

David Rhind
Chair of APPSI

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Michael Wills
Minister of State for Justice
Ministry of Justice
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21 August 2009

Dear Minister,

Update from the APPSI meeting on 23 July 2009

This is just a short note to update you on the APPSI meeting on 23 July.

As usual, we discussed matters of policy and practice but we were also informed by contributions from two external speakers. On this occasion these were the journalist Michael Cross, co founder (with Charles Arthur) of the Guardian Technology's Free Our Data Campaign, and Andrew Stott, the newly appointed Director of Digital Engagement at the Cabinet Office. The Panel also received an update on PSI activities since May 2009 from OPSI; heard about developments since the closure of the consultation of the transposition of the INSPIRE Directive into UK law at the end of May; was given an update on PSI developments in Europe from the Panel's European expert, and listened to a summary of the findings from a local government survey conducted by PSI Consulting Ltd, a company led by John Gray, APPSI member. This local government survey considered the impact of the PSI Re-use Legislation against a number of recent areas of legislation which impact upon the UK information marketplace, especially the Property Search Sector.

Mr Cross spoke at some length about how the Free Our Data campaign was launched and where he sees the Campaign and the re-use of PSI agenda going. APPSI members were struck by the freedom that Michael Cross and Charles Arthur have had in taking forward the Campaign and manoeuvring it any direction they feel is appropriate at any given time. As a result, the Free Our Data campaign has run articles in the Guardian Technology Section almost every week since the launch of the Campaign in 2006. Mr Cross believes that the Campaign has won the intellectual argument on Free Our Data but there is still a long way to go to achieve its policy objectives. The Free Our Data Campaign will continue mainly on the web version of the Guardian newspaper.

The Panel had a constructive discussion with Andrew Stott who welcomed members' views on how they see the key issues, particularly around the more easily availability of public sector information, and what they see as priorities for his agenda.

The minutes of the APPSI meeting set out the details of the presentations and discussions (see Annex A). The papers for the meeting, which include an update on PSI in Europe and the findings of the local government survey, are at:
<http://www.appsi.gov.uk/2009/07/23/23rdMeetingOfAPPSI>

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Rhind". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large 'D' and 'R'.

David Rhind
Chair of APPSI