Draft Minutes of the Steering Group Meeting

Date: 3 March 2025

Time: 10:00 AM

Location: 2 Marsham Street, SW1P 4DF, and virtually on Microsoft Teams

Attendees

Members:

Emily Sullivan (ES)– Chair, Head of Product, Local Digital MHCLG

Firoze Salim (FS)– Head of Frameworks and Standards, Data Strategy and Standards CDDO

Kelly Hewitt (KH)- Digital access manager, Community Action Network

Sam Hollings (SH) – Head of Coding and Data Standards, NHS England

Kate Cooper (KC) – Programme Manager for Data Local Government Association

Chris Storey (CS) - Lead architect for Jobs Careers Service, DWP

Radhika Trivedi - Consultant for Public, a digital transformation company

Secretariat:

Sheldon Ferguson (SF) – MHCLG, Policy Lead

Mike Thacker (MT)

Ben Unsworth (BU)

Melanie Wong (MW)

Apologies:

Fionn Mcgorry (FM)

Gillian Donovan (GD)

Oliver Tones (OT)

Casey Hindle (CH)

George Russell (GR)

Welcome and Housekeeping

- ES welcomed everyone to the meeting, followed by a round of introductions from all attendees, both in person and online.

Minutes from Previous Meeting

- Attendees confirmed their approval of the minutes from the previous meeting.

Review terms of reference and Scope

- MT updated that the Scottish national digital programme A Local Information System for Scotland (ALISS) are planning to update to the latest version of the standard. NHS Inform in Scotland is consuming an ALISS API based on an earlier version of Open Referral. MT queried whether a Scottish representative would be useful to join the steering group.
- MT suggested we might like to invite a representative of the National Council for Voluntary Officers (NCVO) to the Group. Kelly Hewitt offered a contact at the National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA).
- No amendments requested to terms of reference.

Update on ORUK website progress

- BU updated on the latest progress and showed the homepage, adoption assets guidance for different audiences, register your feed form, and the latest iteration of how results of compliant and non-compliant feeds are displayed. On track to put the new website live at the end of March.
- SH expressed interest in whether it is possible at a future date to implement validator checks into the CI/CD github workflow, to prevent non compliant workflows from being published.
- MT updated that he and BU met with Alex Smith following FS' introduction after the last steering group meeting. Feedback from the call was that this was well received and a hope that this could be used as a model for APIs elsewhere in government.

Next steps for steering group and future of ORUK

- SF updated the group on two points:
  - on the ORUK project extension for 6 months from March 2025 with a view to an additional 6 months after that.

- - on positive conversations with i.AI who developed Caddy (AI support for citizens advice) and how ORUK can be used with their tool.
- MT introduced the briefing paper (see Annex A) and asked for comments from the group. Members shared reflections on their time in the steering group.
- SH asked whether the group can produce a briefing paper to support internal conversations with boards and senior stakeholders with a view to getting ORUK formally adopted by the NHS in England. SF suggested further discussion would be useful on this.
- For Community Action Network, KH said some tooling to help less technical minded organisations to review CSV datasets to enable a upload to the ORUK aggregator. She asked for support at meetings with senior local government people to help urge them to adopt the standard. ES and SF offered such support.
- KH wondered whether LAs could be invited as a one off to steering meetings, and whether further feature development on compliance is possible, and requested representation from the steering group to support with board meetings. ES confirmed that MHCLG representation at board meetings was possible.
- CS shared upcoming opportunities in the jobs and careers service that ORUK could support.
- ES reiterated that it makes a difference to Local Authorities if they knew which and how many government departments are using centralised standards.
- KC asked to hear more about progress with suppliers, and updates on take up of the standard. Suggested exploring how to influence councils impacted by devolution and local gov reorganisation. KC offered continued LGA support with ORUK communications and inviting ORUK speakers to relevant meetings.
- FS suggested that the Data Standards Authority are happy to blog about the standard.

Update on Public report on ORUK

- Radhika Trivedi from Public presented findings from the report (see Annex B).
- Members thanked Radhika for her presentation and agreed the report was comprehensive and would help inform the future direction of ORUK.
- KC noted that funding from other departments wasn't mentioned. Members agreed that this is worth further consideration.

AOB

- None

Actions

- Steering group to explore Scottish NHS involvement in the group.
- Steering group to assess the relative merits of a representative from NVCO or NAVCA joining the Group.

Date of next meeting: TBC

Meeting close