CabinetOffice

Making Open Data Real

A Government Summary of Responses

CONTENTS

1. Executive Summary

1.1 This document is a summary of the responses the Cabinet Office received to its public consultation, *Making Open Data Real*, published on 4 August 2011. The consultation closed on 27 October 2011.

1.2 The Government has put openness at the heart of its approach to public service delivery. The consultation set out some of the opportunities that exist to transform the way government and society work for the better through the effective use of transparency and open data, two of the most important public policy levers available to government.

1.3 There were **247** written responses to the consultation and a further **217** online comments via data.gov.uk. Across the responses, there was widespread support for transparency and open data, though there were divergent views on how 'Open Government' might be realised.

1.4 The volume of responses submitted is indicative of the strength of interest in the Transparency and Open Data agenda. In 2012 the Government will set out its strategic vision for the agenda and its response to the evidence submitted to the consultation.

2. Background

1.1 The consultation document set out a series of questions aimed at stimulating debate on how best to embed a culture of openness and transparency within public services. The six key questions which Government requested views and comments on were as follows:

- How we might enhance a 'right to data', establishing stronger rights for individuals, businesses and other actors to obtain data from public bodies and about public services;

- How to set transparency standards that enforce this right to data;

- How public bodies and providers of public services might be held to account for delivering open data;

- How we might ensure collection and publication of the most useful data;

- How we might make the internal workings of government and the public sector more open; and

- How far there is a role for government to stimulate enterprise and market making in the use of open data.

1.2 The consultation document also outlined how the Government, through open data, can realise six key aims: establish greater **accountability** and **choice** within public services; drive improvement in **outcomes** and **productivity** in public services; transform **social relationships** – empowering individuals and communities; and stimulate dynamic **economic growth**.

1.3 During the consultation process, the Cabinet Office held or presented at 12 consultation engagement events, including a series of roundtables hosted by several Think Tanks, a conference and an online discussion forum. In total, these were attended or visited by over 2,000 stakeholders.

1.4 The 247 written responses were broken down into 13 categories of respondent: (Government and NDPBs, Local Government, Industry, Health, Private Individuals, Public Universities, Research Organisations, Think Tanks, Housing Associations, Third Sector Organisations, Devolved Administrations, Representative Organisations, and International Bodies).

Responses Received

Total number of written responses: **247**

Respondent Category	Number of Responses	Percentage of total
Devolved Administrations	4	2
Government Departments and NDPB's	25	10
Health	24	10
Housing Associations	7	3
Industry	31	13
International Organisations	1	0
Local Government	59	24
Private Individuals	37	15
Representative Organisations	36	15
Research Organisations	6	2
Think Tanks	4	2
Third Sector	9	4
Universities	4	2
Total	**247**	**100%**

NB: Totals may not sum due to rounding method used.

Comments via data.gov.uk: **217**

3.Response Summary

1.1 What follows is a summary of the consultation responses broken down according to the six key areas for consultation and the views submitted on the Glossary of Key Terms. As the responses to the consultation made similar points across the major themes, there is some repetition across this summary.

Glossary of Key Terms

Definitions and Scope of Requirements

1.2 Many respondents felt the Glossary would have benefited from greater clarity. Calls were made for more certainty on: what constitutes a public service and 'public task', the scope of 'public' organisations subject to future open data requirements and the scope of data covered by open data requirements. Despite the consultation document attempting to define certain key terms, a number of respondents argued it used these interchangeably. There was no clear consensus on whether the terms went too far or not far enough. There were frequent calls for definitions of metadata and linked data.

1.3 On balance, there was support for the principle that public bodies, bodies in receipt of public funds, and bodies commissioned to deliver public services should be subject to open data obligations. Opinions were mixed on the extent to which organisations should be required to comply with future open data obligations. Some respondents expected full compliance; some felt obligations should be restricted to those already subject to FOI; others that the extent of compliance should be in line with the level of public funding an organisation receives. Concerns were raised regarding the resource implications of future open data obligations, particularly on smaller organisations.

1.4 Research organisations and universities consistently noted that data quality may be negatively affected by premature publication and that this may adversely affect their competitive advantage. Accordingly, there were calls from respondents in these categories for research data to be excluded from open data requirements.

Privacy and Personal Data

1.5 A significant number of respondents expressed concern that the consultation failed to address the interaction between personal data and pseudonymised data with open data, and the potential for open data to have a negative impact on confidentiality and privacy. A number of respondents highlighted that data about public services and data about individuals collected by public servants are hugely different, with the former much less difficult to make 'open' and the latter requiring treatment within standard ethical guidelines.

Tests for opening up data

1.6 On determining whether to make a dataset 'open', the strongest consensus was in support of a presumption in favour of publication, avoiding government

determining what data are 'useful'. A number of respondents highlighted the inherent difficulties in assessing the value of data prior to its release.

1.7 There was broad agreement that data released as part of the agenda should be available for free reuse under the terms of the Open Government Licence. In circumstances where data are not made open the consensus was that government should be transparent about the reasons why.

1.8 The introduction of a standardised Code of Practice many respondents felt would aid decision making concerning future dataset releases. On tests for deciding whether to release a dataset, the most common suggestions were: its usefulness, its potential to be useful in the future, its relevance to the public, existing demand, whether it is fit for purpose, the cost of publication, its potential to impact on an individuals' privacy or national security, whether it is commercially sensitive, and its potential to be misused. Some respondents, however, argued there should be no (or very few tests) because of the difficulties in determining the value of data prior to release.

Role of Legislation

1.9 There was no clear consensus on the role of/need for legislation, though a significant number of respondents did suggest using existing Freedom of Information (FOI) legislation as a basis for implementing future open data principles and/or obligations. Calls were made for government to harmonise and consolidate the existing legislative landscape, which is seen by many as confusing, contradictory and difficult to navigate.

Charging

1.10 On the issue of charging there was a consensus that data should be available for free and that government should accept open data will pose new cost implications. A number of respondents argued government should focus on the value added by individuals or organisations using data, not recouping the costs of making data available. Some respondents, however, did argue data not produced as part of the normal activities of a public service may reasonably be charged for – albeit with charges kept as close to the marginal cost of producing the data as possible. Others argued organisations seeking to derive commercial benefit from data should be required to pay a fee for access. A very small minority argued that government should charge for all data it releases as part of the agenda.

1.11 Responses submitted by central government generally observed the creation of a charging regime would be burdensome and add another layer of bureaucracy.

1.12 If charging was enforced, there was broad consensus that charges should be based on the existing FOI regime.

Guidelines and Compliance

1.13 To encourage compliance with future open data obligations, most respondents agreed government should develop a clear set of guidelines and that the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) should oversee compliance.

Additionally, a large proportion of responses acknowledged ministers' will play an important role in ensuring compliance with the agenda - by exerting pressure on contributing organisations - and that board level champions will likely be required to embed an open data culture within data releasing organisations.

1.14   Whilst there was some support for the introduction of a sanctions framework, the general consensus was that mechanisms to encourage compliance should focus on sharing best practice and guidance and providing incentives and support.

Knowledge and Expertise Gap

1.15   Concerns were raised regarding government's poor record of internally sharing data, which was seen as indicative of a lack of capability and expertise within government and across the public sector to 'make good' on open data obligations.

Enhanced 'Right to Data'

Legislation, Regulation and Licences

1.16   Though respondents to the consultation were largely supportive of an enhanced 'right to data', opinions were mixed on how it should be realised. Some argued it will be necessary to write it into existing legislation, some that it will require new legislation, and others that it would be disproportionate to enshrine the principle in legislation. There were also clear calls for a collaborative approach to be taken.

1.17   Were a legislative approach to be pursued, a number of respondents argued the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) represents a good starting point. There was support for both rigorous and light touch approaches to mandation across the responses, though overall respondents tended to favour a non-punitive approach to mandating an enhanced right to data. Instead, making use of the availability of clear guidance, celebrating best practice, particularly where data publications have resulted in discernable benefits, providing support, and naming and shaming those who fail to comply.

1.18   There were calls for more clarity on the interaction between open data and existing legislation. Respondents from industry stressed that clarity is needed if the economic potential of open data is to be realised. Publishing open data under the Open Government Licence was seen as one way to establish clarity on the issue of reuse.

1.19   Again, the ICO was generally felt to be best placed to oversee the enforcement of an enhanced right to data. Opinions were divided as to whether or not the ICO would require further powers to do this. Continuing ministerial support and board level champions within data releasing organisations were frequently recognised as key elements for ensuring the agenda becomes embedded in an organisation's culture.

IT and ICT contracts

1.20   Doubts were raised about the capacity of existing government IT systems to deliver an enhanced right to data. Many respondents questioned the capability of some public bodies, particularly smaller organisations, to deliver an enhanced right to data when resources are already stretched. Whilst some felt the costs associated with developing systems capable of maintaining large datasets might prove prohibitive. Again, uncertainty was expressed as to whether public bodies possess the requisite skills to effectively deliver an enhanced right to data.

1.21   A number of respondents argued a change in ethos in IT delivery at the strategic level is required within government departments if an enhanced right to data is to be realised.

1.22   Concerning government ICT contracts, respondents broadly agreed it will be necessary to incorporate open data standards into future contracts in order to effectively implement an enhanced right to data and that government should publish clear guidelines setting out future expectations. A number of respondents were clear that they thought the progression of the agenda should not be contingent on the incorporation of open data principles into existing contracts.

1.23   It was not uncommon for respondents to suggest the likely changes required to existing IT systems and ICT contracts would present government with an opportunity to revisit its tendering process, ensuring a more competitive and/or effective service in the future.

1.24   Establishing meaningful data portals was often seen as the platform through which data that has been made available should be accessed. Extending and enhancing data.gov.uk was seen by many to be central to this. The existence of meaningful open data portals was seen by many as one of the solutions to addressing two of the key barriers to establishing an enhanced 'right to data': 1) the uncertainty regarding what data is available and 2) the current fragmented system through which data is accessed.

Resource Implications

1.25   Organisations from the housing, research, university, representative and third sector categories repeatedly raised concerns about a broadening in the organisations traditionally understood as 'public' and the potential impacts of this. Some of the likely impacts suggested were: additional and unserviceable resource requirements, diversion of resources away from front line resources, reduced competitiveness and commercial opportunities, and reduced independence.

1.26   Respondents were near unanimous in their agreement that establishing an enhanced right to data would have resource implications, though opinions regarding the extent of these were mixed. A large number of respondents agreed the resource requirements were likely to be greatest at the outset, with costs reducing as the agenda matures.

1.27   Many respondents noted open data will lead to performance and efficiency improvements in participating organisations – by driving improvements in the accuracy and quality of data held, meaning less resource is directed towards improving data in the future. It was also noted the resource implications of a

future right to data will be dependent on what is finally determined to be 'open data', the sector in which the organisation operates, and its existing infrastructure

1.28 In order to mitigate the likely resource implications, some respondents suggested prioritising data releases, with prioritisation based on demand rather than data controllers' priorities.

1.29 Many respondents agreed the potential benefits of open data outweigh any future costs associated with the agenda. Concerns were expressed by a number of respondents from across the public sector that an enhanced right to data would result in information requests becoming more complicated and difficult to respond to. A number of respondents from across the categories argued government will need to undertake and publish a full impact assessment of future open data proposals.

Privacy

1.30 The interaction between open data and privacy and the potential for open data to have negative consequences on privacy was a recurring theme. Though this did not translate into a general consensus that the potential risks outweigh the benefits of open data or that existing data protection measures are insufficient. Some respondents argued that existing privacy protection measures do not go far enough, whilst others felt they go too far.

1.31 There was a sense that the potential for deanonymisation (or 'jigsaw' reidentification) is an issue which government is yet to address and one that will become more pressing as the open data agenda evolves. Accordingly, respondents frequently suggested government should pursue a common sense approach to privacy, developing clear guidance as more data is released. A significant number of respondents felt more training will be required to ensure organisations publishing data are equipped to face the future technical issues which the open data agenda will raise. An extension to the Caldicott Guardian role/principle was a clear ask made by a number of respondents.

1.32 Dr Kieron O'Hara's independent review on transparency and privacy was raised by a number of respondents, who felt the review raised some important issues which government should respond to, in order to provide clarity on how privacy concerns and open data demands will be balanced in the future.

1.33 Of the responses received, those submitted by organisations operating in the health and education sectors were particularly cautious regarding the potential for breaches in privacy and data protection as a result of open data.

Setting Open Data Standards

Developing and implementing open data standards

1.34 Concerning the development and implementation of a future open data standard(s), respondents to the consultation were almost unanimous in their agreement that government should establish a common standard(s). They also broadly agreed that: a future standard(s) should be based on an existing standard(s); government should take the lead role in publishing any future

standard(s) and accompanying guidance; and government should work with the wider open data community to ensure the standard(s) is accessible across a variety of organisations and systems and that user needs are accounted for.

1.35 The Berners-Lee 5* scheme, the EU INSPIRE Directive, and the Public Data Principles were considered by most respondents to represent good examples of open data standards. Concerning the Berners-Lee 5* scheme, there were mixed views as to which star rating should be applied as part of a common standard - with some respondents arguing the fourth or fifth star should act as a minimum standard, whilst others that it would be unnecessary (perhaps even detrimental to the open data agenda) to apply this level to all future data releases. Instead, they advocated a more flexible approach to developing a data standard(s) – one that recognises the varying uses to which data might be put.

1.36 Respondents regularly emphasised the importance of incorporating a number of core data attributes into a future open data standard. These were: reusability, interoperability, relevance (i.e. up-to-date data), and machine readability. Access to good metadata was considered essential.

1.37 In addition to publishing data to agreed standards, many respondents felt publishing data to agreed timetables was of equal importance and that data publications should be timely so that the maximum value can be derived from them.

Benefits of open data standard(s)

1.38 Establishing an open data standard(s) was by and large viewed as essential to guaranteeing the future usability and interoperability of data releases and a key lever to realising the aims of the open data agenda. A number of respondents did, however, note government will need to ensure any future open data standard(s) is obtainable across the range of organisations likely to be in scope of the agenda.

1.39 Alongside the development of an open data standard(s), many respondents asked for more education concerning the use of data, in order to ensure users understand the importance of the context of data (i.e. its limitations) and are able to derive benefit from it.

Compliance

1.40 To ensure compliance with any future open data standard(s), respondents frequently noted it would be necessary to have one or a combination of the following fundamentals in place: continuing ministerial support for the agenda; the existence of board level champions within data publishing organisations; increased responsibilities for leaders within public organisations; a mechanism for sharing best practice; incentives which make implementation attractive; and standards that can be achieved across a variety of organisations and systems.

1.41 The ICO was largely considered best placed to oversee compliance with a future standard(s).

Intermediaries and Accreditation

1.42   Respondents largely agreed government should encourage the emergence of information intermediaries, as facilitators of the open data agenda. Though there was some support for government to develop and apply an accreditation scheme, a substantial number of respondents felt this would be detrimental to the agenda. The main reason given for this was that: one of the key aims of the transparency agenda is that government relinquishes some of its control. Limiting access to data to a privileged few, it was argued, would undermine this aim and distort the market, limiting the power of the agenda.

Standards for collecting user experience

1.43   Whilst there was almost unanimous agreement regarding the establishment of an overarching open data standard(s), opinions were mixed on the issue of whether government should establish a consistent set of standards for collecting user experience across the public services. Whilst a number of respondents were in favour of establishing a standard(s) for collecting user experience, some expressed confusion regarding the rationale/need for such a standard(s), in addition to the establishment of an overarching open data standard(s). Moreover, a number of respondents noted the inherent difficulties (i.e. developing an appropriate comparative methodology for producing this data) in developing service delivery satisfaction information, which would be greater still if trying to apply this across public services. Respondents were in agreement that there exists a clear need for good metadata, the lack of which is currently considered a problem, as this will be essential in supporting both public use and understanding of data.

Corporate and Personal Responsibility

Board level scrutiny

1.44   On the role of corporate and personal responsibility in shaping the open data agenda, the majority of respondents agreed the agenda would benefit if there was board level scrutiny within organisations covered by open data requirements. One of the main reasons given for this was that board level scrutiny would help (and possibly be necessary to) ensure organisations covered by future open data requirements meet their objectives and responsibilities and incorporate the principles of open data into their day-to-day decision making. There were calls for individuals responsible for open data to be held accountable for poor performance against determined objectives. Some respondents made clear their feeling that the internal governance arrangements within an organisation should remain a decision for its senior leadership.

1.45   Respondents from across local and central government highlighted a board level approach has already begun to prove effective within their own organisations – i.e. in overseeing the delivery of the transparency and open data commitments set out in the Prime Minister's two publicly available transparency letters.

1.46 Opinions were divided as to whether the individual responsible for privacy and security concerns should be the same individual responsible for overseeing obligations arising out of the open data agenda. Some felt this made sense, whilst others that these are important issues which deserve their own champion, particularly as the priorities of the two issues may at times be in tension with one another.

1.47 Additionally, respondents often suggested it would be helpful and beneficial if government published clear guidance or minimum standards which organisations can follow. It was argued this would ensure consistency and safeguard against excuses that organisations did not know what was required of them.

Privacy

1.48 As already noted, a common theme to emerge throughout the responses to the consultation was the need to balance privacy and security concerns with the desire to publish more data. Many respondents felt this was an issue which should be given visibility at board level within publishing organisations, helping to engender a sense of accountability at the most senior levels. Alongside this added level of accountability, a large number of respondents felt there is a need for more specialised training to be available to staff within data publishing organisations. It was argued this would help staff to manage the complex issues concerning privacy and security when dealing with data.

1.49 A number of respondents also called for public service providers to utilise Privacy Impact Assessments, whilst others again called for an expansion/extension to the Caldicott Guardian approach.

Sanctions

1.50 There was no consensus on the use of sanctions to implement the open data agenda. Some respondents, from across the categories, argued it would be necessary for an enhanced right to data to co-exist with a sanctions framework for it to be successfully implemented. Others argued the imposition of a sanctions framework would be unnecessary and further complicate the current legislative framework, which was seen by many to already provide suitable sanctions; and that it would send out the wrong message – possibly resulting in the open data agenda being viewed as an unnecessary burden in a climate where resources are already stretched; instead of as a tool for alleviating some of the problems facing public sector organisations.

Sector Boards

1.51 As far as returns on which sectors would benefit from a dedicated Transparency Board, most respondents noted the sectors already identified in the Prime Minister's letter of 7 July 2011 – which identified several key areas of public service delivery.

1.52 Health and education were seen as particularly important sectors due to the personal nature of data that is collected and stored. There were suggestions, where particular sensitivities exist, that the memberships of sector boards include

a specialist – e.g. in health someone who understands the complex nature of health data. A number of respondents suggested all sectors providing a public service should have a dedicated sector board.

1.53   In order to ensure the efficacy of sector boards, many felt it necessary to regularly review their membership and assess the value of their role.

Meaningful Open Data

Developing a Data Inventory/Inventories

1.54   There was common agreement on the need to develop an effective data inventory with many respondents noting that the current landscape in this area is arranged in a piecemeal way and that it lacks consistency. In terms of optimal ways in which to develop a data inventory/inventories one of the preferred approaches was to draw from existing publication schemes, such as FOI, and non-personal information asset registers. However, caution was urged as changes to the FOI publication scheme would require amending existing legislation. Many respondents advocated improving the existing data.gov.uk service, arguing it has already established the basis of an inventory.

1.55   Responses submitted by central government departments raised the issue of the likely cost implications (of developing an inventory) which were considered a possible barrier to significant change. Of the responses submitted by organisations within the industry category, most suggested developing effective data inventories would pose significant challenges from an ICT perspective, an area in which government has a poor track record.

1.56   Despite common agreement on the need to develop a data inventory, there were mixed views on whether there should be an all encompassing centrally held catalogue, or a series of inventories that reflect the diverse nature of the sectors organisations potentially subject to open data requirements operate in.

1.57   In terms of how a future data inventory would operate, user experience was considered the most crucial factor. There was a general consensus that government traditionally delivers services that are not user friendly. An essential attribute identified as necessary in any future inventory was the presence of advanced search facilities (similar to those in commercial search engines) which enable users to search for a dataset by topic or organisation type.

Prioritisation of data for inclusion in an inventory

1.58   With regard to prioritisation of data for inclusion in an inventory, there was a strong sense that this should not be a decision driven from the top, but one based on pre-existing demand for data and the knowledge and expertise of the data controller – given the variety of functions individual organisations carry out. Beyond this, respondents generally agreed data related to the delivery of public bodies' objectives should be prioritised for release and that the value of a datasets inclusion in an inventory will only be determined once the agenda has matured. A smaller number of respondents noted whilst departments would

reasonably be able to prioritise datasets for publication that they didn't believe they should, as all items in an inventory should be equal.

Benefits of Data Inventory/Inventories

1.59   The development of a comprehensive data inventory/inventories was welcomed by the majority of respondents to the consultation and recognised as an important tool through which public bodies can inform the public which data they do and do not hold and which data is and isn't publicly available. Access to this information was considered a fundamental right of the Transparency and Open Data agenda.

1.60   A common theme to emerge from the comments submitted via data.gov.uk was the creation of a data inventory/inventories would establish a useful mechanism for developing case studies and signposting examples of best practice emerging from the use of open data, inspiring greater take-up of the agenda.

1.61   A number of respondents felt the introduction of data inventories would help drive efficiencies in the public sector – e.g. by reducing data duplication across departments and informing decisions concerning unnecessary data collection, by tracking demand for datasets.

Collection and Publication of Data

1.62   There was broad agreement and a lot of interest amongst respondents on the issue of what data government should collect and publish routinely. The data most commonly identified included: financial data, non personal data, delivery and performance data, user satisfaction data, core data related to government priorities, data for which there is an existing demand, and geographic data.

1.63   In terms of looking at what data is collected unnecessarily, there were calls from some respondents in the local government category to stop the collection of data outside of existing statutory duties and data which is costly to collect and does not relate to the delivery of services or organisational objectives. There was support from a number of respondents from across the categories for a comprehensive audit and/or consultation to further explore the issue of data collection, whilst respondents from central government noted a Data Review, originally led by HMT and now the Cabinet Office, has already made progress in exploring the opportunities for reducing unnecessary data collection. Caution was urged, however, on the use of the term 'unnecessary' due to the difficulties in determining the value of data.

Data Quality

1.64   There were mixed opinions expressed by respondents on the lengths government and public bodies should go to in order to 'polish' data prior to its release. Some respondents, commonly developers and organisations from industry, took a pragmatic position - prioritising quick access to data in a raw format - whilst others argued data should be 'polished' prior to its release, in order to make it more accessible to a wider array of stakeholders. Respondents

were near unanimous in their desire to see data published alongside metadata which contextualises its release, avoiding potential misinterpretations. Beyond this, most respondents, from across the categories, agreed it was essential the data which government collects and publishes is accurate.

1.65   In terms of defining key data attributes, respondents broadly pointed to common sense measurables including: accuracy, adherence to privacy principles, and the completeness of a dataset. Again, respondents were near unanimous in their agreement that government should take a role in publishing clear guidance/standards and examples of best practice.

Government sets the example

Should data be available through central or local portals?

1.66   Concerning the question whether government should release data through a central portal or departmental portals, there was a preference for data to be available or signposted via a central portal or 'one stop shop'. A number of respondents, particularly those from across the public sector, stressed the importance of the data controller retaining control over the data – i.e. whilst data may be signposted to via a central portal, it should continue to be hosted locally (on the data controllers website).

Dataset Prioritisation

1.67   With regard to what factors should inform prioritisation of datasets for publication at national, local or sector level, most respondents felt existing demand should be the main factor in determining this. Though, the 'usefulness' of the data to the public was also frequently raised.

1.68   In order to gauge the existing demand for individual datasets, a number of respondents suggested using the volume of requests for a dataset under the FOI as a key indicator. However, respondents from across the public sector were keen to note data publication priorities should also take account of: the likely resource implications involved in preparing a dataset for release and existing capabilities to derive value from a particular dataset.

1.69   Respondents operating in the research and higher education sector highlighted that they already prioritise data for publication according to the number of downloads of, and requests for, related publications.

Access to more data or more detailed data?

1.70   On the question of whether government should publish a broader set of data or existing data at a more granular level, mixed views were expressed. From the responses submitted by organisations in the industry category, there was a general consensus organisations would get more value out of detailed datasets, as broader datasets only serve as initial building blocks of analysis. There was also a general consensus that considerations of this type will eventually be demand driven as the agenda matures. A number of respondents suggested it was perhaps more appropriate at this stage to ask: "is this data usable, or not?"

Innovation with Open Data

Role of government

1.1 There was a general consensus that government will have a central role in stimulating innovation with the use of open data and that this should be a 'light touch' role; and that demand for data and broader market forces will become the main drivers, once the agenda has become established.

1.2 The most common suggestions concerning government action included: supporting and encouraging access to data; ensuring access is timely so that the maximum value can be derived from data releases; ensuring data is available for free re-use; ensuring data is useful; providing funding to open data innovators (i.e. business start-ups) and building collaborative relationships with the open data community; and celebrating best practice and sharing case studies where the use of open data has already resulted in economic benefits. Some respondents also noted government may need to provide incentives to service providers to ensure consistency of data releases. A prescriptive approach, it was generally agreed, would act as a check on innovation.

4. Next Steps

Throughout 2012, the Government will set out its strategic vision for the agenda and its response to the evidence submitted to the consultation.

Enquiries

Enquiries can be addressed to:

Nick Morgan
Transparency Team
Efficiency and Reform Group, 4th Floor W2
Cabinet Office
1 Horse Guards Road
London SW1A 2HQ

Tel: 0207 271 1326 Email: nick.morgan@cabinet-office.gsi.gov.uk

5. Annex A – Consultation Questions

Glossary of Key Terms

1. Do the definitions of the key terms go far enough or too far?

2. Where a decision is being taken about whether to make a dataset open, what tests should be applied?

3. If the costs to publish or release data are not judged to represent value for money, to what extent should the requestor be required to pay for public services data, and under what circumstances?

4. How do we get the right balance in relation to the range of organisations (providers of public services) our policy proposals apply to? What threshold would be appropriate to determine the range of public services in scope and what key criteria should inform this?

5. What would be appropriate mechanisms to encourage or ensure publication of data by public service providers

An enhanced right to data

1. How would we establish a stronger presumption in favour of publication than that which currently exists?

2. Is providing an independent body, such as the Information Commissioner, with enhanced powers and scope the most effective option for safeguarding a right to access and a right to data?

3. Are existing safeguards to protect personal data and privacy measures adequate to regulate the Open Data agenda?

4. What might the resource implications of an enhanced right to data be for those bodies within its scope? How do we ensure that any additional burden is proportionate to this aim?

5. How will we ensure that Open Data standards are embedded in new ICT contracts?

Setting transparency standards

1. What is the best way to achieve compliance on high and common standards to allow usability and interoperability?

2. Is there a role for government to establish consistent standards for collecting user experience across public services?

3. Should we consider a scheme for accreditation of information intermediaries, and if so how might that best work?

Corporate and personal responsibility

1. How would we ensure that public service providers in their day to day decision-making honour a commitment to Open Data, while respecting privacy and security considerations.

2. What could personal responsibility at Board-level do to ensure the right to data is being met include? Should the same person be responsible for ensuring that personal data is properly protected and that privacy issues are met?

3. Would we need to have a sanctions framework to enforce a right to data?

4. What other sectors would benefit from having a dedicated Sector Transparency Board?

Meaningful Open Data

1. How should public services make use of data inventories? What is the optimal way to develop and operate this?

2. How should data be prioritised for inclusion in an inventory? How is value to be established?

3. In what areas would you expect government to collect and publish data routinely?

4. What data is collected unnecessarily? How should these datasets be identified? Should collection be stopped?

5. Should the data that government releases always be of high quality? How do we define quality? To what extent should public service providers polish the data they publish, if at all?

Government sets the example

1. How should government approach the release of existing data for policy and research purposes: should this be held in a central portal or held on departmental portals?

2. What factors should inform prioritisation of datasets for publication, at national, local or sector level?

3. Which is more important: for government to prioritise publishing a broader set of data, or existing data at a more detailed level?

Innovation with Open Data

1. Is there a role for government to stimulate innovation in the use of Open Data? If so, what is the best way to achieve this?

6. Annex B – List of Respondents

Below is a list of all those who submitted a written response to the Open Data consultation via the designated mailbox or postal address. There were a further 217 comments submitted via data.gov.uk.

1. Accenture
2. Adelphoi Ltd
3. Adobe
4. Advisory Panel on Public Sector Information
5. Affinity Sutton
6. Allerdale Borough Council
7. Archives and Records Association
8. Association for Geographic Information
9. Association of Census Directors
10. Association of Chief Police Officers
11. Association of Directors of Adult Social Services Information Management Group
12. Association of School and College Leaders
13. Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry
14. Association of Train Operating Companies
15. AstraZeneca
16. Beacon Dodsworth
17. Big Lottery Fund
18. Bio Industry Association
19. Birmingham City Council
20. Blackpool Council
21. Brent Council
22. British Academy
23. British Chartered Institute for IT
24. British Library
25. British Medical Association
26. British Psychological Society
27. BT Group
28. Buckinghamshire County Council
29. Business Services Association
30. CACI Limited
31. Cambridge City Council
32. Campaign for Freedom of Information
33. Care Quality Commission
34. CERNER
35. Charity Commission
36. Charles D Raab (University of Edinburgh)
37. Charnwood Borough Council
38. Chartered Institute of Library & Information Professionals
39. Chief Fire Officers' Association
40. Chris Gutteridge
41. Chris Rusbridge
42. Chris Taggart
43. Cisco
44. Consumer Focus
45. Cornwall Council
46. Council of Mortgage Lenders
47. County Councils Network
48. Creative Commons
49. Cumbria Council
50. Dandy Booksellers Ltd
51. Darlington Borough Council
52. David Holland
53. Department for Culture Media and Sport
54. Demographics User Group Ltd
55. Department for Communities and Local Government
56. Department for Education
57. Department for Education (Family and Strategy Team)
58. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
59. Derby City Council
60. Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service
61. Devon County Council
62. Digital Birmingham
63. Digital Preservation Coalition
64. District Councils' Network
65. Dr Foster Intelligence Ltd

66. Dr Robert Daniels Dwyer
67. Durham County Council
68. East Riding of Yorkshire Council
69. East Thames
70. Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
71. emapsite
72. EnAKTinG project
73. EnCoRe project
74. Epimorphics Ltd
75. ESRI UK
76. Essex County Council
77. FindaSchool
78. Fischer Family Trust
79. Food Standards Agency
80. Force11 community
81. Foundation for Information Policy Research
82. G15
83. Gail Ramster
84. General Medical Council
85. Geospatial Engineering Panel
86. Get Stats, Royal Statistical Society
87. Giuseppe Sollazzo
88. Gloucestershire County Council
89. Glyn Moody
90. Google
91. Government Social Research
92. Hackney Borough Council
93. Hampshire County Council
94. Havant Borough Council
95. Hertfordshire Council
96. HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
97. HM Revenue & Customs
98. Home Office
99. Human Fertilisation Embryology Authority
100. Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales
101. Imperial College London
102. IMS Health
103. Independent Regulator of NHS Foundation Trusts
104. Information Commissioner's Office
105. Information Standards Board for Health and Social Care
106. Institute for Effective Education
107. Intellect
108. Intellectual Property Office
109. Involve
110. Ipsos MORI
111. Judith Townend and Lucy Series
112. Jake Arnold-Forster
113. Jake Master
114. James and Marina Gallagher
115. Jo Ivens
116. John Lamont
117. John Sheridan
118. Keith Murray
119. Kieron O'Hara
120. Kirklees Council
121. Landmark Information Group
122. Laurence Moseley
123. Lee Boyd
124. Leeds Council
125. LeSteph
126. Linked Gov
127. Local e Government Standards Body
128. Local Government Association
129. Locus
130. London Borough of Barnet
131. London Borough of Croydon
132. London Borough of Redbridge (including CEO response)
133. Marion Oswald
134. Market Research Society
135. Medical Protection Society
136. Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service HQ
137. Merton Council
138. Michael Clary
139. Michael Nicholson
140. Microsoft
141. Ministry of Defence
142. Ministry of Justice
143. National Association for Voluntary and Community Action
144. National Council Voluntary Organisations

145. National Endowment for Science Technology and the Arts
146. National Housing Federation
147. Network Housing Group Limited
148. National Information Governance Board NHS
149. National Institute of Adult Continuing Education
150. National LGB&T Partnership
151. National Measurement Office
152. National Records of Scotland
153. Newcastle Council
154. NHS Information Centre
155. Norfolk Council
156. North West e Government Group
157. Northamptonshire County Council
158. Nottinghamshire City Council
159. Nottinghamshire County Council
160. Ofcom
161. Ofsted
162. One
163. Open Data Manchester
164. Open Kent (Kent Connects)
165. Open Public Services Network
166. Open Rights Group
167. Open Source Consortium
168. Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman
169. Passenger Focus
170. Patient Opinion
171. Patients Association
172. PCS
173. Peabody
174. Pendle Borough Council
175. Placr Ltd
176. Postal Address File Advisory Board
177. PRIMET
178. Prospect
179. Publish What You Fund
180. Radio Independents Group
181. Reading Council
182. Rebecca Domek
183. Research Councils UK
184. Richard Birmingham
185. Richard Edwards
186. Richard Mason
187. Rochdale Council
188. Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
189. Royal College of Nursing
190. Royal College of Psychiatrists
191. Royal Statistical Society
192. Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
193. Runnymede
194. Russell Group
195. Sam Smith
196. Sarah Clark
197. SARS team UNI Manchester
198. Scottish Working Group on Official Publications
199. Slough Borough Council
200. Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders
201. Society of Information Technology Management
202. South Central Informatics and Information Services Teams - NHS
203. South Norfolk Council
204. South West Observatory Network
205. Southern Housing Group
206. St Albans City and District Council
207. Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Council (joint response)
208. Suffolk County Council
209. Sunderland City Council
210. Swirrl IT ltd
211. Talis
212. Telefonica
213. Thanet District Council
214. The Nuffield Trust
215. The Stationery Office
216. Thomson Reuters
217. Thumbprint
218. Tim Manning
219. Timetric
220. Tony Hirst
221. Tony Michael
222. Trafford Council
223. Transport for Greater Manchester
224. Traveline
225. Tunstall Healthcare (UK) Ltd

226. UK Council of Health Informatics Professions (UK CHIP)
227. UK Data Archive
228. UK IBM
229. UK IT Association
230. UK Location Council
231. UK Space Agency
232. UK Statistics Authority
233. UNIT4 Business Software
234. Universities UK
235. University of Southampton
236. University of Ulster (Hosted Workshop)
237. Urban Forum
238. Wandsworth Council
239. Wellcome Trust
240. Welsh Government
241. Welsh Refugee Council
242. West Yorkshire Police
243. Which?
244. Will Abson
245. Willbert Kraan
246. Wiltshire Council
247. Wolverhampton City Council