

**Geographic Information Panel  
Minutes of meeting held on  
3 April 2007**

**Present**

Vanessa Lawrence (Ordnance Survey) – Chair  
Andrew Burchell (Defra)  
David Fry (Department for Communities and Local Government) for Michael Kell  
Iain Greenway (Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland)  
Chris Holcroft (Association for Geographic Information)  
Graham Jenkinson (Office for National Statistics) for Karen Dunnell  
James Kavanagh (Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors)  
Jim Meldrum (Registers of Scotland)  
Cheryl Miller (SOLACE, East Sussex County Council)  
Nick Rigby (Ministry of Defence)  
Nick Starling (Association of British Insurers)  
Andrew Stott (e-Government Unit, Cabinet Office)

**Apologies**

Michael Fishwick (Demographic User Group)

**In attendance**

Tim Allen (Local Government Association)  
Hugh Buchanan (Ordnance Survey) - Secretary

**Action**

**1 Minutes of last meeting**

The minutes of the December meeting were agreed, with some minor amendments to the drafting.

**2 Matters arising**

Dealt with in the agenda.

**3 UK GI Strategy**

Vanessa Lawrence (VL) reported on progress on the UK GI Strategy since the December meeting. Government is interested in 3 broad categories of information – around people, companies and location. This piece of work supports the interest in location information, and will be better understood in government if it is referred to as a location strategy.

The Know Edge Consortium have completed their work – further work will be taken forward by the GI Panel, led by the Strategy Development Group.

VL gave a presentation based on one she is to give to the CIO Council on 20 April.

GI Panel members made various suggestions on the content of the slides which will be updated. Any further comments from GI Panel members would be welcome.

In discussion the following points were made:

- Local government location-based initiatives empower the public to do what government currently does on their behalf.
- The governance arrangements for location need to align with government's general approach to governance, which recommends a strong government department lead, with a link into the appropriate Cabinet committee (in our case the Ministerial Sub-Committee on Electronic Service Delivery - PSX(E)). Cabinet

Office do not take ownership of issues such as these, but look to a department with a strong operational interest, and connection to users.

- Defra are the government lead on INSPIRE transposition and implementation. They also have strong internal strategy on handling geographic information through their SPIRE programme. Defra will review the governance diagram proposed for the UK location strategy to see how it can be made to fit with Defra's intended governance.
- Governance has to work well for all interested parties, not just for the host department.
- The Location Strategy is more than the implementation of Inspire, since it also supports the delivery of a wide range of public services through local government.
- Defra will not be able to resource a Location Strategy alone – they are happy to bear a share of the costs. The Comprehensive Spending Review will add further challenges since current expenditure cannot be assumed to continue.
- INSPIRE will put requirements on public sector data suppliers, but not on data users. The proposed governance structure is suitable for a programme board leading implementation, but not for a monitoring or enforcement body.
- Mandation of standards and practice is always difficult, even within government. Needs to be considered in context of overall government information management approach. At this stage we can only propose governance to allow monitoring, not design how that monitoring will take place.
- Much conformance will arise through incentives, quality marking and opportunity, rather than compulsion, but to be successful, this needs the development of a coalition of the willing.
- Effective community building to support this, requires Senior Civil Service commitment. In addition, the Technical Infrastructure Forum and User Forums will help to develop these communities.

Future engagement to take the Location Strategy forward will be with the CIO Council, and then to the Minister, with a recommendation that it should be referred to PSX(E). PSX(E) will look for an emphasis on service transformation and citizen empowerment.

#### 4 Any other business

##### a Chairmanship

The view was expressed by both the representatives of Local Government and the Association for Geographic Information that this was not the appropriate time to change the Chairmanship of the GI Panel, given the continuing discussions surrounding the UK GI Strategy. The members unanimously endorsed this view, and VL indicated that she was willing to continue as Chair. HB will draft a submission to the Minister noting that fact, and recommending that VL be confirmed as Chair.

**HB**

##### b RICS membership

James Kavanagh (JK) has represented the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors on the Panel during the consultants' work on the UK GI Strategy. Now that the consultants' work is complete, it was recommended that Rob Mahoney (RM) should resume his role. VL will write to RM with that invitation.

**VL**

##### c Ministry of Defence membership

Nick Rigby (NR) explained that he will be moving from his present post shortly. He will discuss with his colleagues a suitable Ministry of Defence representative

**NR**

**5 Dates of future meetings**

Future meetings of the GI Panel are scheduled for:

- Thursday 28 June 2007, 2 - 5pm
- Thursday 20 September 2007, 2 - 5pm
- Thursday 13 December 2007, 2 - 5pm