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

Minutes of a general meeting of Research Data Scotland (RDS) held via MS Teams on 11 March 2024 at 10.00.

1. **Quorum**

**1.1 ￼**It was noted that a quorum was present in accordance with the Articles of Association of the Company (the “Articles”).

## **1.2 ￼**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.

## **Present Name Position**

## Paul Boyle Chair

## Roger Halliday Director / Trustee

## Scott Heald Director / Trustee

## Mark Parsons Director / Trustee

## Martin Sinclair Director / Trustee

## Emma Gordon Board Advisor

## Janet Egdell Board Advisor

## Neil Rawlins Minute Taker

## **Apologies**

## Julie Fitzpatrick Director / Trustee

## Andrew Morris Board advisor

## Jill Pell Director / Trustee

1. **Items on the Agenda**
   1. **Introduction and welcomes**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Julie Fitzpatrick, Andrew Morris and Jill Pell. Alessia Morris, Scottish Government (SG) joined the meeting for the AGM and as an observer on behalf of Julie Fitzpatrick. Katie Wilde (University of Aberdeen) joined for the AGM.

1. **AGM**

The Chair gave an overview of RDS’s central mission. The CEO gave an overview of what RDS is delivering, including the RAS, website, ADR Scotland programme and an update on working with partners in setting data standards across Scottish organisations.

1. **Minutes of the** **previous meeting and Matters Arising**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2023 and previously circulated (Paper 1) were approved without amendment by the Board. A verbal update on outstanding actions from the Action Log (Paper 2) were provided by RH. All actions from previous meetings are either complete or are in hand.

There were no matters arising.

**5. Standing Items**

**5.3 RDS Q3 2023 Progress Report**

RH gave a progress update which included the Business Plan, Finance and Risk (Paper 3.3 circulated previously). RH highlighted the main themes. There has been a focus on designing quicker, simpler services, but the principal KPIs do not yet reflect this as they will be implemented over the next year. There has been an audit of current data and this has highlighted some of eDRIS’s work has been missed, so the baseline for some KPIs may have changed by the next Board meeting. Regarding sustainability of the organisation, IRO status has been applied for. Risk remains an area of uncertainty as a need to simplify IG, but more work with partners is required to make this happen. Questions and comments were invited. SH noted that metrics were down to the eDRIS team, but would seek an opportunity to refine these metrics and understand where the bottlenecks are. EG noted that the metrics around the user journey should be focused on as researchers are saying the researcher journey is not well linked up and they need to know what resources are going to be needed up front. The more datasets become available, the more complex the landscape gets. RH noted that the learning from England would be useful and that a briefing note should be produced on what can be done to make the user journey easier.

**6 Agenda Items**

**6.1 Industry Access to data**

Layla Robinson and Cicely Kerr from RDS joined the meeting. Professor Dame Anna Dominiczak joined the meeting and gave a five-minute talk on industry access to data. EG then spoke for five minutes on industry access to data from an ADR UK perspective. LR then presented the paper on Industry Access to Data (Paper 4.1 circulated previously). The key points of the paper were that public interest and commercial interest can co-exist, but only in the public good. The Chair noted that from the outset, and set out in its original business plan, that it was within RDS’s remit to work with industry and noted that academics work with industry on a day-to-day basis. However, the public good needs to be at the heart of this – this already happens in Wales where 10% of SAIL enquiries come from industry. Questions and comments were invited.

RH agreed to move forward with the actions proposed in the paper, taking account of the Board’s comments and working with and influencing Scottish Government in doing so. RH thanked the Board for this helpful steer.

**6.2 Business Plan**

RH introduced Paper 4.2 circulated previously. It included the key themes, noting that support was being looked for the 2024-25 Business Plan. Comments and questions were invited. EG noted that open access to low fidelity synthetic data was desirable to restrict time in using ‘real’ data and asked where RDS were with synthetic data. RH responded that RDS is committed to getting its first synthetic data set out by 31 March 2024 and then see how it integrates with the service.

**6.3 Data Sourcing**

Nora Cooke O’Dowd joined the meeting and introduced the paper on data sourcing circulate previously (Paper 4.3). NO undertook a slide presentation on what RDS has done; what RDS is setting out to achieve. Questions and comments were invited. SH noted his support. The question is how to join up IG conversations with the Industry for Data strategy and not double up on effort. JE noted that most of the 2022 census data was now available and the most should be made of this, with EG agreeing that census data being really key. PB noted that thought should be given to federation, how this was going to work, decide upon the system, business models, the charges going to be made and the financial support from commerce.

**7. AoB**

MS noted that at the launch of the RAS service in late April the DFM would be attending. Could those Board members attending be given short briefing notes, who they would be meeting, any speaking notes and the lines to be taken on data for industry. RH agreed to supply a set of speaking notes to be provided to all Board members.

Date of next meeting Monday 10 June at 9am in person in Room 5.45 at the Bayes Centre, Edinburgh.

## There being no further business, the chair declared the meeting closed at

## 11.56.

.............................................

Chairperson

..................................................

(Date)

Actions:

* A briefing note to be produced on plans to simplify the researcher access journey (RH)
* Develop and test a data access and pricing policy for Industry Access to Data (LR/CK)
* A briefing note and set of speaking notes to be produced and sent to all Board members in advance of the launch of the RAS service in late April (RH)