

AGI Glgateway™ Advisory Group Meeting

17 November 2004, 10:30am

AGI Offices, Block C, 4th Floor, Morelands, 5-23 Old Street, London, EV1V 9HL

MINUTES

Attendees

Peat Allan (PA)	Ordnance Survey
Bruce Gittings (BG)	University of Edinburgh
Jamie Justham (JJ)	Dotted Eyes
Mark Linehan (ML)	AGI – <i>Chair</i>
Les Rackham (LR)	Independent Consultant
Louise Scofield (LS)	AGI
Theresa Stabb (TS)	AGI - <i>Secretary</i>
Robert Turner (RT)	AGI
Alan Smith (AS)	Office for National Statistics
Rob Walker (RW)	GI Standards Committee

Apologies

Bob Barr (BB)	Manchester University
Tony Black (TB)	Intelligent Addressing

Not present

Jerry Giles (JG)	British Geological Survey
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1. Review of Minutes and Actions from last meeting

Actions from the meeting held on 8 September were reviewed and the following points were noted:

Membership of Advisory Group

Members should be asked to re-confirm their commitment if two consecutive meetings were missed. **ML** to contact Bruce Gittings and Jerry Giles regarding this matter. **COMPLETED** ML

Debriefing and Reflections on Strategy

ML to talk with Gayle Gander re establishing a formal relationship between Glgateway and HMSO, and to follow this action up. ML e-mailed Sallie Jones regarding this matter. **COMPLETED** ML

MetaGenie/'Gateway in a Box'

RT to talk to Snowflake regarding the possibility of writing software so that metadata records can be imported from -and exported to - MetaGenie Online. RT stated that he had met with Snowflake this week regarding this matter. He noted that this may not be financially viable. Requirements for the new version are being discussed based on the budget available. The Advisory Group will see the requirements for Version II before going ahead. **ONGOING.**

ML to talk to Clive Pause at the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit regarding the Housing Market Renewal and Pathfinders using the MetaGenie facility. This is now Jonathan Rhind's responsibility and he will get back to ML regarding this. **ONGOING.**

Special Discussion on NIMSA Consultation Process

ML to find out if the questionnaire is sufficient for getting views across regarding this consultation and to determine whether a further statement should be submitted. **COMPLETED – SEE AGENDA ITEM 3.**

ML to discuss with Peter Capell the issue of a GI Panel. ML stated that a letter has been sent to Phil Hope MP regarding this issue. Mr Hope replied to this and is considering the matter. An announcement from ODPM is expected. It was also noted that Peter Capell is no longer involved with this issue due to his forthcoming retirement. **CARRIED FORWARD.**

Web Traffic, MetaGenie downloads, and Q4 Financial Reports

RT to provide users with a cd or zip file if they have problems downloading MetaGenie. RT has specified on the website that GIgateway is happy to supply a copy of the MetaGenie CD to all those who have trouble downloading. RT also noted that a zip file was too problematic. **COMPLETED.**

ISO 19115/19139, UK Gemini and its implementation

ML to raise the issue of ISO compatibility with Maewyn Cumming and ODPM, in particular the business case and funding requirements involved in this move. **SEE AGENDA ITEM 5.**

Marketing and Awareness

LS to start a list of potential users of GIgateway and identify communities that would benefit. **COMPLETED.** This list was e-mailed out to the Advisory Group and all contributions are welcome. The issue of Northern Ireland was raised at this point by AS as OSNI appears on the list above. ML noted that the Office of the First Minister is funding Mosaic and also that NGDF funds are available for this (which has to be cleared with OS).

Website content

RT to put the new pages up on the EDINA server and send the link to the Advisory Group members when the pages are nearing completion. **COMPLETED.**

Web Statistics

RT to provide an example of user profiles at the next Advisory Group meeting and to look at the possibility of obtaining a list of URLs which users have come from. **COMPLETED.** RT circulated an example of statistics to the group. **ACTION:** RT to e-mail the top 50 URL's to the group.

MetaGenie downloads

ACTION: ML to speak to Neil Calvert at ESRI to see whether they can offer their support with the integration of MetaGenie. **COMPLETED.** ML has a meeting with Neil Calvert at ESRI on Monday 22nd November regarding this possibility of linking between vendors own metadata systems and MetaGenie. ML

2. Membership of the Advisory Group

It was noted that Tony Black had circulated a paper regarding this matter to the group.

ML stated that the remit of the group remains informal and stated that it was encouraging that ODPM had asked for the group's advice. RW noted that Tony Black's letter was an attempt to broaden the remit and to encourage others to join the group. BG agreed with this approach but stressed the importance of making sure that any potential members are keen contributors. RW BG

The prospect of a representative from ODPM joining the group was discussed. ML stated that Peter Capell had expressed concern regarding this due to the possibility that such a representative may feel uncomfortable because of their funding role. ML added that Jonathon Rhind and David Underwood are potential candidates. ML ML

It was noted by PA that Jonathon Rhind has the strongest interest in metadata. PA

The group concluded discussion on this issue by agreeing that they were happy with Tony Black's recommendations and that AGI membership should be strongly encouraged as a pre-requisite for this.

It was further agreed that ODPM should be added to the list of potential members.

ACTION: ML to consult Tony Black and to invite representatives from these organisations on to the Advisory Group ML

3. NIMSA consultation

ML noted that the Advisory Group's response to this had been disappointing and stressed that the deadline for this (which will be separate to AGI's response) is the end of November. ML expressed the need to determine what the group would like to do regarding this matter. ML

AS stated that he is preparing an organisational response to this from ONS in the next week or so. AS

ML suggested that a written response would be more appropriate than an on-line response. ML

ACTION: ML to extract the most important questions and to put together a list of bullet points that the group can respond to. This should be e-mailed to the group by Monday 22nd November at the latest.

4. Les Rackham's report on the sustainability of a UK metadata service

LR gave a short presentation to the group regarding this matter.

LR

ML thanked LR and stated that it is the role of the Advisory Group to provide recommendations on the way forward in this matter. ML

AS stated that the report is very successful in covering not only the providers' requirements but also – and perhaps more importantly - the users' requirements. AS highlighted the big distinction between those who use GI as a means to an end and those who need to understand GI specifically. He stressed that to ensure GIgateway's credibility there is a need to sort out key data sets rather than simply 'pushing out' more data. AS

ML noted that ODPM, as the owner, does not really have a firm idea of what they want for the service and expressed disappointment that ODPM is still not clear on this. ML

AS noted that Peter Capell's letter raised the issue of targets for the service but suggested that perhaps it would be better to focus on quality rather than quantity. AS

BG asked the group to consider what has changed for the user of the service since AskGIraffe. He noted the possibility that some of the data was still out of date. LR stated that the worst offender of this is IGGI and added that the 'real' data owners in many cases are not responsible for the upkeep of data sets. BG LR

PA outlined the need to get users in touch with the providers of core data sets but also to make them aware of the minority data sets available. PA

AS added that there is a need to strip the service down to a reliable core service. AS

BG also stressed that he was more concerned with quality and that the key is ensuring that sets are kept up to date. BG

ML stated the importance of aligning the provision of metadata to GIgateway with internal metadata services to ensure success. ML

BG suggested the possibility of providing organisations with a detailed plan of the possible construction of a metadata system to reduce barriers to metadata organisation (including standards, documentation etc). He also urged the need to find out which datasets are more useful to users and suggested the possibility of writing this into the system. This information could then be fed back to the provider and force them to update records. BG

LR added the importance of someone to regularly check the metadata records. LR
BG noted that all these ideas focused on technological solutions. BG

JJ explained the importance of concentrating on what the user actually *does* with the information found, in order to then determine how that information is to be organised. JJ
ML added that it was essential not only to clarify whether datasets meet the user's requirements but also to determine what the user actually wants. ML

AS raised the issue of where hits on GIgateway have come from and asked why the service is not more obvious from other public sector sites. He stressed that this was an important issue. AS

JJ suggested looking at the US equivalent (or other metadata services) in order to help. JJ

AS told the group that as a consequence of attending Pan-Government groups, he felt that a definite need exists to access certain datasets and that GIgateway is an obvious choice for this. AS
ML added that it would be a good idea to invite Peter Capell (along with his successor) to join the group to discuss these matters as they go beyond the issues raised in his letter. ML

5. Response to Peter Capell's letter

This discussion responded to the four questions contained within the letter.

ML stated that he would be happy to draft a letter but thought that it would be more useful to sit down with Peter Capell to discuss the issues raised. He added that it should at least be pointed out the overwhelming number of targets that have been achieved. ML also emphasised the need for IGGI to be more proactive in its role. ML

JJ expressed concern over whether it is right to invite NIMSA to the group considering that the group has no executive role. ML offered the following two options: JJ ML

1. The drafting of a letter containing the views of the Advisory Group
2. The drafting of a letter containing ML's response which includes the wider issues as discussed by the Advisory Group

RW stressed that specific targets are not the concern of the group. RW

ML stated that the targets seemed reasonable in the light of the numbers signed up for MetaGenie workshops and downloads. There was a need to examine why those responses were not fed through into contribution etc. ML suggested that he was happy to say the following: 'the Advisory Group does not feel that it can respond specifically to points raised in the letter but is willing to discuss wider issues'. ML

Although BG made clear that he does not have any problem with responding to targets, most of the group agreed that this is outside the role of the Advisory Group. BG

PA noted that targets are about where emphasis and effort should go and that perhaps the Advisory Group can be used to help find solutions and to think of ways to encourage take-up within local government. PA

BG suggested that perhaps the Advisory Group can be used to highlight the fact that targets are not appropriate and ML replied that further discussion with ODPM is needed regarding this matter. BG ML

JJ highlighted the necessity of asking questions such as 'What are acceptable quality levels?' and then using these findings as a springboard for further discussion. JJ

ML also noted that repeat visits would be enhanced by focusing on core data sets. ML

ACTION: ML to draft a response to Peter Capell's letter and to copy this to the Advisory Group. He added that an invitation will be included to meet with the group.

BG focused on the need to also respond to those responsible for the Scottish and Welsh GI strategies, emphasising the need to link them in to Glgateway BG

6. Regular updates

MetaGenie

LS stated that there has been over 400 downloads of MetaGenie (of which LS organisational downloads make up 230)

She added that 30% of people are planning to contribute.

New website content

LS stated that the home page is now changed every fortnight to keep the site looking fresh and to update users of latest news.

7. AOB

JJ stated that he felt it appropriate to acknowledge the team's accomplishment JJ over the last Quarter.

The date for meetings in 2005 were set as follows:

Wednesday 16th February

Wednesday 18th May

Wednesday 7th September

Wednesday 16th November.