

## **Minutes of the Cross-Party Group on Digital Participation**

**@ the Scottish Parliament, Committee Room 1, 6pm 28 May 2019**

### **Agenda:**

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Presentation from Linnar Viik (Programme Director from Smart Government in Estonia and Co-Founder of the Estonian e-Government Academy)
3. Presentation from Roger Halliday (Chief Statistician, Scottish Government)
4. Questions & Answers with CPG members
5. Reflections from Linnar Viik and Roger Halliday
6. Closing remarks from Willie Coffey MSP

### **Attendees:**

- Kate Forbes MSP – Minister for Public Finance and Digital Economy, Scottish Government
- Linnar Viik - Programme Director for Smart Government and Co-Founder, Estonia e-Government Academy
- Priit Masing – Estonian Embassy in London
- Peter Ferry – Honorary Consulate of Estonia
- Roger Halliday - Chief Statistician & Data Officer, Scottish Government
- Willie Coffey MSP, Convener, CPG on Digital Participation
- Liam McArthur MSP, Deputy-Convener, CPG Digital Participation
- Ewan McQueen – Office of Finlay Carson MSP
- Jonathan Ruff – Ofcom
- Amy Preston – Ofcom
- Stuart Young – Etime
- Maggie Ellis – European Knowledge Tree Group
- Nic McCormick – Managing Director, Lothian Broadband Networks Ltd
- Alyson Mitchell – Digital Participation team, Scottish Government
- Amanda Britain – Communications Consumer Panel
- Philip Whitley – Senior Policy Advisor, Digital Directorate, Scottish Government
- Richard Johnson – Director, OLM Systems
- Chris Meikle - Zero Waste Scotland
- Nancy Fancott – Policy Officer, Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland
- Cade Wells – Business Manager, CENSIS
- Darren Kilburn - FarrPoint
- Rab Campbell – Chairman, Wallet Services
- Julie Melville - Lothian Broadband Networks Ltd
- David Jeffrey - Tap Into IT
- Sally Dyson - SCVO
- Laura Muir – Napier University
- Colin Foskett - Blackwood Group
- Graeme Hamilton - Blackwood Group
- David Walls – Lothian Broadband Networks Ltd
- Sheila M Forbes – Strathclyde University
- Tariq S Durrani – Strathclyde University

- Adrienne Chalmers – Individual
- Mike MacGregor – Individual
- Barbara Adams – Servelec
- John Trower, Chairman, Optimity
- Andrew Muir – Chief Executive, FarrPoint
- Domhnall Dods – Towerhouse Consulting
- Julie Peroni – Ofcom Advisory Committee for Scotland.

**(1) Welcome and Introductions:**

- CPG Convener Willie Coffey MSP (WC) welcomed attendees and acknowledged the apologies from absent CPG members.
- WC briefly spoke about the work of the CPG on Digital Participation and introduced the speakers for the session which included Kate Forbes MSP (KF), Minister for Public Finance and Digital Economy for the Scottish Government.
- KF spoke briefly about the importance of digital connectivity and participation and how this related to her Ministerial duties. She also explained that she was attending in a listening capacity and was keen to hear about the experiences and lessons to be learned from attendees.

**(2) Presentation from Linnar Viik:**

- LK provided members with an overview of the Estonian Government's 'e-Estonia' programme which has revolutionised the provision of public services in Estonia.
- LK explained that Estonia consistently achieves high ranking in various international benchmarking indexes for digital connectivity, health provision and entrepreneurship. A key part of this success has been moving public and information services online (99% of Estonian public services are provided online).
- LK then outlined the timelines, challenges and opportunities presented over the past `17 years of the e-Estonia Government programme; from passing of original legislation to current day.
- LK also discussed the benefits for government, industry and citizens from this 'digital-first' approach; including increased engagement and more efficient provision of public services – citing case studies and practical examples e.g. accessing social benefits during key life events, such as childbirth.
- During the QA session, several CPG members noted the differences between Scotland and Estonia, including the lack of widespread high-speed broadband and mobile coverage as well as the attitudes of citizens/governments to electronic ID cards.
- There was a short discussion about data storage and some concerns were raised about the risks of hosting vast amounts of citizen information in different territories.

**(3) Presentation from Roger Halliday:**

- RH provided members with an overview of his work within the Scottish Government and the benefits to be gained from smarter use of data in policy-making.

- RH discussed the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework and how data could allow for more accurate measurement of outcomes, citing practical examples in cross-matching homelessness/health records.
- RH also spoke about the recent social security powers devolved to the Scottish Parliament and how improved data collection could help streamline access to public services and/lead to an improved consumer experience.
- During the QA session, CPG members asked about the challenges involved in ensuring consistency in data collected from different sources and queried whether a 'digital first' approach could exclude some of the most vulnerable members of society.

#### **(4) Questions & Answers with CPG members**

- WC noted that questions had been asked throughout the presentations and moved to the next agenda item.

#### **(5) Reflections from Linnar Viik and Roger Halliday**

- LV and RH summarised the main themes from their respective presentations and there was a short discussion about public attitudes to governments' collecting and using personal data.

#### **(6) Closing remarks from Willie Coffey MSP**

- WC shared his reflections from the meeting; highlighting the different approaches to providing digital public services in EU countries. He also noted some of the challenges around ensuring protection of citizens data.
- WC thanked all speakers for interesting and thought-provoking presentations; noting that the presentation slides would be circulated in the coming days.
- WC also informed CPG members of the date for our next meeting (1 October 2019)