Katona (Cabinet Office) (KK) |
| Bob Barr (BB)  2:30o | Ekua Boateng (Cabinet Office) (EB) |
| Alex Kafetz (AK) |  |
| Dominique Lazanski (DL) | **Observers** |
| Harvey Lewis (HL) |  |
| Gesche Schmid (GSc) |  |
| Giuseppe Sollazzo (GS) |  |
| Tom Smith(TS) | **Apologies** |
| Jacqui Taylor (JT) | Charlie Boundy (CB) |
| Jeni Tennison (JTe) | Paul Fenton (PF) |
|  | Paul Malyon (PM) |
|  | Ed Parkes (Cabinet Office) (EP) |
|  | Duncan Ross (DR) |
|  | Carlos Somohano (CS) |
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**Agenda**

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| **Item** | **Description** |
| **1** | Chair’s introduction and welcome |
| **2** | Update on benefits cases   * DVLA and Stolen Vehicles * VOA |
| **3** | CO update on NII |
| **4** | New Data Request prioritisation |
| **6** | ODUG Events   * OGP * Parliament - Engage the public |
| **7** | Proposals for £3.5m budget spend   * New proposal (BB) * Local Govt proposal (JT/GSc) * Other |
| **8** | Case Studies |
| **9** | A.O.B.  9.1 ONS Census Consultation – overview (5mins)  9.2 Forward meeting schedule (5mins)  9.2 AOB |

**Chair’s Intro and Welcome**

The Chair welcomed the group to the meeting and noted that the minutes from the last meeting had been approved in correspondence.

**Chair’s Update**

The Chair had attended meetings to discuss the Data Request mechanism in the light of updates to data.gov.uk and to agree ODUG’s participation at the Open Government Partnership (OGP) Summit. She had spoken at a Royal Statistical Society Event and had given evidence to the Public Administration Select Committee (PASC) enquiry on Statistics and Open Data.

In addition the Chair had a meeting with Royal Mail to discuss their PAF license consultation. ODUG had a vigorous discussion on the position the group should adopt on postcodes, in light of the Royal Mail privatisation. The key arguments are set out below:

* Supporting a non-open data position of a small flat fee for access to PAF in order to sustain the highest possible quality and most up to-date data, if the Royal Mail was minded to do this.
* Encouraging and supporting competitors to PAF and creating challenges to the sustainability and dominance of the PAF commercial model.
* ODUG members were supportive of Building an Open Data PAF alternative using local authority data and crowd sourcing.
* ODUG members were supportive of maintaining the strong position that PAF should be available as Open Data.

The group concluded that their continued ambition was for an Open Data Postcode Address File, which makes building an alternative to PAF the only viable option for the Open Data agenda.

**Update on benefits cases**

**Update on DVLA**

KK provided an update which highlighted that discussions about the release of the data (and other datasets) are ongoing. She informed the group that the benefits case on the DVLA had been helpful in making the case for data release, although the Department of Transport had fed back that more emphasis on social benefits in future benefits cases, and additional case studies (rather than a single request) are helpful in making the case for data release.

**New Data Request prioritisation**

JT gave an update to the group on the work, with Cabinet Office, around the data request process in light of the changes being made to data.gov.uk and the process of aligning two different processes and making them work in harmony. JT reminded the group that the road map needed to be refreshed before the OGP event at the end of October.

**Action**: JT to refresh the road map with the input of the group.

**ODUG Events**

**OGP Update**

An update about the OGP was given highlighting the following points:

JT showed the group the ODUG logo for the event, which was approved by the group.

JT also sought approval from the group to produce an ODUG A6 booklet to highlight the key ODUG achievements, number of data requests, business cases and to include a testimonial of a data release that has helped a requestor. The leaflet was approved by the group.

**Action:** JT to co-ordinate rotation of ODUG Members on the stand

**Action:** EB to receive A6 booklet and to print 1,000 copies

**Proposals for £3.5m budget spend**

**Local Govt Proposal**

JT and GSc invited the group to provide feedback on the Local Government Voucher Scheme which proposes to give local authorities funding to incentivise them to publish open data to a benchmarked standard. The key themes of the discussion are outlined below:

* The scheme cannot ensure that all local authorities would sign up and provide the data. However, the proposal is designed to test take-up in a pilot offered on a voluntary basis.
* An alternate scheme might include funding a young data scientist to work with local authorities to help unlock their data.
* The discussion also raised the issue of how to prioritise the themes for funding and how to ensure the funding made the biggest impact.
* Additionally the number of authorities who could be helped in the pilot was raised, as well as whether the funding should be focussed on local authorities least engaged in the open data agenda or on to building capacity on a particular open data theme.
* There was a discussion about whether a voucher scheme of £2500 or £6000 would be sufficient to fund resources if local authorities face the bigger issue of staff cuts.
* The fund administration was also a key issue raised as it was not explicit in the paper who would administer the scheme.

**Action:** JT and GSc to prepare a 1 page document executive summary setting out the proposal on Seed Vouchers highlighting the key themes for funding and more details on fund administration.

**New Proposal**

There was a brief discussion of BB’s paper and the outcome was for BB to speak to GS to see how both proposals fit together.

**Action:** BB and GSc to meet to discuss how the proposals fit together.

**Case Studies**

The Chair asked the group to submit examples of open data case studies that would be complied and circulated within the group. HL will lead on this.

**Action:** Case Study proposals to HL (ALL)

**Census Consultation**

TS gave an update on the Office for National Statistics census consultation, highlighting the different options for future collection and use of census and alternative data sources. Action: For TS/BB to provide a first draft of a paper on the census change to the group prior to the next meeting.

**Action:** For all to contribute case studies to the open data spreadsheet on the ODUG collaboration space.

**A.O.B.**

PM had suggested that the group that needed to prepare a response the Law Commission consultation on Data Sharing between Public Bodies. The group agreed. A lead is required for this work.

ODUG members acknowledged Defra's decision to release their draft Open Data strategy for comment to the Open Data community as an approach to be commended, regarded by ODUG members as exemplar behaviour.

EB asked the group to group to contact her with any difficulties in setting up ODUG profiles on DGUK.

**Action:** For an ODUG member to come forward to lead the ODUG response to the Law Commission consultation. (ALL)

**Action:** For ODUG members to contact EB with any DGUK profile issues. (ALL)