



Network Meeting

Friday 23rd June 2017

Agenda and meeting notes

The purpose of the meeting was to cover:

- where we are now with the current National Action Plan and what's needed from the Civil Society OGN between now and December 2017
- the opportunities ahead for the OGN movement and where we want to go and what's needed as the Network grows – vision, engagement, priorities
- planned activity over the summer in advance of contributing to future Scotland and UK National Action Plans

Meeting agenda

Date: Friday 23rd June 2017

Time: 13:00 – 15:30

Open
Government
Network
Scotland



This meeting was filmed. To view the recording click [here](#).

	13:00 5 mins	Welcome <i>Lucy McTernan, SCVO</i> <i>Ali Stoddart, The Democratic Society (facilitator)</i>
1	13:05 55 mins	Current OG National Action Plan (NAP) <i>Following the recent joint meeting of the Scottish Government and Scottish civil society, this session will review where we are now in progressing the NAP and what action is required of the Network between now and December 2017 in relation to the five commitments.</i>
2	14:00 50 mins	Opportunities and challenges for our Network <i>This session will focus on the opportunities ahead for the Network, as well as some of the key challenges that face the open government movement in Scotland. What is our Network's vision and what are the priorities?</i>
3	14:50 20 mins	Planned network activity <i>This session will provide an overview of planned activity over the summer to develop the Network in advance of contributing to future Scotland and UK National Action Plans.</i>
4	15:10 20 mins	Actions and next steps <i>We will review what we need to do next to build and maintain momentum before the next Network meeting, drawing on the various actions that have been agreed over the course of the meeting.</i>

Meeting notes

Present: Paul Bradley, Chris Bartter, John Downie, Doreen Grove, Elric Honore, Alexandra Hrabnova, Lucy McTernan, Janine Rennie, Ruchir Shah, Ali Stoddart



Welcome

- Ali Stoddart welcomed attendees. Lucy McTernan moved on to discuss growing movement around citizen's rights in context of Brexit, transparency of negotiations and absolute commitment to transparency from Brussels, focusing also on Scotland's role within the international pioneer tier for Open Government.
- **Action:** Meeting of OG Pioneer Countries next month in Washington DC (more details to follow).

Current OG National Action Plan (NAP)

Commitment One: Financial Transparency

- Introduction from Doreen Grove (SG) – It is necessary to work with people who understand data, ask them how they use it; SG would really welcome input from people who have an idea how they might use financial information and what is needed.
- **Action:** Meeting with Open Knowledge Foundation next week
- People need to understand what the trade-offs are, the flows of money, so plan is for us in the future to be more open about where money is going. It was commented that the way to do that is to run it as a co-produced exercise with civil society
- We would not need to use Freedom of Information so much if we have all fundamental institutions and public policy open and free to the public - we are stuck in the cycle
- It is not just a dynamic between SG and Civil society - the approach of Scottish Parliament is more pro-active now around transparency

- **Action:** gather information from Open Knowledge Foundation meeting and determine next steps.
- There was a discussion about where open government can be more effective. What is the connection with local government?
- In the UK plan SG very specifically put in one commitment focusing on better understanding the levels that effective OG commitments should sit.

Commitment Two: Measuring Scotland's Performance

- Looking at aligning National Performance Framework with SDGs and National Action Plan on Human Rights. Team are currently reviewing the framework and undertaking a lot of work with stakeholders.
- There will be further opportunities to feed in, and process shows that the SDGs is the place where Scotland wants to be.
- What role can the SDG Scotland Network play in supporting government to get the message out that this is the responsibility of all government departments and not only international development?
- SG working hard to build the capacity around SDGs internally. We need to find champions across government who can link the SDGs all the way through the National Performance Framework.

Commitment Three: Fairer Scotland

- Focus of this commitment is on insuring that as the Fairer Scotland plan is delivered there is a continued engagement process with people and communities. Currently no clear engagement plan, but will be shared with Network in due course. What does this engagement look like and how will this inform policy?
- **Action:** OGN to have sight of Fairer Scotland Engagement Plan

- What has happened to Healthier Scotland and Fairer Scotland dialogue? Engagement seems to have dissipated and fallen a little flat. Many examples of where work seems to be happening, but this needs to be clearer.
- This process is about changing culture and in some places it works better than others. Need to move away from the idea that work such as Fairer Scotland is a 'project' that's completed and we move on to the next.
- **Action:** Encourage peer to peer learning between healthier and fairer Scotland

Commitment Four: Participatory Budgeting

- 24 local authorities out of 32 have committed themselves to PB
- 1% target – what does this mean? Is this 1% of entire local authority, or 1% of each department's budget?
- Evaluation being carried out by respected academics – interim report will be launched in the next few months
- There are mixed kinds of drivers for local authorities to get involved in PB.
- One thing that does seem to be quite common is that a lot of them see this as a part of public service reform agenda, not necessarily as an open government or transparency or opening-up budgets type agenda.
- As a result, some of them are seeing this process as a bit transactional - "We are doing PB for the Scottish government to fulfil 1% target, what do we get in return?" Some local authorities are using this to change culture, whilst others are not there yet.
- In areas where there is some dedicated resource, you can actually start to see some real changes happening.



Commitment Five: Increased Participation

- Commitment kept broad because of the difficulties around increasing participation.
- Government is trying to develop a participation framework that can help people with increasing participation and to identify particular policy areas where participation is an important element.
- Scottish approach to user design – good example is the 2000 people who will be working with government to help to design a new social security system over the next 2 years.
- SCVO trying to build SDGs network in Scotland to work with colleagues across government and developing globalgoals.scot. Attempt to discuss open government in the context of relevant issues – health, education, housing etc.

Opportunities and challenges for our Network

Opportunities from the board:

- Strong enthusiasm in network
- Opportunity to change something
- Reform
- Join up good stories
- Join up other conversations
- Fairer data feed
- Future plans
- Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM)
- Open steering space
- Pitch
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

Challenges from the board:

- Is it different?
- Make an impact
- Delays: Brexit/Election
- Clear relevance
- Messy
- Long term
- Risk of focus on negative
- Comms spectrum Simple -> Complex
- Central Belt focussed

Further discussion on challenges and opportunities



- Understand what peoples' scepticism is about open government – people are interested, but we need to think about why this scepticism exists (we've been here before etc.)
- People get frustrated when you start to talk about initiatives like Open Government in a way that they are going to change everything for the better – need realism.
- It is about the reform? We are not going to change things tomorrow
- What's the evidence? Are there changes in Government? People seem more prepared to think about it – it is definitely a positive shift.
- Spreading, connecting is what civil society should be about. We can talk about what the key features are, what the barriers are, we can share experiences
- The challenge is how to have this conversation in a more sophisticated way (especially through technology)
- There's a communication spectrum: from simple to difficult
- The challenge is: How we proactively engage on Open government? How quickly and how well?
- What is the advantage of Scotland being a pioneer? Increased ability to set our own agenda, learn from our international colleagues. It is a really positive thing which provides Scotland with an international platform. The process is evaluated, not just the outcomes
- The agenda is absolutely central to what government is trying to do.
- The question is less about the structure and infrastructure; it is more about how to set up the issues that people want to talk about.

- Need to focus on how open government impacts on the issues that matter to people.
- We put together a wiki last year – good for openness but not perfect.
- Spending some further time looking at what people think is working
- It is really important to use OGP as a mechanism to generate a really strong conversation, it is about how we use the energy around it.
- In terms of networks, it's really important to be a genuine movement
- Number of another networks, Open Knowledge Scotland; PB Scotland; Our Voice – important to tap into these networks for good of OGP process.

Planned network activity, actions and next steps

- Ali talked through the various activities that The Democratic Society and SCVO will be taking forward over the summer months to develop the Network's activity.
- This includes:
 - facilitating a session between Scottish Government commitment leads and civil society to encourage collaboration and suggestions for how the two can work more closely in partnership and involve citizens in NAP implementation.
 - Mapping existing online and offline networks and produce a network map detailing potential opportunities.
 - Develop an engagement plan for NAP-co-production linking this to the structures and governance of the Open Government Scotland Network.