Summary of discussion: JBC Data Science Advisory Board Meeting 30th April 2021, 14:00-14:50 [held virtually]

Chair: Ewan Birney

1. **Previous minutes were signed off and agreed**
2. **JBC presentation: plenary of data governance in the JBC**

The JBC gave a summary of its data acquisition, including details of data sources and data categories that are ingested (education, mobility, health, business, retail, waste water etc.). It was made clear that personal data is deidentified as a matter of priority, although most data is non-personal and is aggregated. This was followed by an outline of the JBC's data cataloguing and data management practices, as well as the JBC's position on data ethics. Key future directions were outlined as follows:

- Acquisition
  - JBC plans to improve data acquisition strategy through, among other strategies, prediction of relevant future acquisitions;
- Management
  - Some ideas for future growth included retaining a focus on privacy, whilst making promoting data discovery, and plans to make datasets available to the wider data science community;
- Ethics
  - Key things to consider are transparency, accountability, fairness;
  - Need to decide on how to ensure these are embedded in the organisation by default.

3. **General discussion**

There was then a discussion of the JBC's presentation topic, in which the following points were raised:

- The importance of clarifying terminology surrounding data governance was raised.
- The topics of data governance, ownership of data in government and trustworthiness were raised, but it was decided that these were expansive discussions that warrant separate deep-dive sessions.
- Transparency as a route to building public trust in the JBC's data governance was raised, to which the JBC responded that it is exploring this but there must be certainty that data released to the public reflects reality as much as possible.
- There was a discussion around receiving input from the Scottish government, along with an offer of support in working through data governance issues.
- It was raised that the issue of fairness was mentioned but was not discussed in depth. It was agreed that members would like to hear more from the JBC about this.

4. **JBC update**

Director of D&DS gave an update on current organisational priorities.

5. Meeting outcomes

The Board:

- Recommended that the JBC clarify their terminology surrounding data governance;
- Offered support from the Scottish government to work through data governance issues;
- Suggested data governance and trustworthiness as future 'deep-dive' topics.

Attendance

Dr Ewan Birney	Deputy Director General, European Bioinformatics Institute (Chair)
Professor Andrew Morris	Director, Health Data Research UK
Dr Sylvia Richardson	Director, Chair of Biostatistics, University of Cambridge
Professor Graham Medley	Professor of Infectious Disease Modelling, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
Professor Chris Holmes	Programme Director for Health and Medical Sciences, The Alan Turing Institute
Dr Zeynep Engin	Urban Dynamics Laboratory, UCL
Professor Simon Vosper	UK Meteorological Office
Professor Dame Wendy Hall	Professor, Associate Vice President (International Engagement) and Executive Director (Web Science Institute), University of Southampton
Professor Daniela De Angelis	Professor of Statistical Science for Health, University of Cambridge, Deputy Director and Programme Leader at the MRC-BSU
Professor Alison Heppenstall	Professor of Geocomputation at the University of Leeds, ESRC-Turing Fellow
Professor Mark Parsons	EPCC Executive Director and Associate Dean for e-Research at Edinburgh
Mel Giarchi (*attending today's meeting on behalf of the Scottish Government, instead of Angus MacLeod*)	Scottish government representative
Craiger Solomons	Lead analyst, Primary Care & Health Science Directorate, Welsh Government
Stuart Miller	Director of Adult Social Care (Delivery), DHSC

Gearoid Cassidy	Northern Ireland Assembly
Dr James Hetherington	Head of UCL's Research Software Development Group (UCL) and Director of Research Engineering at the Alan Turing Institute (Turing)
Dr Johanna Hutchinson	Director of Data & Data Science, Joint Biosecurity Centre (Observer)
Charlie Dunstan-Rice	Joint Biosecurity Centre (Secretariat)
Aine Fairbrother	Joint Biosecurity Centre (Secretariat)
Priya Toora	Joint Biosecurity Centre (Secretariat)
Dr Nick Watkins	Joint Biosecurity Centre (Observer)
Cristian Lungu	Joint Biosecurity Centre (Presenting)