Quality in Public Dialogue

A Framework for assessing the quality of public dialogue

Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

CONTENTS

STATUS OF THE FRAMEWORK

The development of this Framework has involved inputs from a wide range of people within and beyond the Sciencewise team, through individual communications and meetings (see Annex 1 for a summary of the development process), as well as desk research (see Annex 2 for main sources).

Particular thanks to Professor Judith Petts for initial support and continuing encouragement. Thanks also to the DECC/Defra Social Science Expert Panel for considering the first draft of the framework and providing valuable feedback. Thanks to Dr Ruth Little, Defra and University of Sheffield; Simon Maxwell, Defra; Kieron Stanley, Defra; Patrick Middleton, head of engagement at the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC); and Caryl Williams, Defra. Thanks to Dr Diane Beddoes of Dialogue by Design; Rhuari Bennett and Carl Reynolds of 3KQ; Sarah Castell of Ipsos MORI; David Collier of White Ox; and Viki Cooke of BritainThinks for their comments as experienced dialogue evaluation and delivery practitioners. Thanks to Rhion Jones, the Consultation Institute. Thanks also to all those in the Sciencewise team especially those who provided extensive expertise and input to drafts - Andrew Acland, Simon Burall, Robin Clarke, Alison Crowther, Fraser Henderson, Suzannah Lansdell, Dr Amy Pollard and Steve Robinson.

This version of the Framework builds on the initial Working Paper published in March 2015 and has been developed further as a result of additional inputs from many of those listed above, additional research and feedback on the use of the Framework by some of the independent evaluators of public dialogue projects supported by Sciencewise over the past year.

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Evaluation Manager for the Sciencewise programme
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[1] This document was updated in January 2018 to include minor changes resulting from the new Sciencewise programme.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document presents a Framework for assessing the quality of public dialogue in public policy making under the Sciencewise programme. We are using the definition of public dialogue from the *Government's Approach to Public Dialogue on Science and Technology* (usually referred to as the Sciencewise Guiding Principles).

> *Public dialogue is a process during which members of the public interact with scientists, stakeholders (for example, research funders, businesses and pressure groups) and policy makers to deliberate on issues relevant to future policy decisions.*

We recognise that processes designed to inform and influence public policy and decision-making - including public dialogue - need to be rigorous and impartial, relevant, accessible, legal and ethical, and that all such processes need to be assessed against agreed standards. At the most basic level, rigour and impartiality require quality assurance of these processes to guarantee the quality of the outputs[2]. This Framework is designed to provide an improved approach to a quality assurance process for public dialogue.

The main message for all potential users of this Framework is the importance of a robust and transparent methodology throughout the design, delivery and evaluation of dialogue projects, to ensure the results can be used with confidence in policy making.

In order to increase the use and acceptability of this Framework alongside other quality frameworks we draw extensively on existing guidance, particularly from HM Treasury's *Quality in Qualitative Evaluation* framework[3], and the Sciencewise Guiding Principles.

We hope the Framework will be of use as initial briefing on what public dialogue involves, as a checklist for those designing and delivering public dialogue - and for those who want to test the robustness of a dialogue project at all stages of planning, design, delivery and evaluation.

A pragmatic approach to the use of the Framework is expected and recommended. Not all the questions identified here need to be addressed fully in all circumstances and, in many cases, evidence of every activity may not be required. Equally, however, the Framework is designed to provide sufficient guidance to be of value even in complex and contentious projects where the level of evidence required is likely to be higher.

The Framework obviously has limitations. Public dialogue practice is constantly evolving. There is much more to be said on many of the questions raised and no framework can hope to capture fully the true spirit of public dialogue. Our aim is to provide a baseline of what can be agreed among some key parties as the sum of knowledge at present on what constitutes the basic requirements for a good quality dialogue process. Even within the Framework presented below there are options and alternatives, because one size will never fit all.

While recognising these limitations, our hope is that this Framework will enable further discussion and agreement in future on what constitutes widely accepted quality standard for a public dialogue process which produces trustworthy results that can be used with confidence in policy development and decision making.

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[2] Government Social Researchers (GSR) Code. See http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/networks/gsr/gsr-code
[3] HM Treasury (2012) *Quality in Qualitative Evaluation: a framework for assessing research evidence* (supplementary Magenta Book guidance).

Key points addressed in the Framework

Context for the dialogue. The conditions leading to the dialogue are conducive to the best outcomes:
• Timing to influence decision making
• Boundaries of influence
• Context setting

Scope and design of the dialogue. The parameters of the dialogue are appropriate and are reflected in the design:
• Rationale for using public dialogue
• Governance and management
• Resources
• Involvement of relevant and senior decision makers
• Clear purpose and topic focus
• Questions to be addressed
• Level of participant influence
• Delivery personnel
• Types of public participants
• Numbers of public participants
• Number and location of workshops
• Diverse perspectives
• Specialist involvement
• Design of deliberative workshops
• Addressing stakeholder aspirations
• Ethics, anonymity and data protection

Delivery. The implementation of dialogue events represents best practice:
• Focus on addressing agreed dialogue objectives
• Fair and balanced dialogue
• Appropriate numbers and types of participants involved
• Respect for public participants
• Sufficient time and information for deliberative discussions
• Quality and depth of facilitation
• Learning from practice throughout
• Recording the dialogue
• Capturing agreement, disagreement and uncertainty
• Analysis of dialogue results
• Clear and coherent reporting of dialogue results with clear links between data and conclusions
• Reporting of wider implications of dialogue results
• Participant involvement in reporting the dialogue results
• Sharing the dialogue results and final reports with those involved

Impact. The dialogue delivers the desired outcomes:
• Achieving the purpose of the dialogue
• Dissemination of dialogue results
• Credibility and use of dialogue results
• Short and longer term impacts of the dialogue on policy and practice
• Impacts on public participants
• Unexpected impacts of the dialogue
• Reporting on impacts

Evaluation. The dialogue process is shown to be robust and contributes to learning:
• Clear scope for the evaluation
• Analytical frameworks and criteria
• Evaluation reporting

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1   This document presents a Framework for assessing the quality of public dialogue in public policy making under the Sciencewise programme. For the purposes of this Framework we are using the definition of public dialogue from the *Government's Approach to Public Dialogue on Science and Technology* (usually referred to as the Sciencewise Guiding Principles), which is:

Public dialogue is a process during which members of the public interact with scientists, stakeholders (for example, research funders, businesses and pressure groups) and policy makers to deliberate on issues relevant to future policy decisions.

1.2   We recognise that processes designed to inform and influence public policy and decision-making - including public dialogue - need to be rigorous and impartial, relevant, accessible, legal and ethical, and that all such processes need to be assessed against agreed standards. At the most basic level, rigour and impartiality require quality assurance of these processes to guarantee the quality of the outputs[4]. This Framework is designed to provide an improved approach to a quality assurance process for public dialogue under the Sciencewise programme.

1.3   In order to increase the use and acceptability of this Framework alongside other quality frameworks, we have drawn on existing well-established quality standards as much as possible, particularly HM Treasury's *Quality in Qualitative Evaluation* framework[5], and the Sciencewise Guiding Principles. The Sciencewise programme, which is funded by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, helps policy makers to deepen their understanding of the public's views on new and emerging areas of science and emerging technology, enabling them to develop policies which take account of public opinion.

1.4   Although comprehensive in some ways, the Sciencewise Guiding Principles do not provide sufficient detail to fully assess the quality of public dialogue under the programme, resulting in a lack of clarity about what constitutes good practice. A number of questions have remained around public dialogue, which this Framework aims to start to address. For example:

- How many is 'enough' participants or locations?
- Should the role of scientists and other specialists involved in dialogue events primarily be to provide information, or should they also be participants in the dialogue?
- What makes a dialogue 'deliberative' and how much time needs to be given to providing information to participants compared to time for discussion?
- To what extent should dialogue processes include non-deliberative techniques such as polling techniques, and attempt quantitative analysis to present what is inherently a qualitative process (e.g. measures of scale to demonstrate strength of feeling)?
- What forms of analysis and reporting are appropriate and what role do participants have in reporting dialogue results (e.g. reports based on agreements reached collectively among or with participants)?
- What will count as sufficiently robust processes to enable decision makers to be able to know how and when to use dialogue results with confidence in decision making alongside other forms of evidence?

1.5   A pragmatic approach to the use of the Framework is expected and recommended. Not all the questions identified here need to be addressed fully in all circumstances and, in many cases, evidence of every activity may not be required. Equally, however, the Framework is designed to provide sufficient guidance to be of

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[4] Government Social Researchers (GSR) Code. See http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/networks/gsr/gsr-code
[5] HM Treasury (2012) *Quality in Qualitative Evaluation: a framework for assessing research evidence* (supplementary Magenta Book guidance).

value even in complex and contentious projects where the level of evidence required is likely to be higher.

1.6   The Framework provides a set of questions on public dialogue practice designed to stimulate thinking and open up design options. It is not intended to be prescriptive, limiting or bureaucratic. The focus throughout is on the most commonly used design and delivery elements in many public dialogue projects. It is loosely structured around the elements of the Sciencewise Guiding Principles: context, scope, delivery, impact and evaluation.

1.7   Throughout the Framework detailed notes have been provided to illustrate or demonstrate particular points. These are not definitive and are provided to illustrate how the particular issue has been addressed in the past.

2.   USE OF THE FRAMEWORK

2.1   The potential users of the Framework are expected to include those designing, delivering and evaluating public dialogue in practice as well as public bodies commissioning public dialogue.

The main message for all potential users of this Framework is the importance of a robust and transparent methodology throughout the design, delivery and evaluation of dialogue projects, to ensure the results can be used with confidence in policy making.

2.2   We hope that the Framework will be of use in the following ways:

a.   Before starting a public dialogue, as an introduction to the basic building blocks of quality public dialogue for those interested in using dialogue to inform policy and decision making, to enable them to consider the use of dialogue in their own work by providing an understanding of the key elements of design and delivery.

b.   At the beginning of designing and delivering a public dialogue, as a checklist for practitioners and to provide a clear mechanism for understanding the criteria against which their work is likely to be evaluated.

c.   During the design phase of a public dialogue, as a checklist to enable policy makers and others to test the robustness of the design of a specific dialogue process. If all aspects of the Framework are addressed it would be expected that the robustness of the process would withstand scrutiny.

d.   In planning and delivering an evaluation of a public dialogue, as a checklist against which to formally evaluate the quality and good practice of dialogue projects. The Framework is designed to build on and be used alongside other principles and guidance for evaluation including the Sciencewise Guiding Principles.

e.   As a contribution to the wider development of methods to assess the quality of public participation more generally - beyond the field of policy involving science and technology and the specific definition of public dialogue used in this document.

3.   SCOPE OF THE FRAMEWORK

Quality standards in public dialogue

3.1   Public dialogue is being used increasingly by national government and other public bodies to inform policy development and decision-making[6]. By March 2016 the Sciencewise programme alone had supported 55 public dialogue projects with Government departments and agencies. There is growing evidence of the value of public dialogue in terms of enhancing the quality of public policy decision-making and risk management[7]. There is also growing understanding of when and where public dialogue can be of most value in policy and decision-making (it is not appropriate in all circumstances).

3.2   As the use of public dialogue has grown, the quality of the processes used has come under increasing scrutiny. All public dialogue projects supported by the programme are independently evaluated to assess their quality and outcomes, creating an extensive practice evidence base. However, as yet there has not been an agreed evaluation framework specifically designed for the particular characteristics of public dialogue that link participation processes with the impacts on policy decisions. Questions have remained about the *definition of dialogue quality* among commissioners, practitioners, researchers, policy makers, evaluators and public participants. All those involved share an interest in ensuring that dialogue processes are robust and rigorous according to some agreed quality standards.

3.3   There has been some interest in adopting the quality standards already developed for qualitative social research[8] to guide and assess public dialogue. There are certainly many overlapping areas of interest between qualitative social research and public dialogue on issues including framing, design, sampling, data collection, analysis and reporting. This guidance draws on those standards where appropriate.

3.4   These qualitative research quality standards, while they may be useful in assessing some aspects of public dialogue design and delivery, are not sufficient to cover all aspects of public dialogue processes. For example, public dialogue processes often have numerous different objectives. In common with research and other evidence commissioned by Government, dialogue may be intended to inform, influence and improve decision making and public policy. However, dialogue objectives may also include opening up policy making, learning (including about public engagement), building relationships (including with stakeholders), strengthening democracy and empowering participants.

3.5   Given such a wide range of instrumental, substantive and normative motivations for public dialogue[9], a range of new frameworks for assessment is needed. This new Framework therefore draws on qualitative research quality standards where appropriate and also on standards from other fields including market research, deliberative public engagement, public participation, consultation, stakeholder engagement, and evidence for policy making[10].

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[6] For example see RPA (2015) *Evaluation of the Sciencewise Programme 2012-2015.*
[7] Clarke, Robin (2015) *Valuing dialogue: economic benefits and social impacts.*
[8] For example, HM Treasury (2012) *Quality in Qualitative Evaluation: a framework for assessing research evidence* (supplementary Magenta Book guidance).
[9] There are various definitions of normative, substantive and instrumental rationales and imperatives for public engagement including Andy Stirling (2012) 'Opening Up the Politics of Knowledge and Power' in *Bioscience.* PLoS Biol 10(1). London School of Economics.
[10] See Annex 2 for references

Formalising quality standards for public dialogue

3.6   There has been extensive debate about the extent to which any assessment of the quality of public dialogue can or should be standardised.

3.7   Public dialogue will essentially always be designed as a 'bespoke' approach to address a particular problem or question and involves a range of complex aspects. Each process has to take into account that each of the following elements of a dialogue process will affect the quality of the process and thus the products and the final outcome[11]:

3.8   The first crucial factor in the design, delivery and evaluation of any public dialogue is *purpose* – what is the dialogue expected to do and to achieve? The methods used should be chosen to best achieve the purpose, as well as achieving the desired products and outcomes (e.g. reports, new relationships, improved policy). The approach and methods used for the design, delivery and reporting of dialogue need to be *fit for purpose*: form follows function.

3.9   The difficulty with defining quality in public dialogue is that the answer very often given is 'it depends' because the quality of dialogue depends on a complex mix of elements especially:
•   the purpose and objectives, outputs and products, and outcomes and results
•   the past and present context - the circumstances in which the dialogue is taking place
•   who needs to be involved, including public participants, stakeholders, contractors
•   the funding and personnel resources available
•   the timescale - often dependent on timing of policy decisions.

3.10   In addition, definitions of quality can depend on the subjective element of what will be credible to those using the results. Definitions of this type of credibility can vary significantly, as we know from numerous practical evaluations, and are crucial to the effectiveness of dialogue in informing and impacting policy decisions.

3.11   Most importantly, any assessment of the quality of the public dialogue depends on a balance of all these aspects within particular circumstances. This Framework therefore is focused on providing some basic quality thresholds to enable some initial generic assessments of quality to be made, rather than aiming to be comprehensive or prescriptive.

3.12   There is no suggestion in the following Framework that bespoke dialogue processes are no longer required. However, from experience, from practice and from formal evaluations, there is now sufficient learning and shared understanding in the field about 'what works', 'what is appropriate and ethical' and 'what is credible' to enable some judgements to be made about what is a valid and good quality public dialogue process.

4.   LIMITS TO THE FRAMEWORK

4.1   Public dialogue practice is constantly evolving and developing with new approaches and methods emerging all the time. This Framework can therefore only represent established good practice around tried and tested work and does not cover emerging and innovative techniques including digital methods (e.g. online deliberation and the use of social media and websites within public dialogue). It is hoped that the

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[11] Warburton, Diane (2008) *Deliberative public engagement: nine principles.* Involve / National Consumer Council; see http://www.involve.org.uk/?s=Nine+Principles

Framework will be developed further to reflect new and different forms of practice as they emerge and are more widely used.

4.2   The Framework does not attempt to provide guidance on wider public engagement methods or other forms of dialogue beyond the Sciencewise programme. There is substantial existing material available on many other methods[12], which are also continuously evolving and developing in new and innovative ways.

4.3   The Framework does not provide sufficient information for the *detailed* design, delivery and evaluation of a public dialogue project. Links have been provided to further guidance where this is available but the Framework will be of most use to those who want a quick introduction to the issues and activities involved, or are seeking a basic checklist to support existing knowledge.

4.4   The Framework also does not provide all answers to all concerns and questions about public dialogue. There is certainly much more to be said about definitions (e.g. 'public' or 'publics'[13], 'citizens' or 'public'), about ethics and about the practicalities of sampling and data protection, and about the politics of public dialogue. The Framework is essentially a set of questions and possible solutions.

4.5   We also recognise that no framework can hope to capture fully the true spirit of public dialogue. For many of those engaged in public dialogue the motivations, rewards and sense of what constitutes quality are deeper than can be fully expressed in a mechanistic framework. Public dialogue can be a transformative, challenging, emotional process. It can be as much about bringing truth, beauty and democracy to policy making as it is about bringing new insights and good sense from public participants to specific policy discussions. We have tried to reflect some of these qualities where possible, but these issues too may benefit from further work.

4.6   The aim is to provide a baseline of knowledge about what constitute the basic requirements for a good quality dialogue process. Even within the Framework presented below there are options and alternatives for answering the questions, because one size will never fit all.

4.7   While recognising these limitations, our hope is that this Framework will enable further discussion and agreement in future on what constitutes a widely accepted quality standard for a public dialogue process which produces trustworthy results that can be used with confidence in policy development and decision making.

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[12] Sciencewise (2016) *Public Views to Inform Policy.*; Cabinet Office (2016) *Open Policy Making Toolkit*. https://www.gov.uk/guidance/open-policy-making-toolkit; *Participation Compass* at http://participationcompass.org/
[13] For example: *Which publics? When?*,by Alison Mohr, Sujatha Raman, Beverley Gibbs. Sciencewise 2013.

5. FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING QUALITY IN PUBLIC DIALOGUE UNDER THE SCIENCEWISE PROGRAMME

CONTEXT. The conditions leading to the dialogue are conducive to the best outcomes		
Activity / output	**Appraisal question**	**Quality indicator (features for consideration)**
Timing	Did the dialogue happen at the right time to inform and influence the relevant decisions?	Rationale for the use of public dialogue at the specific time it was done (*e.g. upstream in the policy process, focused on policy review or implementation, feeding into particular resourcing decisions*) Evidence that the dialogue was timed to feed into the relevant decisions as early as possible in the decision process, at a point at which the decision could be influenced by the dialogue results and the relevant decisions had not already been taken
Boundaries of influence	What was the potential for and limits to informing and influencing decisions?	Evidence of clarity and openness about exactly what could be informed and influenced by the dialogue, and what could not Evidence that there was *potential* for change, that decision makers were willing to be influenced Evidence that dialogue discussions were not unduly restricted by what could or could not inform future decisions, and that participants could raise the issues that they felt were important
Context setting	Was the dialogue set within the context of relevant current, previous or parallel activities?	Evidence that the issues being discussed were understood in relation to existing knowledge about public and political concerns on the main and related topics and concerns *(e.g. review of existing public views on the topic, desk research, literature review, discussions with an Oversight Group and/or other key stakeholders)* Evidence that consideration had been given to related current initiatives on the topic, especially those involving public participants *(e.g. links with formal online / written consultations)* Evidence identifying any key external factors that could have influenced the tone and results of the dialogue *(e.g. significant media coverage of the topic)*

SCOPE AND DESIGN. The parameters of the dialogue are appropriate and are reflected in the agreed scope and design		
Activity / output	**Appraisal question**	**Quality indicator (features for consideration)**
Rationale for using public dialogue	What was the rationale for using public dialogue?	Evidence that the rationale for using public dialogue (rather than any other engagement / research methods) was clear, including how the dialogue results were expected to be used alongside other inputs to decision making
Governance and management	Were the governance and management arrangements appropriate and effective to meet the objectives?	Rationale for the role and membership of an oversight group[14] for the design and delivery of the project, with rationale for the inclusion (or not) of any external stakeholders to provide expertise on overall framing, process and content, design and delivery *(e.g. the involvement of funders, decision makers, scientists and other specialists and other stakeholders).* Evidence of effective engagement of any oversight group *(e.g. members attend meetings provide feedback in other ways)* Evidence of effective input by any oversight group *(e.g. influenced materials, design, identified or acted as specialists to be involved in work with public participants)* Evidence of clear roles and responsibilities being agreed and implemented, including how changes to the project design were discussed and accommodated. Evidence of clarity of ownership and ultimate responsibility for ensuring the project met its objectives, including sufficient allocation of time for this. Evidence of wider stakeholder engagement (or not) to help widen buy-in to the process and results *(e.g. early in the dialogue to input to framing of the topic and questions to be addressed; and/or at the end of the dialogue to discuss how the dialogue results can be taken forward)* Evidence of clarity of decision making within the project organisation and management to ensure that the objectives were met, including clarity of roles and responsibilities for decisions and actions

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[14] Most dialogue projects have a formal oversight or advisory group, providing a mechanism for the involvement of relevant stakeholders in project design and delivery

		(e.g. between commissioning bodies, contractors, advisers and evaluators on issues such as avoiding bias and building relationships with participants during and after the dialogue)
		Evidence of an appropriate and efficient internal management team for the day-to-day organising of the project
Resources	Were the resources of time, skills and funding sufficient to meet the objectives?	Rationale for the budget and timescale allocated to the dialogue, and the particular skills needed for design, delivery, specialist input, analysis and reporting, and clarity on the impacts any scarcity of resources had on the quality of the outputs. Rationale for the design of the dialogue and any associated activities to meet the agreed objectives, given the time, skills and funding available *(e.g. resource implications of any associated activities such as surveys to increase numbers of participants and provide triangulation of results)*
Involvement of relevant and senior decision makers	Were the relevant and senior decision makers involved, at the right times and in the right ways, and were they adequately briefed and supported?	Rationale for the approach to working with decision makers *(e.g. to build understanding during the project, gain buy-in to the process and dialogue results; and/or build capacity for working with public dialogue)* Evidence that sufficiently senior decision makers were involved throughout the process to provide organisational support to the process and results in principle and practice, and that they were prepared, willing and able to use the dialogue results to inform their decisions Evidence that the appropriate decision makers were sufficiently involved in the framing, design and delivery of the dialogue to understand the nature of the process and be confident that the results could be used in decision making *(e.g. attended at least one dialogue event in person; and were aware of the timing, form and purpose of the dialogue results so these could be used in decision making)* Rationale for the role of decision makers attending dialogue events and evidence that they were sufficiently briefed and supported *(e.g. the extent to which they were 'observers', or were 'participants' in the discussions – 'dialogue' implies greater involvement than observation; provision of explicit briefing for the role agreed)* *Note: 'Use of the results' is not intended to imply that decisions makers would be bound by dialogue results; however, it is*

		expected that the results would be considered in future decision making.
Clear purpose	Was the purpose of the dialogue clear from the start? Were the objectives appropriate and clearly stated?	Evidence that the purpose was clear and agreed among relevant stakeholders, and that different motivations and expectations among those involved were articulated and understood

Evidence that the stated objectives identified what the dialogue was expected to *achieve* (not just what it would *do*)

Evidence that the purpose and objectives were framed in a way that ensured that the dialogue would meet the required quality standards, including informing specific decisions

Rationale for the outputs, outcomes and impacts sought from the dialogue, including their extent and limits, and how they were expected to be achieved

Evidence of plans for how, where, when and by whom the results of the dialogue were expected to be used in informing decisions

Evidence that any internal objectives were made explicit and shared *(e.g. organisational and individual capacity building)*

Evidence that the stated purpose and objectives were expressed in language that could be used without amendment with public participants and all other stakeholders involved, so that a clear and shared understanding could be developed

Discussion of how the objectives were appropriate in the particular context and circumstances of the dialogue |
| Topic focus | What was the main topic focus of the dialogue? | Rationale for the main topics and issues to be covered by the dialogue, and what was included and excluded

Evidence of how the main topics and issues to be covered by the dialogue were identified and agreed *(e.g. through an oversight group, desk research, wider stakeholder engagement)* |

		Evidence of how public participants were able to suggest additional topics (or not), and to comment on and discuss any issues that went beyond any initially agreed topics during the dialogue process
Questions to be addressed	Were the main questions to be addressed by the dialogue open, clear and appropriate?	Rationale for and framing of the main questions that the dialogue addressed Evidence of how the main questions to be addressed by the dialogue were identified and agreed *(e.g. through an oversight group, desk research, wider stakeholder engagement)* Evidence of how public participants were able to suggest additional questions (or not), and to comment on and discuss issues that went beyond any initially agreed questions during the dialogue process
Level of public participant influence	What level of influence were public participants expected to have over the process and outputs?	Rationale for the extent to which public participants could influence the design, process and outputs of the dialogue *NOTE: Public dialogue can be designed to have varying degrees of participant influence or control, including in relation to the issues discussed and the ways in which the key points of discussion recorded and reported. Options include:* • *points being elicited, extracted and reported by external facilitators* • *points being shared and owned by and with the public participants[15]* Evidence that the nature of the expected relationship (including limits) had been explained clearly and agreed with public participants
Delivery personnel	How was the responsibility for detailed design and delivery agreed and managed?	Rationale for use and role of external contractors in detailed design and delivery, or use of internal personnel only Evidence of the appropriate engagement of stakeholders, including through an oversight group, in decisions about the appointment or procurement of the personnel required Evidence of the appropriate planning and methods to recruit internal staff or procure external contractors *(e.g. clear timetable built into project timings; developing a specification for the project and an invitation to*

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[15] The differences in levels of participant influence can be based on practical and ethical considerations. For example, see Robert Chambers (1992) *Rural Appraisal: rapid, relaxed and participatory*. IDS Discussion paper 311, University of Sussex

		tender (ITT); open and fair recruitment or procurement processes; clarity about who will assess tenders and make decisions about appointment; clarity about contractual and financial arrangements)
Type of public participants	How appropriate, robust and credible was the sample design for the selection / recruitment in relation to the *types* of public participants to be involved to meet the objectives of the dialogue?	Rationale for the <u>overall approach</u> to involving particular members of the public to meet the objectives (*e.g. recruitment to reach participants who had no previous knowledge or interest in the topic, or an invitation process to reach interested and knowledgeable participants*) Rationale for selection of participants to provide a credible diversity and mix of participants and the basis for inclusions and exclusions (*e.g. 'illustrative' demographic mix; 'broadly' representative of the relevant population; credibility with decision makers*) *NOTE: The Sciencewise Guiding Principles state that the participants should "Be appropriately 'representative' – the range of participants may need to reflect both the range of relevant interests, and pertinent socio demographic characteristics (including geographical coverage)."* *It would be expected that any dialogue project would at least reflect the current gender, age range and ethnicity percentages of the specific population (e.g. for the UK population as a whole or the locality where there are local workshops); educational qualifications may be used as a proxy for social class (see Note 1 at end of the Framework for some baseline figures that could be used)* Rationale for whether and how special efforts were needed and made to ensure the inclusion of specific groups (*e.g. those most affected by the topic; or that might be 'hard to reach' through normal recruitment approaches*) *NOTE: Specific characteristics may be important in deciding the sample of public participants to be recruited, depending on the topic being discussed. For example, the dialogue on a DNA database recruited more black and minority ethnic (BME) participants than the relevant percentage of the population as BME groups were considered to be potentially disproportionately affected; and the Drugsfutures dialogue recruited some participants on the basis of specific knowledge, experience or family situation related to the use of drugs.* Rationale for and evidence of approach to maximising inclusion and avoiding unintended exclusion (*e.g. multi-lingual; diversity of views and values; specialised recruitment including of 'hard to reach' groups; physical and resource barriers addressed; financial incentives paid*)
Type of public participants		

		NOTE: Financial incentives are usually paid to public participants in public dialogue projects. Incentives are usually paid at around £50 - £80 per day (sometimes more), plus expenses (where appropriate). There are debates about the payment of incentives at all, and levels of payment. However, this approach has been found to be effective in encouraging people from a wide range of backgrounds to attend dialogue events, beyond those with an existing interest.
Numbers of public participants	How appropriate, robust and credible was the sample design for the selection / recruitment in relation to the *numbers* of public participants to be involved to meet the objectives of the dialogue?	Rationale for the number of public participants to be involved in the dialogue *NOTE: Qualitative processes such as public dialogue cannot and should not be assessed on the basis of quantitative criteria (e.g. number of participants). It is the quality of the ideas developed through deliberation, of the discussion and of the outputs that are important. This quality is more likely to be achieved through depth and length of discussion than more or less participants.* *The key factor is that the number of participants should be appropriate for the purpose, context (e.g. how contentious the topic is) and resources of time and money. The number of participants also has to be credible to key stakeholders, so they can use the dialogue results with confidence.* *Larger numbers do not necessarily provide greater credibility. Relatively small numbers of participants discussing issues for longer periods and at greater depth may be entirely credible (e.g. juries of 12 in the UK legal system).* *As a rough guide to numbers in past public dialogue projects, of the 21 projects supported by Sciencewise and completed between 2014 and early 2016 for which we have data:* • *6 had over 100 public participants* • *6 had 50 – 100 public participants* • *8 had 30 – 50 public participants* • *1 had less than 30 (i.e. 25 public participants)* *Of these 21, 5 also included a digital element to reach larger numbers.* Evidence of and rationale for the approach taken to recruitment and sampling, and how the specification for recruitment was agreed and implemented *NOTE: Participants for dialogue projects are usually recruited on the street specifically for the dialogue project by professional recruitment agencies using agreed questionnaires, then the samples adjusted to meet demographic and any opinion characteristics agreed in the recruitment specification. This is generally seen to be an appropriate approach to provide credibility although other options may also be considered.*

		Rationale for the use of a range of methods to increase participation beyond the numbers attending deliberative workshops *(e.g. digital approaches to reach larger numbers)*
Number and location of workshops	How appropriate, robust and credible was the number and location of workshops with public participants in meeting the objectives?	Rationale for number and location of workshops with public participants in order to meet the dialogue objectives *NOTE: Gaining the participation of people from a wide geographical spread can be achieved in different ways – bringing people from across the UK together at a single event or holding workshops in different geographical locations. Both have timing and cost implications* *Qualitative processes, such as public dialogue, do not usually formally compare responses from participants in different geographical locations. The use of a range of different locations is related to the diversity of people that can be easily reached through local events and the consequent richness of outputs.*
Diverse perspectives	How was the inclusion of a diversity of perspectives ensured to reduce unwanted bias?	Rationale for and evidence of the approach to ensuring that a diverse range of views was included in the design and delivery of the dialogue *(e.g. the role of external stakeholders in the process to reduce bias, ensure broad framing, include less often heard voices and values, and cover the breadth of interests around the topic)* Evidence of how openness, transparency and participation (and confidentiality where appropriate) were achieved throughout the project
Specialist involvement	Were the right number and type of scientists and other specialists involved in the right ways?[16]	Rationale for the role of specialists in the dialogue events *(e.g. to provide information to support the discussion, or as participants in the discussion; 'dialogue' implies more than information provision)* Rationale for the number, choice, use, diversity of perspectives, knowledge and skills of specialists involved in providing scientific and technical information support to the participants in dialogue events *(e.g. including sceptics / devil's advocates; those with very different views on the topics)* Evidence that specialists invited to provide information to dialogue events were adequately briefed and supported, to enable them to provide appropriate information at the right time and in the right way

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[16] Sciencewise (2013) *Involving Specialists in Public Dialogue.*

Design of deliberative workshops	How appropriate, robust and credible was the design of the deliberative workshops with the public (fit for purpose)?	Rationale for and evidence of how the overall approach to the design of the deliberative workshops meets the agreed dialogue objectives (fit for purpose) *NOTE: Different overall approaches can be applied to deliberative workshops. For example:* • *Professional personnel design a process; work with specialists who present agreed briefing information; facilitate discussions among participants; gather and analyse data on participant views; produce a report and recommendations. This approach would require the use of rigorous qualitative social research-based standards for sampling, data collection, analysis and reporting.* • *Professional personnel design a process which is open to negotiation with participants; work with specialists who provide agreed briefing information; facilitate discussions among participants, specialists and decision makers; discussions are recorded visibly in the event (e.g. flip charts) and conclusions agreed within the workshop; reports summarise agreed priorities and issues; reports may be checked again with participants prior to completion. This approach has more similarities with participatory appraisal and stakeholder dialogue techniques.* Rationale for the choice of methods used in the dialogue project overall, and extent to which data from different (including non-deliberative) methods were triangulated to strengthen robustness of results (*e.g. a mix of deliberative workshops, open public meetings, opinion polls, formal written and online consultations, other digital engagement[17]*) Evidence that the methods were appropriate to enable open, creative and productive discussions at deliberative workshops including sufficient time for participants to receive relevant and useful new information, discuss and think about implications (ideally with a break between events) and come to conclusions Discussion of limitations of the workshop design and the implications of these limitations for the dialogue results; clear presentation of the limitations in dialogue reports

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[17] This mixed methods approach was used in the Mitochondrial replacement dialogue among other projects

Activity / output	Appraisal question	Quality indicator (features for consideration)
Meeting aspirations	How was the dialogue able to cover the aspirations and concerns of those involved?	Rationale for how the dialogue project overall was designed to identify and address the aspirations and concerns of those involved (*e.g. dialogue events; governance*) Rationale for the dialogue design and methods in relation to the objectives, budget and timescale (*e.g. decisions about numbers and locations of events, one-off or reconvened events, length of time for events, numbers of participants at each event*) Rationale for any changes to the dialogue design during the process to meet participants' interests
Ethics, anonymity and data protection	Was due attention given to ethics, anonymity and data protection?	Rationale for approach to ethics in relation to the ethical challenges of the project including any frameworks used[18] and evidence of reflexivity[19] Evidence of approaches to anonymity, consent procedures, management and confidentiality of data Discussion of measures to avoid potential harm or difficulty for participants, and to protect participants

DELIVERY. The implementation of dialogue events represents best practice

Activity / output	Appraisal question	Quality indicator (features for consideration)
Focus on addressing agreed dialogue objectives	How well did the dialogue project address its original purpose and objectives?	Clear statement of project purpose and objectives, agreed with relevant stakeholders and shared with public participants; evidence of reasons for any changes in objectives Explanation of limitations of project in achieving the objectives and how these affect the interpretation of results (*e.g. because of gaps in sample coverage; missed or unresolved areas of discussion; time and resource constraints*)
Fair and balanced dialogue	Was the process fair, with no in-built bias?	Rationale for the approach to the roles of different internal and external stakeholders in designing the form and content of the dialogue, to ensure the process was fair and had no in-built bias

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[18] There are numerous research ethics frameworks that can be adapted for use in public dialogue projects. See the Government Social Research (2011) *Professional Guidance on Ethical Assurance for Social Research in Government*; the *Social Policy Association Guidelines of Research Ethics*, SPA (2009) and the SRA (2003) *Ethical guidelines,* Social Research Association.

[19] Reflexivity: public policy and related public dialogue are concerned with social values, which are inevitably affected by personal values and beliefs. Those responsible for dialogue projects should reflect critically on these issues and be transparent about methods to enable open scrutiny and review of the process. SPA (2009) *Social Policy Association Guidelines on Research Ethics*, SPA.

| | | Evidence of how a sufficient number and diversity of perspectives was brought into the planning and delivery of the dialogue to give robustness and credibility to the process

Rationale for managing the split of responsibilities between facilitators - whose role is to manage and protect the integrity of the process, on behalf of participants, and specialists - whose role is to provide technical information on the content of the topic

NOTE: Public dialogue workshops would normally involve a clear distinction between the roles of facilitators and specialists, to avoid any potential for the views / background of specialists influencing the direction of discussions unfairly:

- *The facilitators' role is to safeguard the process and the interests of the participants, enabling all participants to have their say, understand and question others' claims and knowledge, with no set of views dominating*
- *The specialists' role is to provide information and answer questions on the technical aspects of the topic* |
|---|---|---|
| Appropriate numbers and types of participants reached | How appropriate, robust and credible was the set of participants involved? | Detailed profile of the achieved sample (i.e. final numbers and types of participants involved), the extent to which the recruitment specification and target samples were met and the extent to which this was appropriate to the objectives of the project

Description of extent to which the participants reflected the wider population (however defined) in terms of gender, age and ethnicity balance (as a minimum)

Description of any other demographic, attitudinal or behavioural factors that were particularly important in relation to the topic

Discussion of the implications for project findings and conclusions of any missing coverage in participants

Discussion of methods of sampling and recruitment and how these might have affected participation / coverage; evidence of efforts to reduce barriers to participation *(e.g. physical access, translation etc)* |

		Discussion of the credibility of the process given the balance between time and budget and numbers of participants, locations, length of discussions etc
		Evidence of the credibility of the actual sample with those expected to use the final dialogue results
		Evidence of level of retention of participants throughout the process (e.g. numbers dropping out and when)
Respect for public participants	Were public participants treated with respect, and sufficiently supported?	Evidence of how the objectives of the dialogue, and the extent and limits to the potential impacts of the dialogue, were shared with participants
		Evidence (including from participants) of how respect for participants was demonstrated in the dialogue events (*e.g. treated with care, openness, encouragement, offered opportunities for meaningful contribution, input acknowledged and valued etc*)
		Evidence (including from participants) of honest and full communications with the public participants throughout the process (*e.g. about the extent of and limits to the expected influence of the results of the dialogue; how the results will be used; how they will continue to be kept informed*)
		Evidence from participants of satisfaction with the process, and willingness to be involved again
Sufficient time for deliberative discussions	Was there sufficient time and support for public participants to take on new information, develop thinking and discuss the issues?	Evidence of and rationale for approach to ensuring there was sufficient time and support for participants to engage in deliberative discussions[20] so that they could become informed about the topics, reflect on their own and others' views, discuss and explore issues in depth with other participants and come to considered conclusions (*e.g. proportionally more time for discussion compared to time taken receiving information; time away from the discussions to reflect on and discuss the issues with others between dialogue events; reconvening events after a break of some days*)
		Evidence of and rationale for approach to ensuring that the discussions were long enough to allow those involved to probe the issues in sufficient depth to enable underlying key values, concerns

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[20] Warburton, Diane (2008) *Deliberative public engagement: nine principles.* Involve / National Consumer Council; see http://www.involve.org.uk/?s=Nine+Principles

		and aspirations to be articulated, shared and understood collectively, and thus inform conclusions
Sufficient information to support discussions	Did public participants have sufficient relevant information to enable them to contribute to the discussions?	Rationale for the overall approach to drafting, finalising and using materials to introduce relevant and useful new information to participants to support discussion Rationale for the methods used to introduce new information (*e.g. the use of written material, input in person from specialists on particular topics, videos etc*) Evidence of the approach to ensuring that participants were provided with information and views from a range of perspectives (*e.g. involvement of oversight group and/or wider stakeholder engagement in the drafting of materials*) Evidence of encouragement for participants to use information from other sources (where appropriate) to enable participants to extend their knowledge if they wished Rationale for the roles taken in presenting information to ensure neutrality and independence (*e.g. those presenting content information being independent from the commissioning / policy body; and independent from facilitators, who are responsible for process not content*)
Quality of facilitation	How well facilitated were the public discussions?	Evidence (including from participants) that all the participants were able to have their say and that all those who wanted to give their views were encouraged and supported to do so Evidence that no single person or view was allowed to dominate and that diversity of views, multiple perspectives and alternative positions were supported in the discussions Evidence of attention to disagreements, questions, outliers and exceptions during discussions Evidence that the discussions were well structured, open, focused on the key issues, and that all the key issues were covered

		Evidence of attention to details of logistics, timing etc[21]
Depth of facilitation	How well were the detail, depth, complexity and richness of the discussions encouraged, explored and probed with participants?	Exploration of contributors' terms, concepts and meanings, and discussion of explicit and implicit explanations of meanings Unpacking and portrayal of nuance / subtlety / intricacy Detection of underlying factors / influences Identification and discussion of patterns of association / conceptual linkages within data Identification and discussion of illuminating observations
Learning from practice throughout	How well were lessons from experience during the delivery of the dialogue identified and used to improve the process throughout?	Evidence of wash-up sessions after each event to immediately identify what worked well and less well, and what needed to be retained or changed in subsequent events Evidence that event feedback forms were analysed promptly (usually by evaluators), lessons learned and applied for subsequent events Evidence of other formative evaluation input provided throughout to aid continued improvement, without evaluators straying into co-design
Recording the dialogue	How well was the recording and data collection implemented?	Rationale for the approach taken to recording and collecting data from the discussions and conclusions from the dialogue from the deliberative discussions at dialogue events *NOTE: There are different options for data collection depending on the approach agreed, with different requirements for evidence:* • *Collaborative recording with participants. This would require evidence of how data recording was shared and agreed collectively with participants during the dialogue event (e.g. flip charts) and how priorities and conclusions were developed and agreed collectively with participants during dialogue events* • *Recording of participants. This would require evidence of who collected data and how (e.g. on laptops); how facilitators checked back with participants periodically during discussions to clarify key points and*

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[21] Sciencewise *Guidelines for Running meetings and Workshops.*

		procedures for data collection / recording, for later analysis
		Rationale for the approach to ensuring there were sufficient resources to fully capture the depth, detail and nuances of the public discussions to provide credible results (*e.g. note takers in addition to facilitators; audio recording; additional facilitators / note takers working across several small groups to pick up wider points; participant feedback on draft results; conventions for taking notes e.g. to distinguish verbatim recordings from note takers' commentary / analysis*)
		Discussion of how the methods or context may have influenced data collected (*e.g. timing, location, venue*)
		Demonstration of how error or bias may have arisen in data collection / reporting and how that was addressed (or not)
Capturing agreement, disagreement and uncertainty	How were agreement, disagreement and uncertainty among participants defined, identified and recorded?	Rationale for seeking to define and identify agreement among participants on a particular point[22] and/or to map out the range of views (*e.g. degrees of agreement found e.g. everyone agrees; participants can 'live with' an outcome; prepared to accept; not acceptable and needs more work to make progress; not acceptable and would provoke vetos on any attempt to progress[23]*)
		Evidence of openness about where there was a lack of agreement and there remained plurality of views and how the rationales and implications of diverging views were recorded and reported so that reasons for disagreement were covered as fully as collective statements
		Rationale for and evidence of choice of methods for identifying where there was and was not agreement in practice (*e.g. electronic polling in the room, sticky dots on propositions put forward*)
		NOTE: There are debates about the validity and value of polling / scoring within deliberative processes. Polling has worked well in some cases to provide robust evidence of views at a particular point in the process. It has also been used to mark specific points in discussion, providing individual feedback across a whole room, as the basis for further reflection and deliberation.

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[22] Public dialogue would not normally expect to *achieve* agreement, but users of dialogue results are often interested to know where there was agreement and where there was disagreement.
[23] Classification from the mediation / conflict resolution / consensus-building field, provided by Andrew Acland November 2014

		The dangers of this approach are well recognised (e.g. results can be taken out of context, results of numbers are more obvious and attractive to some audiences and can be misused). *However, decision makers are often very interested in strength of feeling on issues as well as where there is agreement or disagreement (some include this in the objectives of their dialogue). Carefully managed and reported, polling and scoring can work well, rather than inferring strength of feeling across all participants in other ways.*
Analysis of dialogue results	How was the approach to the analysis of dialogue results agreed, and how well was the analysis undertaken?	Rationale for approach to analysis of data, and evidence of effective analysis *NOTE: There are options for undertaking data analysis of dialogue results, depending on the approach taken to working with participants:* • *Analysis of data with participants. This will require evidence that analysis was undertaken collectively during the dialogue events, in collaboration with the participants, and that final results have been agreed with participants.* • *Analysis of participants' data. This will require evidence of the form of the original data (e.g. use of verbatim transcripts, observation or interview notes, documents etc); a clear rationale for choice of data management method / tool / package (e.g. thematic analysis; software package used); how descriptive analytic categories, classes, labels etc were generated and used; typologies / models of variation of views derived and discussed; identification of patterns of associations / linkages with divergent positions* *Some public dialogue projects use a combination of both these methods during and after dialogue events.*
Clear and coherent reporting of the dialogue results	How clear and coherent was the reporting of the dialogue?	Evidence of clear links between reporting, the aims and objectives of the dialogue and the key questions that were to be addressed Provides a narrative / story / clearly constructed thematic account and has structure and signposting that usefully guides readers through the commentary Provides clear links between dialogue objectives, methods, data collected, analysed and reported Provides accessible information for intended target audiences in lay language so that readers can make their own judgements about the status of the data and legitimacy of the findings

		Provides a short stand-alone Executive Summary, with key messages highlighted and summarised and conclusions focused around the aims and objectives of the dialogue
Clear links between data and conclusions in reporting dialogue results	How clear were the links between data, interpretation and conclusions?	Discussion of how explanations / theories / conclusions were derived - and how they relate to interpretations and content of original data; whether alternative explanations were explored; discussion of extent to which conclusions were developed with participants in the course of dialogue events or subsequently Clear differentiation between original data, analytical commentary and recommendations Clear links between analytic commentary and presentations of original data with appropriate use of quotes, photographs and other methods for demonstrating links between evidence and conclusions Discussion of how / why particular interpretation / significance is assigned to specific aspects of data - with illustrative extracts of original data where appropriate Display of conflicting views and how they lie outside the main propositions / theories / hypotheses / conclusions; or how those conclusions were revised to include them Description of data sources, historical and social / organisational context, locations or settings (*e.g. specific contextual factors that potentially affect the quality and nature of the dialogue process and results; use of data management methods that preserve context e.g. separation of reporting of findings from different categories of participants - such as public participants and stakeholders; explanation of origins of references*) Participants' perspectives / observations placed in personal context (*e.g. annotated with details of participant characteristics, such as location of event attended, or age etc - if relevant e.g. from specific events aimed at young people*)

Reporting of wider implications of dialogue results	How well explained was the scope for drawing wider inference from the dialogue results?	Discussion of what can and cannot be generalised to the wider population from which the sample is drawn, evidence to support any claims for wider inference and clarity on limits to drawing wider inference
		Discussion of the weight that can be given to the results as 'evidence'[24], compared to other sources (i.e. evidence from dialogue is different from but can be of equal value to evidence from other evidence traditions such as natural sciences Detailed description of the contexts in which the project was conducted to allow applicability to other contexts to be assessed
		Evidence of honesty about the limitations of the results, and any caveats readers / users should take into account in interpreting dialogue results
Participant involvement in reporting the dialogue results	How were public participants involved in the drafting and production of final results, if at all?	Description of and rationale for approach to gaining public participant input to the final results of the dialogue, or not *(e.g. results developed collaboratively with participants or data collected and results reported by others)*
		Evidence of how participants were involved in validating the results, and had the ability to challenge specific conclusions and overall results, or not
Sharing the dialogue results and final reports	How were those involved in the dialogue informed of the final results, and the use of those results?	Description of and rationale for approach to sharing the final reports and information about the impacts of the dialogue with those involved
		Evidence of how final reports were published and shared with all those involved in the commissioning, design and delivery of the dialogue (*e.g. public participants, members of oversight groups, specialists providing input to events, other stakeholders*)
		Evidence of follow-up communications with all participants to share information about how the results of the dialogue were disseminated and used in policy and decision making
IMPACT. The dialogue delivers the desired outcomes		

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[24] There is limited consensus on what constitutes good evidence, with judgements being socially and politically situated. The process of defining standards of evidence is developmental. See Sandra Nutley, Alison Powell and Huw Davies (2013) *What Counts as Good Evidence?,*Alliance for Useful Evidence, ESRC, Nesta.

Activity / output	Appraisal question	Quality indicator (features for consideration)
Achieving the purpose of the dialogue	How well did the dialogue achieve its original purpose and objectives?	Evidence that the dialogue achieved its original purpose and agreed objectives; evidence of reasons for any changes in objectives Explanation of limitations of project in meeting the original aims and objectives and how these limitations affect the interpretation of dialogue results (*e.g. because of gaps in sample coverage; missed or unresolved areas of discussion; time constraints*) Explanation of the extent to which the project met the original expectations of those responsible for the dialogue, of any failures to meet these expectations, and of the implications of the differences between expectations and actual outcomes
Dissemination of the dialogue results	How were the dialogue results disseminated?	Evidence of how, where and when the dialogue results were disseminated to those best placed to act on and learn from them Evidence of wider dissemination of dialogue results to other interested parties (*e.g. conference speeches, journal articles, blogs, etc*) Evidence that decision makers trusted the process and products of the dialogue sufficiently to be willing to disseminate the results to their networks
Credibility and use of dialogue results	How credible were the results to those who were expected to use them?	Results clearly linked to the purposes of the project, and the initiative or policy to which the results were directed Results / conclusions were supported by data / evidence, with clarity about how the conclusions were arrived at Results / conclusions 'made sense' / had a coherent logic Results presented or conceptualised in ways that offered new insights / alternative ways of thinking (where appropriate)

		Evidence that decision makers trusted the process and products of the dialogue sufficiently to be willing to use the results in decision making
Short and longer term impacts of the dialogue on policy and practice	What difference has the dialogue made to decisions on policy and practice in the short and longer term?	Credible / clear discussion of how the dialogue results have contributed new insights and increased knowledge and understanding *(e.g. influence on the knowledge, understanding attitudes and capacity of the public, policy makers and others on the topics and on the potential for public dialogue in informing policy and decision making in future)* Evidence of how, when, where and by whom the dialogue results had been used in achieving any specific changes to policy decisions or priorities (*e.g. priorities for action changed; new policy ideas developed; existing policy ideas dropped*) Evidence of how, when, where and by whom the results have been used to improve policy making (*e.g. better risk management; addressing logjams from conventional stakeholder engagement; policy quicker, easier and cheaper to implement*) Description and discussion of the extent to which the project led to organisational change, collaboration, networking, broader participation and co-operation in relation to public engagement in policy (*e.g. improved relationships with stakeholders, cross-departmental collaborations)* Evidence of plans to maximise the use of the dialogue results in the longer term, to continue to influence policy, decisions and practice Evidence of plans for tracking, checking and reporting longer term and wider impacts of the dialogue
Impacts on public participants	What difference has the dialogue made to the participants?	Evidence of changes to participants' knowledge and thinking about the topic Evidence of change to participants' views on public engagement, and their willingness to engage more in future
Unexpected impacts of the dialogue	Did the dialogue have any unexpected impacts?	Description and analysis of the extent to which the project achieved any unexpected impacts, and the value of those to the body running the dialogue, participants and other stakeholders

Reporting on impacts	How will immediate and longer term impacts be shared with participants and other stakeholders?	Clear and transparent reporting mechanisms to demonstrate how the public participants' conclusions were taken into account in future plans and if not, why not *NOTE: Dialogue projects have shared information about planned impacts of public dialogue in various ways. For example:* • *The What Works Centre for Wellbeing produced a summary and work plan following the reporting of the dialogue results entitled "What you have told us and what we're going to do"[25].* • *The Chief Executive Officers of BBSRC and EPSRC[26] discussed the results of the Synthetic Biology and provided an agreed response to all participants and stakeholders which outlines agreed actions in five specific areas[27]*

EVALUATION. The dialogue process is shown to be robust and contributes to learning

Activity / output	Appraisal question	Quality indicator (features for consideration)
Clear scope for the evaluation	What was the scope of the evaluation?	Discussion of how the evaluation addressed the impacts and process of the dialogue, so that the outcomes could be identified and assessed and the lessons from the experience could contribute to good practice Discussion of the role of formative evaluation in the project, and evidence of any impacts of that role on the quality of the design and delivery of the project Discussion of the timing, scope and parameters of the evaluation (*e.g. that the evaluation started as early as possible in the design and delivery of the dialogue project, and continued throughout the process; evaluation delivered by an independent party*) Discussion of how the evaluation was designed to examine the extent to which the dialogue achieved the objectives and met the expectations of participants in the process Discussion of how the evaluation was designed to address the value, costs and benefits of the

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[25] What Works Centre for Wellbeing (2016) *What you have told us and what we're going to do*. https://whatworkswellbeing.files.wordpress.com/2016/02/summary-final.pdf
[26] Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) and Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)

		dialogue (*e.g. the balance of costs and benefits; feedback from those involved*)
Analytical frameworks and criteria	Were the analytical frameworks and criteria on which the evaluation was based clear?	Discussion of how assessments of effectiveness / evaluative judgements have been reached (i.e. on what basis) Discussion / evidence of the main assumptions / hypotheses / theoretical ideas on which the evaluation was based and how these affected the form, coverage or output of the evaluation Discussion of any formalised assessment criteria used, when and how generated and how applied (*e.g. this framework; Sciencewise guidance on project evaluations[28]*) Discussion of any unintended consequences of the evaluation, their impact and why they arose
Evaluation reporting	How the results of the evaluation are reported, disseminated and used?	Rationale for structure and form of evaluation reporting Discussion of the main audiences for the evaluation findings Discussion of the contribution of the evaluation to openness, transparency and accountability (*e.g. evaluation reports published*)

NOTE 1. As a rule of thumb, to check whether the sample of participants reflects the wider population, the following figures based on 2011 Census data can be used:
- *50/50 male female - actual percentages are approx 49% male, 51 % female*
- *For age groups from 20 upwards as a percentage of that sector of the population (total 46,758 million): 20-24 years: 9%; 25-34 years: 17%; 35-49 years: 28%; 50-64 years: 24%; 65 and over: 22%*
- *For highest level of qualifications achieved: Degree or above: 27%; 2+ A levels or equivalent: 12%; 5+ GCSEs or equivalent: 15%; 1-4 GCSEs or equivalent: 13%; Other qualifications: 10%; No qualifications: 23%*

Diane Warburton
Evaluation Manager for the Sciencewise programme
March 2016

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[28] Sciencewise (2017) *Guidance on evaluating projects*

ANNEX 1: THE PROCESS TO DEVELOP THE FRAMEWORK

1. The process used to develop this framework has included:

   - A review of quality standards from relevant related fields including qualitative research, market research, public participation, consultation, stakeholder engagement, and evidence for policy making (see Annex 2 for sources).

   - The framework as currently drafted draws particularly from the ***Quality in Qualitative Evaluation*** framework[29], and the ***Government's Approach to Public Dialogue on Science and Technology*** (usually referred to as the Sciencewise Guiding Principles).

   - A review and update of the Sciencewise Guiding Principles in 2013, with input from the Sciencewise Steering Group, particularly Professor Andy Stirling (University of Sussex) and Professor Kathy Sykes (University of the West of England). The revised version of the Principles was published in November 2013.

   - Sciencewise evaluation activities since 2008, including individual independent evaluations of all projects supported by Sciencewise, programme-wide evaluations of Sciencewise reviewing good practice, lessons and impacts from public dialogue, earlier Sciencewise research on the quality and value of public dialogue[30] and the independent evaluation of the Sciencewise programme published in 2015.

2. Consultations on the draft framework were undertaken at the following events:

   - The DECC/Defra Social Science Expert Panel meeting on 25 February 2015.

   - The Sciencewise Dialogue and Engagement Specialists (DESs) meeting on 12 February 2015.

   - A Sciencewise workshop with evaluation and delivery practitioners and researchers on 11 March 2015.

3. Individual discussions and comments in writing from the Sciencewise team; external design, delivery and evaluation practitioners; academic and public sector researchers; and public bodies with experience of commissioning public dialogue. See Contents page for acknowledgements of all contributions.

4. Further research and discussions between March 2015 and February 2016, and additional input from the Sciencewise team and others. The framework has also been part of the guidance for the independent evaluations required for all public dialogue projects supported by Sciencewise. Feedback from all these sources has also informed this latest edition of the Framework.

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[29] HM Treasury (2012) Quality in Qualitative Evaluation: a framework for assessing research evidence (supplementary Magenta Book guidance).
[30] Warburton, D. (2010) Evidence Counts. Understanding the value of public dialogue.

ANNEX 2: REFERENCES

This annex covers the documents referred to throughout the framework, plus additional material consulted to produce the framework.

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