Data Delivery Group (DDG)
Note of Meeting – 24 June 2019

Attendees		
Colin Cook (CC)	Roger Halliday (RH)	Ruchir Shah (RSh)
Gillian Docherty (GD)	Brian Hills (BH)	Carol Sinclair (CS)
Janet Egdell (JE)	Tommy Laughlin (TL)	Ritchie Somerville (RSo)
Graham Fairlie (GF)	Ken Macdonald (KM)	Peter Tolland (PT)
John Fotheringham (JF)	Rod Murray-Smith (RMS)	Gareth Williams (GW)
Katy Guthrie (KG)	Nayha Sethi (NS)	
Apologies		
Marion Bain	Paul Dowie	David Smith
Kevin Collins	Matthew Rice	

Welcome, Introductions and Actions from last meeting

CC, chairing in lieu of Sarah Davidson, welcomed attendees to the meeting. After introductions round the tables, it was confirmed that all actions from the last meeting had been completed.

High Level Delivery Plan (HLDP) for Data – progress and next steps

RH advised that the HLDP for Data is being redrafted to reflect feedback and developments; the final draft will be shared for comment shortly.

RH invited members to consider how the HLDP can be taken forward, progress measured, and its place in the wider landscape, such as in relation to the UK National Data Strategy* (NDS). It was agreed that a degree of overlap with this, Scotland's Digital Strategy and other initiatives is inevitable. The need for engagement to share successes and good practice in Scotland, and learn from elsewhere, was discussed, as was developing a unique Scottish approach to data that could potentially be set out in a future Scottish Data Strategy. The consensus was that there is a need to both contribute to UK activities, such as the NDS, and further develop a distinctive approach that reflects our values in the National Performance Framework (NPF).

* More information on this, including how to respond to the call for evidence, can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-data-strategy-open-call-for-evidence/national-data-strategy-open-call-for-evidence.

Proposal to develop an Artificial Intelligence (AI) strategy for Scotland

BH from The Data Lab (TDL) outlined their proposal to develop an strategy focused on benefit to the citizen and aligned with the NPF. TDL will organise development work, with the Minister for Public Finance and Digital Economy chairing a committee overseeing this; delivery and governance of the strategy will become a DDG responsibility in time. GD acknowledged that the proposed scope and timetable for work are extensive, but stressed that this is to ensure that all relevant input is captured and considered appropriately.

BH noted NS' suggestion that it may be useful to draw upon AI plans and strategies elsewhere, and advised that TDL plan to review these shortly. RSh highlighted the need for openness and transparency in developing the strategy to secure and sustain public trust, and advocated adopting a fully open, online approach to help achieve this. RSo observed that further thought as to how commercial considerations could preclude this may be required, and cited the need to ensure the strategy adroitly reflects Scotland's input to, and lead in some areas of, UK work.

Noting the benefit to the citizen focus, CS suggested that positioning the strategy as being focused on health and wellbeing could help to unlock further funding from different areas. RMS noted that it would be helpful to clarify the long-term aims around AI in Scotland, and the need to consider current and future ethical questions arising from the use of AI. How the AI strategy sits relevant to the HLDP was briefly discussed.

GW asked for assurance that there is full commitment to developing an AI strategy and, if so, if it could be delivered sooner than the proposal suggests. RH advised that there is a solid commitment, but that to progress development more quickly than planned would likely require further resource. CC concluded the discussion by noting members' positive comments on and support for the proposal, and noted the strategy's potential to help position AI in Scotland on a global stage. BH advised that he would welcome further feedback ahead of development work getting underway, in connection with which some members will be contacted shortly.

Data policy and ethics frameworks

RH spoke to his paper, DDG/19/3/2, outlined the intent to develop a data policy statement and ethics framework and then invited members to consider the questions posed on the paper.

There were several recurring comments in the plenary feedback discussion. Firstly, data and digital ethics are ongoing questions that need to become intrinsic to all activities rather than an afterthought; related to this is the need to consider and define what is meant by 'data' and what constitutes good practice in its handling and usage. Any statement of principles or framework would need to be well informed and link effectively to relevant plans and strategies; how to operationalise and measure compliance with them would also require careful consideration.

Other observations were the considerable number of stakeholders, some more obvious than others, the substantial interest in and amount of work already going on in the space and the need to be mindful of international aspects.

Members were invited to note interest, or suggest others who may be interested, in joining a potential DDG sub-group for these topics. RSh suggested that it may be useful to improve understanding of existing policy and ethics frameworks, then convene a seminar to consider next steps; RMS noted the need to engage with the UK Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation^, whose work is now getting underway. CC closed the discussion by noting that developing a distinctive Scottish position on data and digital ethics could be a valuable step to take.

^ Details at https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/centre-for-data-ethics-and-innovation-cdei.

Closing Remarks

CC thanked all for attending, their input to the HLDP and support to wider DDG work.

Next Meeting

2.00 pm, Monday 7 October 2019

Conference Room C, D & E, St Andrews House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG

Actions
None recorded

DDG/19/3/3