**OPEN GOVERNMENT STEERING GROUP**

General Medical Council Boardroom, General Medical Council Scotland
The Tun, Gentle's Entry, Edinburgh EH8 8PJ

Meeting 3: Wed 20 February 2019 10:00 – 11:30

**NOTE OF MEETING**

**Attendees**

**Co-chairs**

Michael Russell – Cabinet Secretary for Government Business and Constitutional Relations (apologies)
Barbara Allison – Director Communications, Ministerial Support & Facilities, Scottish Government – deputising
Lucy McTernan – Chair of Civil Society Steering Group

**Civil Society**

Alex Stobart – Mydex CIC
Benjamin McElwee – See Me Scotland
Catherine Gee – Keep Scotland Beautiful
Eddy Borges-Rey – The University of Stirling (apologies)
Elric Honore – Fife Centre for Equalities
Kaela Scott – Involve
Shaben Begum – Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (apologies)

**Scottish Government**

Audrey MacDougall –  Deputy Director Communities Analysis Division and Chief Social Researcher
Claire McPherson – Deputy Director Public Service Reform Division
Colin Cook – Director Digital (apologies)
Doreen Grove – Head of Open Government
Roger Halliday – Chief Statistician and Head of Performance
Scott Bell – Head of Procurement Development and Construction Review Division
Stephen Gallagher – Interim Director Communities and Local Government (apologies)

**Local Government**

Councillor Kelly Parry – Community Wellbeing Spokesperson, COSLA (apologies)
Councillor Graham Houston –Vice President, COSLA

**Steering Group Secretariat**

Niamh Webster – Open Government, Scottish Government

**Observers**

Daren Fitzhenry – Scottish Information Commissioner
Simon Cameron – Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)
Mick Doyle – Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC)
Saskia Kearns – Consumer Policy and Interventions Team, Scottish Government

## NOTE OF MEETING

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

Members and observers were welcomed to the Steering Group meeting by the co-chairs: Barbara Allison, Director Communications, Ministerial Support & Facilities, deputising for Michael Russell, Cabinet Secretary for Government Business and Constitutional Relations and Lucy McTernan, representing the civil society members of the Open Government Steering Group. Mr Russell was unable to attend the meeting due to other commitments, so apologies were given for his absence. A welcome was made by Cllr Graham Houston, the Vice-President of COSLA, to open the meeting.

The agenda is attached at **Annex A** and the papers for the meeting with the draft commitment is included at **Annex B**.

### 2. Official Launch event – reflections

Following introductions of members and observers, the group were asked for their reflections on the recent Launch event (31 Jan), where Scotland's Second Open Government Action Plan was officially launched.

Members were in agreement that it was good to see the event so well attended, and so many people interested in open government.

Reflections included:

- Good to see lots of different people from across Scottish Government talking about the Action Plan as 'our' plan and viewing it as their ownership and responsibility, felt like a milestone.
- Some people at the event were coming new to open government and learning about the concepts and principles.
- Should follow up with those who came to the event to work on the co-delivery of the commitments. Note that we may lose those who were interested if we don't follow up. A community of interest – suggestion that there could there be a space online or a network of champions (within Scottish Government and externally) to support this.

While we have the Action Plan now published, setting out the activity and milestones over the next two years, there was some feeling from the members that there was a lack of clear structure on what happens next and how in practical terms, either for each commitment or as a whole (the complete Action Plan).

There was discussion following this about a need for focusing on and moving forward with the actions in the Action Plan, with the members expressing the importance of successful implementation and delivery as a priority. Members were also keen to take actions, detail as yet to be defined, to work openly and jointly in implementing this Action Plan, to deliver in partnership.

The group reflected on how working with people and co-creation could be properly embedded overall as a way of working, recognising that behavioural change is needed to make this a reality.

Reflections were also shared that the commitments are all related and linked, and good to discuss the strategic oversight with this group. But there is a risk that when commitment leads/people involved go back to normal day-job, they go back to working in silos again. There's a need for support and networks to continue seeing the bigger picture – and the aims of open government. There was also a link made with the National Performance Framework, which brings these values of openness, transparency and engagement together, as a way to guide commitment leads through the delivery and connecting to bigger picture of outcomes.

There was a discussion about the role of the group's role in acknowledging the wider political and global context that open government operates in, and that potentially impacts the progress and reforms. The group cited issues such as Freedom of Information (FOI) and Brexit related transparency issues. While it was recognised that open government is much more than, and distinct from, a campaign, the group recognised the importance of noting contextual challenges.

Attendance of observers such as those of regulatory and scrutiny bodies, and across the Scottish public sector was welcomed, including the Scottish Information Commissioner. Given that strong laws on Freedom of Information (FOI) is a core criteria for membership of the Open Government Partnership, the group gave express welcome to the Scottish Information Commissioner's continued attendance at the Steering Group meetings. The members recognised the importance of the retention of independence from government of regulators and scrutiny bodies, and while acknowledging this, invited the Scottish Information Commissioner to consider whether he wished to formalise his role. The group meanwhile welcomed the continuation of the Scottish Information Commissioners attendance.

**Decision:** Steering Group to have a standing item at future meetings on contextual reflection, as a mechanism to discuss any issues or topical concerns.

**Decision:** Continued attendance of scrutiny and regulatory bodies welcomed, and express welcome to the Scottish Information Commissioner's attendance, given the important role of strong freedom of information laws as a core criterion for membership of Open Government Partnership. Scottish Information Commissioner invited to consider formalised role with the group.

## 3. Open Government Partnership international – updates

- Lucy updated the group on the latest International Steering Committee meeting, held in Washington, in her capacity as a member of the committee. Open Government agenda has reached a level of maturity, and worth recognising the importance of having a global movement now looking at these issues. There are Steering Committee elections coming up too.
- European Network leaders in Open Government now being led by the Netherlands.
- Open Government Global summit taking place in Ottawa, Canada in in May (29-31) – more information here: https://ogpsummit.org/en/ Prominent theme is inclusion. Hopeful that Scotland will be well represented. Some workshops proposals have been submitted – will be worked up in more detail if successful, inviting and involving civil society and the wider Open Government Network. The new Minister leading open government in Canada is moving the narrative to one of openness, participation and inclusion which feels helpful for widening the movement.
- Open Government Locals programme (of which Scotland was a Pioneer member) was reviewed in December by the International Steering Committee (report and minutes here https://www.opengovpartnership.org/about/ogp-steering-committee/meetings-minutes-and-communications ) and continues to be discussed to plan the future. Below commitment will feed into this learning.
- **Decision:** none required


## 4. Draft Scottish Commitment in UK Action Plan on Open Government

- Draft commitment attached at **ANNEX B**. Idea is about sharing learning and spreading effective practice, based on Scotland's experience as Pioneer on Locals Programme (above) and to develop and feed-in to this learning.
- Question was raised about Scottish Government capacity to deliver. The discussion highlighted that the onus is not on Scotland alone – responsibility to deliver the commitment is shared.
- The UK Open Government Steering Group are also meeting in Manchester next week and are looking at resource, with members indicating this is a priority with all gaining from the output of successful delivery of this commitment.
- To make explicit the role of involving the public in this commitment.
- COSLA will involve other Local Government Associations from across the UK in the commitment.
- There were some questions on the use of the output of this work; how it spreads and what the next step would be.
- Group discussed value of getting agreement on basic concept of this commitment, with the option to frame it as it progresses. Group recognised value in giving permission and structure for connecting people across the UK e.g. structure in place makes it easier for counterparts in different places working on similar issues/commitments to exchange learning.
- **Decision:** Members in agreement to support this commitment, with the above recommendations taken into account. Still in drafting stage, to be finalised with civil society and Welsh, Northern Irish and UK Governments, and added to UK Open Government Action Plan (2019-21).

**5. Open Government Week** (11-17 March)

- Info on Open Government Week and international scheduled activity week here: https://www.opengovweek.org/
- Open Data events planned in Scotland during this week could be shared through open government
- **Decision:** Group to promote any international events such as those that are being livestreamed and share links to other events. Open data events to be communicated and shared as open government events.

**6. Priorities for future discussion**

- Delivery of the Action Plan is the priority for the group. Group want to be sure of making progress and have some light touch monitoring of commitments. To include feedback from groups delivering commitments on the challenges and sharing their learning so far. Suggestions of commitment leads attending next meeting (May) to give short update and overview of progress.
- List of commitment leads to be provided to the group.
- Independent reporting mechanism provides some external monitoring
- Project management/monitoring mechanism to be set up – Open Government team already working on trying to get a solution in place to provide high-level real-time reporting of progress.
- **Decision:** commitment leads to be invited to attend next meeting (May) to give short update and overview of progress. Progress reporting mechanism to be set up and will be shared with the group. List of commitment leads to be shared with members.

**7. AOB**

- With thanks to Catherine Gee for highlighting, members may be interested in inputting into the UK Voluntary National Review (VNR, or 'the review') which is a country-led progress report on implementing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs or Global Goals).

  How to respond: Please submit your response using the online survey, or by downloading the alternative format online.

  More info: Contact SDG Network Coordinator, Paul Bradley, at paul.bradley@scvo.org.uk and Scottish Government National Outcomes and SDG lead, Victoria Loughlan, at victoria.loughlan@gov.scot

- Ottawa, Canada – Global Summit on Open Government https://ogpsummit.org/en/

**8. Next steps and close**

The group were thanked for their continued time, energy and commitment to strengthening open government in Scotland. The next meeting is scheduled for May 2019. Currently 15 May as per calendar invites sent in December, but may be subject to change – date will be confirmed shortly).

Several members of the group stayed for a workshop following the Steering Group meeting, to reflect on the Action Plan co-creation and development process throughout 2018. This will inform a learning report, co-produced by Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) (external facilitators) and the Scottish Government Open Government Team.


**END**

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**AGENDA**

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|---|---|---|
| 10:00 | **1. Welcome**<br>• Lucy McTernan, Co-chair<br>• Barbara Allison, Director Communications, Ministerial Support & Facilities<br>• Cllr Graham Houston, Vice President of COSLA | |
| | **Introductions**<br>• Who you are and who you represent | Chaired by Lucy McTernan |
| 10:45 | **2. Official Launch event – reflections**<br>• Your reflections<br>• Learning from workshop | All<br>Open Gov Team |
| | **3. Open Government Partnership international**<br>• Update on International Steering Group<br>• Update on interactions | Lucy McTernan<br>Open Gov Team |
| | **4. Draft Scottish commitment in UK Action Plan**<br>• To discuss (draft attached) | Open Gov Team |
| | **5. Open Government Week** (11-17 March 2019)<br>• Possible activity in Scotland | Open Gov Team |
| | **6. Priorities for future discussion**<br>• Annual review of governance<br>• Partnership working – gov and civil society<br>• What else feels important? | Open Gov Team |
| | 7. AOB? | |
| | **8. Next steps and Close** | |
| 11:30 | **Break and arrivals for Reflection Workshop** | |
| 11:45 | **Reflection workshop: what did you think of the Action Plan development process throughout 2018**<br>Open event: invites sent to public who came to events, Open Government Network, Steering Group | Independently facilitated by SCDC |
| 13:15 | **Lunch** | |
| 13:45 | **End** | |

| Open Government Partnership Commitment submission: Template (required) | |
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| **Scottish Commitment for UK Open Government Action Plan (2019-21)** Develop effective ways to share knowledge and learning to provide sustainable Open Government policies and practises across public services in the UK | |
| Lead Implementing agency/actor | Scottish Government, in partnership with Convention of Scottish Local Authorities and OGP Scotland Network |
| **Commitment description** | |
| What is the public problem that the commitment will address? | The global public problem we are addressing is the growing lack of trust in governments, processes and power. This is now evident throughout the UK, in communities and in all spheres of government across the country. The Open Government Partnership [OGP]'s potential contribution to democratic renewal, at home and across the world is much greater if all aspects of governance are supported to become more participative, transparent and accountable. <br><br> The OGP has reviewed the first cycle of Open Government subnational/local members of the 'Pioneers' programme, available in the papers for the International Steering Group. The review recognised the energy, innovation and new political leadership the Pioneers (including Scotland) brought from all levels of government. It also acknowledged that commitments owned by administrations delivering services are more likely to deliver direct improvement in people's lives. <br><br> The report also acknowledged that it would be difficult for OGP to expand, as an organisation, quickly. The questions this raises resonate with the work Scotland led in their commitment in the previous UK NAP 3. We recognised that if Open Government is to reach right through the system of public services it needs collaborative – not hierarchical - leadership; requires a learning environment, clear direction and support as well as an active civil society, able to engage and challenge governments at every level. <br><br> Further work will be undertaken by the OGP Global team during 2019 to identify the best way(s) to spread open practices and government-civil society engagement in all spheres of government. This commitment aims to support that work by considering the options to expand open government practises throughout public services across the UK. |

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| | The changing nature of democracy and varying levels of devolution in United Kingdom make it an ideal testing ground for beginning to develop a robust framework which enables OGP Action Plans to be developed in the places and at the right level that is most effective for the people they serve and for that work to be supported collaboratively, within and across jurisdictions, and with civil society.  The effective sharing of learning can help us all to tackle each jurisdictions most significant issues in ways which will support the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. |
| What is the commitment? | In the UK NAP 3 (2016-2018), Scotland led work to bring together a group of leaders from all four national governments in the UK and civil society as well as representatives of Local Authorities in Scotland to consider how we share learning on open government. The discussion was chaired by the Scottish Minister for Parliamentary Business and facilitated by the head of Open Government at the OECD, Alessandro Bellantoni. This new commitment will build on the enthusiasm at that meeting for improving how we share good practise across the UK.   Scotland will lead a programme of discussions over the coming two years to identify how best to support the spread of Open Government policy and practise across public services.<br><br>The work plan for the two years and the precise makeup of the work and the groups taking it forward will be determined at an initial meeting of representatives from governments and civil society and experts from across the UK in the spring of 2019.<br><br>The aim will be to establish process to share learning across the UK; to establish effective, effective ways to lead and spread Open Government - through collaborative dialogue between governments, civil society and experts.<br><br>It will have a number of working groups to develop options for the models of leadership and guidance which can support Open Government becoming the way of working across public services and will consider to what degree that this spread is dependent upon access to the benefits of direct membership of OGP. |

| | The working groups may consider what mechanisms do or could support: |
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| | <ul><li>improved collaborative working within and across the spheres of government, so that open government practises in transparency, accountability and participation are spread through public services</li><li>the role of civil society to ensure there is a system which is sustainable, empowering, effective and recognises the roles of a vibrant civil society</li><li>raising the profile of open government with citizens</li><li>the relationship with OGP so we can all reap the benefits of international shared learning more equitably and effectively</li></ul><br>It is proposed that this work (which will be officer led) will draw on the expertise from OGP and from each jurisdiction and support the priorities in each place. Operating by meetings and remote discussions each group coming together at least four times over the next 2 years.<br><br>In addition it is proposed that the output from the working groups comes together to a high level learning event in late spring 2020. Which will be aimed at ensuring senior political, administrative and civil society buy in to support open government activity for the next NAP cycle. |
| How will the commitment contribute to solve the public problem? | This commitment will provide the space for deliberation and discussion through specific working groups and summit discussions which will offer the opportunity for all actors, be they political, official, civil society or public, to bring their expertise together to propose a options which support the spread of open government effectively. |
| Why is this commitment relevant to OGP values? | This commitment supports the OGP values of openness, accountability and participation at a time when the UK will be subject to arguably the biggest change in our society, economy and environment for a generation.<br><br>Given the nature of this commitment it has the potential to help address all 5 of the Open Government Partnership 'grand challenges' across the UK:<br>1. Improving public services<br>2. Increasing public trust<br>3. More effectively managing public resources<br>4. Creating safer communities<br>5. Increasing accountability |
| Additional Actors | This commitment will be a collaboration between OGP Civil Society networks and representatives of all spheres of governments in all 4 nations of the UK. |

| Milestone Activity with a verifiable deliverable | Start Date: | End Date: |
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| Hold working level discussions across the 4 nations to plan the programme of work-streams and outputs | Spring 2019 | Summer 2019 |
| Hold workshops for each of the work streams to develop their thinking | Summer 2019<br>Autumn 2019<br>Spring 2020<br>Spring 2021 | Spring  2021 |
| Hold high level working groups with representatives from each of the work-streams, OGP Support Unit and to include political leaders. To discuss and agree options for  future sharing of learning across UK | Autumn  2020 | Dec 2020 |
| Final meeting of working level group to put into action the outputs from the work-streams and the high-level discussions | Spring 2021 | August 2021 |

**END**

Niamh Webster
Secretariat
Open Government
Scottish Government
22 Feb 2019