

PAF (11)3rd Meeting

26th May 2011

THE POSTCODE ADDRESS FILE

ADVISORY BOARD

Minutes of the meeting held at 13.30 on Thursday, 19th May 2011

At QAS

George West Road, 2-3 Clapham Common North Side,

London, SW4 0QL

PRESENT

Ian Beesley	Chairman
Tim Drye	Direct Marketing Association
Joel Curry	QAS
Terry Hiles	Capscan
David Heyes	Wigan BC
Michael MacClancy	The DX Group
Emma Gooderham	Allies Computing
Razia Ahamed	Google
Ian Paterson	UK Mail

Also in attendance

Steve Rooney	AMU)	
Scott Childes	AMU)	items 5-9
Ian Evans	AMU)	

Guests

Steven Cape	Postcomm (Observer)	
Lars Calvert	Department for Communities and Local Government	item 5

Apologies

Iain McKay	DNAS
Martin Taylor	Royal Mail

1. MATTERS ARISING:

- The Chairman introduced and welcomed Razia Ahamed from Google, as a new member of the Advisory Board.
- David Heyes reported he was now in a position to suggest Andrew Marn from the Metropolitan Police, an ACPO representative, to cover the interests of the emergency services and he would arrange for the Chairman to meet him soon.
- The Chairman advised the Board that he had approached 20 organisations to express an interest in working on a research project to estimate the value of PAF to the UK economy. 5 organisations had expressed an interest in the project; 3 had been interviewed and a final selection process would take place after these organisations had provided their 'best and final' proposals.

2. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE:

- The Chairman reported that Lars Calvert of the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) had been invited to attend the meeting to discuss the Public Sector Mapping Agreement (PSMA).
- AMU had consulted the Advisory Board about a request from the Cornish language Society for PAF to include addresses using that language. The Board agreed that since the Cornish language was not an official working language of the UK, whether to agree to the request should be a commercial decision for the AMU

ACTION: The Chairman - to write to the AMU to record this conclusion.

3. POSTCOMM REPORT ON PAF REGULATION – PAF(11)11

Opening a 'second reading' debate on the Postcomm recommendations the Chairman said that the report showed confidence in the light touch approach to regulation of PAF and in the activities of the Advisory Board over the past 3½ years. Nevertheless, in the light of the consultations received, Postcomm had suggested that the Board examine whether it would be possible to improve its communication and contact with PAF users. In a brief discussion, a number of practical steps were identified for further consideration.

In particular, the Board welcomed the suggestion that, building on the work of the Quality Working Group, it should start an annual questionnaire to PAF users to solicit views on what improvements they needed. AMU co-operation to identify end users issue questionnaires and fund analysis would be sought. But it would also be important to stress the independence of the exercise.

The Board was gratified that Postcomm had come down in favour of its interpretation that the funds available for investment in PAF improvements or price reductions should represent a 3-year moving average of profit above the 8-10% margin allowed by the regulator. After clarifying with AMU how much this would amount to for the years 2007/8 – 2009/10 the July meeting of the Advisory Board would focus on ideas from the constituencies represented and would look forward

to the amount available for the 2012/13 programme based on the profit from the years 2008/9 – 2010/11.

It was noted that Postcomm had earlier announced an intention to scrutinize the AMU's P&L statements. It was unclear whether the regulatory authority now had the resources to do so. Hence, the Advisory Board would seek participation in the review, including exploring with Postcomm the employment of an accountant by the Board to undertake the detailed work.

It was also noted that the Postcomm report raised the possibility of the AMU dealing with postal redirections and Post Boxes in a parallel way to management of the postcodes.

ACTION: The Chairman to circulate a draft a formal response to the Postcomm report.

ACTION: Advisory Board members to review how they communicate with their constituencies

ACTION: Advisory Board members to consider how their organisations might publicise the activities of the Board.

ACTION: Advisory Board members to seek ideas for investment projects from their constituency members.

ACTION: The Chairman to ask the AMU to cascade the PAB web address to End Users

ACTION: Board members to submit proposals in advance of the July meeting, looking at increasing the use of PAF reducing costs or improving quality.

ACTION: The Secretary to investigate alternative venues (including the RM Conference Centre in Rugby) for reinstating the date of the Open Meeting as 16th November.

4. A CHARTER FOR 2012 and 2013

The Chairman had invited Joel Curry to prepare a draft Charter for the aims, objectives and work of the Board covering the years 2012 and 2013 with help from a small working group. In the light of likely emerging issues the Chairman would review membership of the Board with Postcomm and the AMU with a view to refreshing its composition at the end of 2011. Meanwhile, the Chairman requested that, as a matter of courtesy to him and fellow Board members, he be notified of any contact by Advisory Board members with the media and that in such dealings Board members should avoid intemperate language that might reflect badly on the Board.

5. THE PUBLIC SECTOR MAPPING AGREEMENT AND PAF

Lars Calvert of DCLG gave a short update on the state of play with the draft public sector agreement for PAF and answered questions from Board members.

6. INVESTMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE - PAF(11)12

The AMU presented the pro forma to be used in managing the PAF investment programme. The Advisory Board welcomed the structure of the document as providing clearer focus for the discussion of priorities and for the tracking of

progress. In a short discussion a number of presentational improvements were suggested, including a more succinct overview of each project.

ACTION: AMU to revise the pro forma in the light of the discussion.

ACTION: AMU to complete the templates to cover each investment project for 2011/12 and to circulate them to the Advisory Board.

7. AMU UPDATE

a) Navigation Licence

The Chairman explained that he had been approached by a navigation PAF user complaining that delay in finalising the Licence was extremely disruptive to their business. AMU confirmed that 10 directly affected PAF Solution Providers had been consulted about the draft Licence, and that they were in the process of collating the results. The summary feedback should be available from w/e 27th May and would be circulated to the Board.

b) Postal Services Bill

The Postal Services Bill would be re-presented on 9th June to the House of Commons. The Bill refers to Ofcom rather than Postcomm as the Royal Mail regulator and gives the regulator more powers to direct Royal Mail to take action.

c) Looking forward to 2013

Licence renewal – a PAB working group would be set up from April 2012

ACTION: AMU to consider how independent legal support could be provided for the Advisory Board work on the licence.

8. GOOD ADDRESSING AND THE POSTAL DISCOUNT

The Board discussed a Royal Mail communication to its wholesale customers confirming that a planned surcharge on non-compliant addressing would not be implemented until the end of October. Nevertheless, reservations about the reasonableness of imposing a surcharge at all were expressed and it was agreed to probe Royal Mail on this.

ACTION – The Chairman to contact Martin Taylor and AMU to ascertain who might be asked to discuss the Royal Mail proposals concerning Good Addressing and the Bulk Mail discount at the PAB meeting in July.

9. Next meeting 14th July – Phoenix Centre