

Scotland Narrative for inclusion in UK Open Government, National Action Plan Self-Assessment Report

October 2017

History of Open Government in Scotland

Soon after taking office Nicola Sturgeon, First Minister of Scotland said she wanted: “An outward looking Government which is more open and accessible to Scotland’s people than ever before” and for her Government and public services: ‘to be known for the quality of our relationship with Scotland’s communities’.

We have developed a distinctive Scottish way of delivering government since the devolution of powers to a re-established Scottish Parliament in 1999. The importance of hearing the voice of stakeholders and citizens remains one of the key principles for both Parliament and Government and it forms a solid base for ground-breaking Open Government reforms that followed.

Scotland benefits from a strong Civil Society, established trade unions, faith groups, third sector organisations and academic institutions as well as people who actively engage in public affairs. Civil Society organisations work hard to focus energy and to build capacity in the third and voluntary sectors, support self-direction, co-production and community empowerment. There is a growing Open Government network of organisations and individuals which is working to strengthen and expand the understanding of Open Government in Scotland.

Process summary

Scotland is one of only 15 governments around the world selected to work with the OGP in 2017 as subnational pioneers, we recognise the importance of maximising that opportunity both within the UK and internationally which led to the development of this commitment within the UK plan. In addition, Scotland has its own OGP National Action Plan which we are delivering along the UK plan commitment.

Implementation of the commitment.

Delivery of this commitment is depending upon engagement at Ministerial level across all the UK administrations, alongside representatives from local government and civil society. Whilst the original intention was to host a discussion during the second half of 2017, an unplanned general election, plus local government elections, have meant that it has not proven possible to find a suitable date within this calendar year. We are now exploring the possibilities for early 2018 and envisage delivery within this current plan period.

Conclusion and next steps

We will continue to work with partners across the UK administrations and civil society to deliver the commitment in early 2018.

PROGRESS TOWARDS OPEN GOVERNMENT COMMITMENTS – AUGUST 2017

Commitment title	COMMITMENT: Developing Effective Open Government for governments at all levels, through the outputs from one or more summit discussions	
Lead department(s)	Scottish Government, Directorate for Local Government and Communities.	
Civil society organisation(s) involved in implementation to date		
Report date	11 October 2017	
Overall commitment status	Rescheduled into early 2018	
Overall progress against commitment	There have been initial discussions across UK administrations and with local government stakeholders, however due to external factors, including a general election and local government elections in 2017, it has not proven possible to find a suitable date within this calendar year. We are now exploring the possibilities for early 2018 and envisage delivery within the 2017/18 financial year, well within the timeframe for the current plan.	
Progress against milestones/activities		
One or more summit meetings between governments, civil society, OGP and experts to explore the issues collaboratively		Rescheduled

