25th Meeting of the UK Data Forum
22 March 2018
Minutes

Attendees:

Guy Goodwin (Chair)	National Centre for Social Research
Paul Allin	Imperial College, London
Samantha McGregor	Economic and Social Research Council
Mike Ball	Economic and Social Research Council
Erica Pufall	Wellcome Trust
Catherine Bromley	Office for Statistics Regulation
Kirstin Hines	Office for Statistics Regulation
Stephen Ellard-Elliott	Ministry of Justice
Teresa Williams	Cafcass
Julie Stanborough (Secretariat)	Office for National Statistics
Gareth Pryce (Secretariat)	Office for National Statistics
Johanne Merriman (Secretariat)	Office for National Statistics

Apologies:

Chris Roebuck	NHS Digital
Sarah Henry	Office for National Statistics
Suzy Moat	Warwick Business School
Stefan Bender	German Data Forum
Giles Pavey	Department for Work and Pensions
Andrew Garrett	Royal Statistical Society
Lucy Vickers	Office for National Statistics
Jason Bradbury	Ofsted
Matthew Woollard	UK Data Archive
Sharon Witherspoon	Academy of Social Sciences
Sue Bateman	Cabinet Office

1. Welcome and introductions

The Chair, Guy Goodwin, welcomed members to the meeting. All members introduced themselves.

Guy Goodwin welcomed the new members to the UK Data Forum group and recapped on the changes to the group members and changeover of the secretariat Julie Stanborough of ONS will be leading the new secretariat. The reason for this change being it was agreed in the previous meeting that Julie and her teams are better networked within the various admin data divisions and the GSS. It will also link together the secretariat and the website which will ensure updates from the meeting will be reflected on the website, this will be up and running for the next meeting in July.

Guy noted that there are no longer updates to the agenda as both ESRC and ONS agreed that the group should be focused more on specifics and make more of an active difference, however, he encouraged the group to continue to send through any comments or updates to the chair or the secretariat who will ensure that the comments/updates get passed to the UKDF members.

Guy added that the group in the past has been a very public facing group and sees that continuing, a note of the meetings should be made and included on the website. Guy also sees the group as being independent minded and will still offer views on initiatives to government and others but feels that the group should be involved in some initiatives earlier in the process. This will mean some of the items being brought to the meetings will be confidential but will allow the group to provide input and raise any concerns. These items will only be stated as an overall discussion in the minutes to protect confidentiality.

Sam McGregor added that circulating more between meetings will help avoid lengthy discussions and will allow the meetings to be more focused.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting/Matters Arising

Paul Allin noted that one of the sentences/paragraphs in the previous minutes was a little terse and has sent suggested amendments which need to be updated.

Matters Arising

- Updating the website - This has been discussed and is on track to be updated in time for the next meeting.

- Brexit – It was discussed at previous meetings about having Brexit as an item on the agenda, Guy invited the group to provide thoughts/comments on what was meant by having an item on Brexit.

  Steve Ellard-Elliott offered that it could be about having it on the horizon scanning.

  Paul Allin noted that Brexit from the stats user perspective has not been addressed yet and there should be a starting discussion with ONS and other holders of data on what will the world look like after Brexit and what are the requirements for data and infrastructure standards. This question needs to be kept open.

  Sam McGregor added that in relation to ERICS the ESRC are working closely with BEIS on contingency planning i.e. European Social Survey and also the potential for a Global Social Survey as a contingency option. Sam suggested inviting someone from BEIS who is working on this to provide an update at a future meeting, it was agreed that Adam Baker should be invited to the next

meeting in July and also that an email should be sent around the group and associates before the meeting asking if there any updates that people can provide and to state if not.

Julie Stanborough suggested Rob Bumpsted would be the ONS lead on this, Guy suggested adding Rob Bumsted to the meeting and if they cannot attend asking for a short update.

Kristin Hynes (OSR) suggested adding Jane Naylor to the invite list as she is now leading on how stats are affected by Brexit. It was agreed.

Action: Invite Adam Baker (BEIS), Rob Bumpsted (ONS) and Jane Naylor (DeXu) to the July meeting.

- Longitudinal Study Review – this has been discussed briefly and is going through the system at the moment.

- Ian Bell Letter – Will come back to in the first item.

3. **Use of Administrative Sources, Surveys and Census as Sampling Frames**

Guy Goodwin introduced this item. A paper was previously distributed which touched on sampling frames. As agreed Guy sent a letter to Iain Bell who agreed to meet and discuss. There were two issues raised. Can the census be used as a sampling frame? and whether there are plans to link census with survey and admin data?

An example, migration surveys are difficult to complete at present as there isn't a sampling frame but in order for the census to be used as a sampling frame it would need to be built into the legislation.

Guy and Iain are to meet and discuss issues and will feedback after the meeting.

Guy posed the question to the forum: Do we know where we are with sampling frames and what can be used for what? Should there be a list of sampling frames that can be used and who can/can't use them?

Teresa Williams highlighted a number of case studies were completed by Nuffield in conjunction with ESRC, Closer and other departments to highlight the issues between admin to admin data but found issues with admin to survey data. An understanding is needed around the issues at both ends to find a solution.

Steve Ellard-Elliott suggested that the question could be where are users finding either issues or barriers or whether census change will cause problems?

Erica Pufall noted that Wellcome has not seen issues with sampling frames but have seen issues with linkage and accessing the admin data.

Paul Allin noted that it may be more about being aware of what can be done and getting access to data for stats purposes in terms of generating a sample frame.

Guy stated that there should be transparency and there could be 10/12 key datasets that could be all that is needed and will speak to John Pullinger about this from a GSS perspective initially.

Action: Chair to speak to John Pullinger about a list of key datasets which can be used as a sampling frame including key contacts.

4. Data Linkage

The Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) is looking at the UK statistical system's ability to provide greater insight to users via linked data. It presented a draft paper to members of the UK Data Forum highlighting some of the provisional findings emerging from stakeholder interviews carried out in phase one of this work.

The work had suggested that there were five areas for intervention that might help bridge the gap between people's current experiences and our overall ambition for the UK statistical system to maximise the value and benefits of linked data while mitigating against risks:
- Making data linkage the norm
- Social licence
- Legal gateways and data controllers
- Project and researcher assessment
- Skills and resources

OSR is considering models linked to each of these areas and its long-term objectives, as well as some possible short and medium-term steps to help achieve them. These models are still in very provisional form but OSR wanted Forum members' early views as to whether the objectives are along the right lines, what is missing and to advise on who needs to be consulted.

5. UKRI Infrastructure Roadmap

UKRI is considering the need for and design of an infrastructure roadmap. Forum members were asked about possible content, planning and engagement with the social science community. The paper was presented as "confidential" because it was seeking early views from members at development stage.

Members were asked for their views on: the potential infrastructure needs over the next 10-year period; what new research capability could be gained from new

infrastructures; barriers and risks to development; engagement and collaboration with other disciplines; and the opportunities for community/stakeholder engagement. Advice from Forum members is to be fed into UKRI deliberations on next steps.

6. AOB and Agenda items for next meeting

There were no other business matters to discuss.
The items being added to the next agenda are Brexit and Longitudinal Global Survey Update.

The Chair closed the meeting.

Next meeting

The next UK Data Forum meeting will take place at ETC. Venues, 1 Drummond Gate, Pimlico, London, SW1V 2QQ on 11 July 2018.