Meeting minutes

Research Data Scotland Board Meeting

## 4 December 2023

Company number: SC677016

Charity No: SC051305

**RESEARCH DATA SCOTLAND** (the “**Company**”)

Minutes of a general meeting of Research Data Scotland (RDS) held via MS Teams on 04 December 2023 at 10.00.

1. **Quorum**
   1. It was noted that a quorum was present from 10.15 in accordance with the Articles of Association of the Company (the “Articles”).
   2. There was produced to the meeting a notice (“**Notice”**) convening the meeting and, with the consent of all members present, the Notice was taken as read.

## Attendance

### Present

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Position** |
| Paul Boyle | Chair |
| Roger Halliday | Director / Trustee |
| Andrew Morris | Board advisor |
| Mark Parsons | Director / Trustee |
| Julie Fitzpatrick | Director / Trustee |
| Martin Sinclair | Director / Trustee |
| Allan Johnstone | RDS (for items 1-3 only) |
| Hugh Wallace | RDS (for items 1-4.1 only) |
| Layla Robinson | RDS (for items 1-3 only) |
| Nora Cooke O’Dowd | RDS (for items 1-3 only) |
| Vanessa Bruton | Minute taker |

### Apologies

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Gillian Docherty | Board advisor |
| Shannon Vallor | Board advisor |
| Scott Heald | Director / Trustee |
| Jill Pell | Director / Trustee |

1. **Items on the agenda**
   1. **Introduction and welcomes**
   2. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2023 and previously circulated were approved by the Board.

1. **Matters arising**

The CEO updated on activity to move towards a federated network of Scottish Safe Havens. It was noted the importance of developments in the safe havens in Scotland are in line with UK and international activities. All actions from the previous meeting are either complete or covered in Papers 4.1 and 4.2.

1. **Business plan and risk**
   1. **Finance, Audit and Risk committee**

The subcommittee were happy with the risk management arrangements but outlined two areas of development – internal audit capability for specific situations, and the plan to deep dive into two areas of strategic risk at subsequent subcommittee meetings.

* 1. **Business Plan**

Chief Data Officer highlighted:

* RDS have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Scottish Government (SG).
* RDS has staff on secondment to SG.
* The first data sets have been updated. Staff are working on new data sets and reproducible code.
* RDS has had a response to the Synthetic Data Fund with 10 applications.

Chief Partnership and Strategy Officer highlighted:

* There has been good progress with the Regional and the National Safe Havens to collaborate on federated governance within Scotland.
* RDS has formally submitted with the University of Edinburgh (UoE) a bid to the ESRC around 2022 census data.
* RDS have reviewed the public engagement panel that is run with the Scottish Centre for Administrative Data Research (SCADR) and are reaching out to users and researchers.

1. **KPIs and Finance Papers**

An update on KPIs and Finance was given.

* In June RDS will report on delivery times for the Researcher Access Service (RAS).
* RDS is expecting a reduction in its budget for the next financial year.

1. **Researcher Access Service**

Chief Information Officer highlighted:

* RDS are currently developing a viable end-to-end application process. This will allow researchers access to nine data sets via a streamlined process. The intention is to make more data sets available.
* RDS are working with technology partners Appian and Nexer.
* RDS are working for a technical release in January 2024. There will be testing to make the service accessible in February 2024.
* A Data Approvals Transformation Lead started with RDS in October and has made significant progress in laying the groundwork to transform the approvals process.
* This has led to agreements with SG, NRS and PHS to get data access via the principle of functional anonymization. Documentation has now been drawn up to support that decision.

1. **Mid-term Gateway Review**

Chief Executive Officer highlighted:

* The SG midterm review is halfway through the five- year SG funding cycle.
* Its focus is on RDS setup and strategy to succeed. It was led by an independent reviewer.
* To review and confirm the RDS mission purpose and scope.
* There will be a follow up review from the same review team at the end of next summer.
  1. **RDS Target Operating Model**
* RDS’s purpose in its articles state that RDS is there to support the promotion and advancement of Health and Social Wellbeing and improve the physical and mental health of Scotland.
* eDRIS is a key partner with RDS and it is important that RDS are aligned with Public Health Scotland’s purpose
  1. **Enduring Services**
* This is looking at a model of service through RDS.
* Six services are proposed.
* Some of the services are in place.
  1. **Sales Income**
* The paper (circulated previously) summarised the plan to develop RDS’s capabilities in this area and modeling and assessment of what the growth looks like.
* Part of our business case needs to demonstrate that RDS are growing income from sales through industry.
* The prices that industry pays compared to academia and the NHS is currently three times the price of doing the same project for the NHS.
* RDS to develop and publish a policy around industry access so that the owners of data and the public will support it.
  1. **Business case**
* RDS to develop a business case for funding post 2026 to SG.
* RDS have developed a narrative and are now putting together the business case.
  1. **Research Council Funding**
* One of the Gateway recommendations was to apply for IRO status.