

Assessment of the public dialogue on trust in digital identity services

Final report

November 2024



Navigator Consulting



GraphicScience

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Executive Summary

Background

Digital identity and attribute services allow individuals to prove who they are, or things about themselves such as their age, easily and securely without relying on physical documents. They can enable people to access services more easily, safeguard privacy and grow the economy.

The Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) is working to enable the use of trusted digital identities in the UK. Their stated intention is to enable people to access services more easily, safeguard privacy (by enabling people to better control how their data is handled by others) and grow the economy (by enabling digital transformation that saves people and businesses time and money).

To ensure that these services can be adopted confidently and in a secure way, DSIT is developing the UK digital identity and attributes trust framework, alongside supporting governance and legislative measures. The trust framework is a set of rules and standards that digital identity and attribute service providers can be independently certified against to demonstrate that they meet robust requirements, including on cyber security, fraud and inclusion. The framework is being developed iteratively, with its second prototype ('beta') version having been published in June 2022.

In order to further inform policy making, DSIT commissioned a public dialogue in partnership with Sciencewise, specialists in deliberative public dialogue which supports socially informed policymaking.

The focus of the dialogue was to explore public trust in digital identity services, resolving trade-offs related to digital identity policy, identifying specific issues that need to be addressed, and proposing policy solutions. It also involved interaction with a sandbox, a parallel testing exercise for digital identity service providers to test their software against specific questions using synthetic data.

The public dialogue on trust and digital identity services was published in 2023. The analysis for this assessment was conducted under the 2022 to 2024 Sunak Conservative government. Hopkins van Mil were appointed in late 2022, and delivered the dialogue between April and June 2023. The report on the dialogue was produced in August 2023 and published in February 2024.

Graphic Science, in collaboration with Navigator Consulting, were appointed in February 2023 to conduct an independent assessment of the project. The content of this assessment is independent, and is not endorsed by DSIT.

Project outcomes

Six long-term outcomes were identified for the project. Several of these had deadlines attached, which are specified below.

Outcome 1. The dialogue directly informs:

- The rules that providers of digital identities must follow in order to become certified against the UK digital identities and attributes trust framework (by end of 2023)
- The functions and oversight structure of a new governing body for digital identities, the Office for Digital Identities and Attributes (OfDIA) and how it interacts with the public (by end of 2023 and when it moves to its permanent home in 3-5 years)
- Planning for public communications initiatives to be delivered by the end of 2023.

This outcome is sufficiently advanced that it can be evaluated, and it has been met to a very large extent. However, the Data Protection and Digital Information Bill which would have legislated for these changes did not receive Royal Assent before the prorogation of Parliament ahead of the July 2024 General Election, and a bill cannot be carried over from one parliament to the next. It is, therefore, for incoming ministers to decide how to progress this work.

Outcome 2. The dialogue informs new initiatives and 'soft' interventions, such as:

- New pilots related to use cases or target users (in the next 5 years)
- Engagement with the market, civil society and regulators.

It is too early to say whether this outcome will be met, but its precursor medium term outcome was that the DSIT digital identity team would gain a better understanding of public perceptions of risks, opportunities and priorities for digital identities. This has been met, which suggests that this long-term outcome will be met in the future.

Outcome 3. Industry digital identity providers become certified against the digital identities and attributes trust framework.

This outcome is sufficiently advanced to be evaluated, and it has been met to a very large extent.

Outcome 4. Public dialogue with industry engagement is incorporated in more digital and data policy projects.

Outcome 5. The DSIT team develop further public engagement methods that involve industry engagement.

Outcome 6. DSIT civil servants increase their skills in deliberative methods.

It is too early to say whether these three outcomes will be met, but their precursor medium term outcome was that the DSIT digital identity team would increase their knowledge and confidence in using deliberative methods with the public to generate evidence for informing policy. This has been met, which suggests that these long-term outcomes will be met in the future.

In addition to these expected outcomes the project has also had an unexpected outcome, which is that there has been interest from other governments in the process and its outputs.

Delivery

This was a well-designed and efficiently delivered dialogue process. The project team worked extremely collaboratively throughout, and participants felt welcome and able to express their views in an environment that was both safe and intellectually challenging. This meant that they became immersed in the questions surrounding digital identity services and engaged deeply with them.

There were two ways in which participants were invited to set the agenda for the discussions. The first of these was via questions that were responded to by specialists and facilitators during sessions and on the online community. This was felt to have been broadly successful. The second was via an innovative process whereby participants' questions were explored by Digital Identity providers using a "sandbox". This was less successful.

The process suffered, however, from requiring participants to absorb too much information in too short a time: this is at least partly a consequence of the compressed timescale that it had to fit within in order to meet the legislative timetable.

Nevertheless, participants felt very positive about their experience in general, and they valued the discussions, and praised the way that they had been facilitated. They were able to focus on the key issues, without being distracted by outside factors such as logistics or administration.

Others involved in the process also had a positive experience: specialists who contributed to the process felt well-supported and recommended that others should get involved in future processes, and the Oversight Group reported feeling able to robustly question the structure and content of the dialogue.

Basic costs and future benefits

A formal cost-benefit analysis for this sort of work is impractical. However, it is possible to say that although this was a medium-sized dialogue process in budgetary terms, it involved 96 people in discussions over 22h30m of dialogue and deliberation. This is a relatively large number of people engaged over a relatively long period for a process of this type. Furthermore, it generated information that DSIT could not reliably have found any other way, and which some stakeholders felt was more radical than they would have expected. Just as importantly, it generated that information in a way that was relatively transparent to those (within government and industry) who will have to have trust in this dialogue process if it is to achieve its outcomes.

1. Introduction

1.1 Context

Digital identity and attribute services allow individuals to prove who they are, or things about themselves such as their age, easily and securely without presenting physical documents. They can enable people to access services more easily, safeguard privacy and grow the economy.

The Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) is working to enable the use of trusted digital identities in the UK. Their stated intention is to enable people to access services more easily, safeguard privacy (by enabling people to better control how their data is handled by others) and grow the economy (by enabling digital transformation that saves people and businesses time and money).

To ensure that these services can be adopted confidently and in a secure way, DSIT is developing the UK digital identity and attributes trust framework, alongside supporting governance and legislative measures. The trust framework is a set of rules and standards that digital identity and attribute service providers can be independently certified against to demonstrate that they meet robust requirements including on cyber security, fraud and inclusion. The framework is being developed iteratively, with its second prototype ('beta') version having been published in June 2022. There are already over 40 organisations using this certification process to prove they meet the right standards to do pre-employment, pre-rental and criminal record checks as part of right to work, right to rent and Disclosure and Barring Service schemes.

DSIT is working to put in place governance structures by establishing the Office for Digital Identities and Attributes (OfDIA), the new governing body for the digital identity market which will support the development of the market by helping develop trust and enable access to digital identities across the UK economy. The Data Protection and Digital Information Bill (No2) which would have legislated for these changes did not receive Royal Assent before the prorogation of Parliament ahead of the July 2024 General Election, and a bill cannot be carried over from one parliament to the next. It is, therefore, for incoming ministers to decide how to progress this work.

1.2 Commissioning a dialogue

In order to further inform policy making, DSIT commissioned a public dialogue in partnership with Sciencewise, specialists in deliberative public dialogue which supports socially informed policymaking.

The focus of the dialogue was to explore public trust in digital identity services, resolving trade-offs related to digital identity policy, identifying specific issues that need to be addressed, and proposing policy solutions.

Previous research by government departments had focused on wider principles that the public expected from digital identities and on issues of inclusion but had not included deliberation on detailed interventions, rules to be followed or governance design. This research suggested that the public is particularly interested in the ease of use, strong governance, transparency and inclusivity of digital identities.

This dialogue took place when the development of the trust framework and consultation with industry were well-advanced, and as a result the commissioners were able to outline clear pathways to impact.

A business case was developed by DSIT in collaboration with Sciencewise, which formed the basis for UKRI to match-fund the project. The objectives of the project as identified in the business case were:

- To engage a diverse selection of the public on what further policy would be needed to ensure digital identity providers and services are trustworthy
- To inform the rules in the UK Digital identity and attributes trust framework
- To inform the functions, oversight structure and interaction with the public of the governing body for digital identities (OfDIA). For example, this might include complaints structures, advisory functions, support for the public and anti-fraud functions
- To inform planning for public communications initiatives
- To test a new engagement strategy combining a public dialogue and Sandbox-style testing with industry.

As a result, the dialogue process sought to explore:

- What rules should be put on digital identity and attribute providers regarding user control of data, transparency, privacy and inclusion?
- What does the public think providers should and should not be allowed to do with users' data?
- What does the public expect from the use of technologies, including biometric technologies, in digital identities?
- How should digital identity and attribute services be monetised?
- What does a digital identity governing body need to have in order to be trustworthy?
- What risks does the public see in digital identities that must be mitigated? What should the general public know about digital identities?

Timetable for delivery and impact

The timing for a public dialogue is a tricky balancing act. The earlier it takes place the more meaningful decisions still remain to be made; the later it takes place the easier it is to find meaningful places for its outputs to go.

As noted above, this dialogue was at the later end of that scale. As described in the business case (on which UKRI's Sciencewise programme had based its decision to match-fund the project) "public dialogue would allow [DSIT] to engage with the public

around policy trade-offs related to digital identities. Examples of trade-offs the team has previously grappled with are: rules that strengthen the security of solutions might make them less privacy-enhancing or inclusive, rules that improve user agency over data use are often considered by industry as adding excessive friction for users, and providers that offer free services to users often use data for secondary purposes."

The business case argued that the dialogue would directly impact:

- The rules that providers of digital identities must follow in order to become certified against the UK digital identities and attributes trust framework (by end of 2023)
- The functions of the governing body [i.e. OfDIA] and how it interacts with the public (by end of 2023 and when it moves to its permanent home in 3-5 years)
- Planning for public communications initiatives to be delivered by the end of 2023."

The dialogue was also intended to impact "potential new initiatives and 'soft' interventions, such as: New pilots related to use cases or target users (in the next 5 years); Engagement with the market, civil society and regulators".

The relationships between the activities, objectives, and pathways to impact are articulated in a logic model developed as part of this assessment process (see section 1.5).

1.3 The Dialogue process

The public dialogue was delivered by Hopkins van Mil (HVM), which also delivered the secretariat function for the project team. The project was commissioned by the Digital Identity team of DSIT, in partnership with UKRI's Sciencewise programme. Project management was provided by DSIT.

Participants

Recruitment took place through a third-party agency, who have a database of people who sign up to take part in market research of this type. This meant that the participants were often familiar with market research work, albeit not in such depth. A detailed specification for representation from different demographic groups was provided by the contractors to the recruitment agency (see Appendix 2).

This specification was discussed within the project team meetings and by the Oversight Group. In order to counter issues around digital exclusion the delivery team provided support or equipment to participants where appropriate.

Project management

Day-to-day management was overseen by a project team drawn from Sciencewise, DSIT and HVM. An Oversight Group of 13 people (excluding the project team) met 4 times during the course of the project to give advice on the project's direction.

Assumptions

The logic model (see 1.4 below) identified that the dialogue process relied on a number of assumptions in order to achieve its intended outcomes. These were that:

- combining public dialogue with industry sandbox testing would strengthen the dialogue's recommendations by grounding them in what's technically possible and would build industry buy-in
- policy makers would directly apply lessons from the dialogue to key trade-offs in digital identity policy
- the project team was committed to disseminating findings and learnings with the wider digital policy making and analytical community in [DSIT], and had processes in place to enable this
- there would be clear and articulated pathways for the findings of the dialogue process to inform development of the three stated areas: the trust framework, the Office for Digital Identities and Attributes (OfDIA), future public engagement initiatives undertaken by the department
- diverse participants in the dialogue process would contribute to the digital identity services and providers being trusted by the public.


An initial baseline review of the dialogue process established that these assumptions were reasonable, with some caveats around the sandbox (see below).

Diverse perspectives

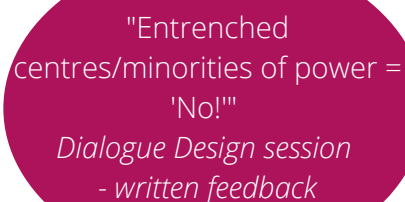
In order to achieve its outcomes the dialogue required several perspectives to be combined – commercial, governmental, third sector, and public.

The project could have been adversely affected by the team's move (in February 2023) from DCMS to DSIT, but senior civil servants were engaged throughout, including being present at the dialogue design workshop in March 2023.

There was a real effort on the part of HVM and DSIT to bring a variety of commercial, governmental and third sector voices into the conversation. From the start the project team worked hard to ensure that voices were brought in that reflected the breadth of views around digital identities. The dialogue design workshop was an early example of this approach, bringing together the project's Oversight Group, the project team, digital identity providers, civil society, and key stakeholders from government. This gave a space for those who were sceptical about digital identity services to share their concerns about the extent to which government would be willing to respond to the dialogue. When asked about the project risks their responses included:



"Not taking on board views b/c it is 'hard' not what gov't thinks, or not seen as important" *Dialogue Design session - written feedback*



"Entrenched centres/minorities of power = 'No!'"
Dialogue Design session - written feedback

Similarly, there was an impressive amount of work done by DSIT and HVM to recruit a variety of speakers with different standpoints to present during the process, and everyone who was approached accepted the invitation.

The sandbox

The innovative use of the sandbox was intended to give the opportunity to test how the outputs of the dialogue sessions would affect how real world commercial interests will act (as opposed to how they say they will act), which could then iteratively be fed back into the dialogue process. This method was untested and would be explored through the course of the dialogue.

Previous work

A lot of effort went into ensuring that relevant previous work informed the dialogue process, with the business case explicitly referencing previous research on public perspectives of data-driven technologies and digital identities by BritainThinks, the Ada Lovelace Institute, Royal Holloway University and the Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation.

1.4 Evaluating the process

Graphic Science, in collaboration with Navigator Consulting, were appointed in February 2023 to evaluate the project.

The data for this report has been collected via a primarily qualitative mixed methodology consisting of the following:

- A review of project documentation
- Observation of meetings of the project team and Oversight Group
- Observation of the Dialogue Design workshop
- Observation of the 6 pilot sessions and the 12 dialogue sessions
- Brief surveys of the public dialogue participants following each dialogue session
- A longer online survey of the public dialogue participants following the conclusion of the dialogue sessions;
- An online survey of the specialists who featured during the public dialogue sessions, either as the subjects of the lived experience films, or live during the sessions
- Interviews with public dialogue participants
- Post-project interviews with key members of the HVM team
- A representative of the Sandbox provider
- 3 members of the Oversight Group
- Key members of the project team
- A senior DSIT representative.

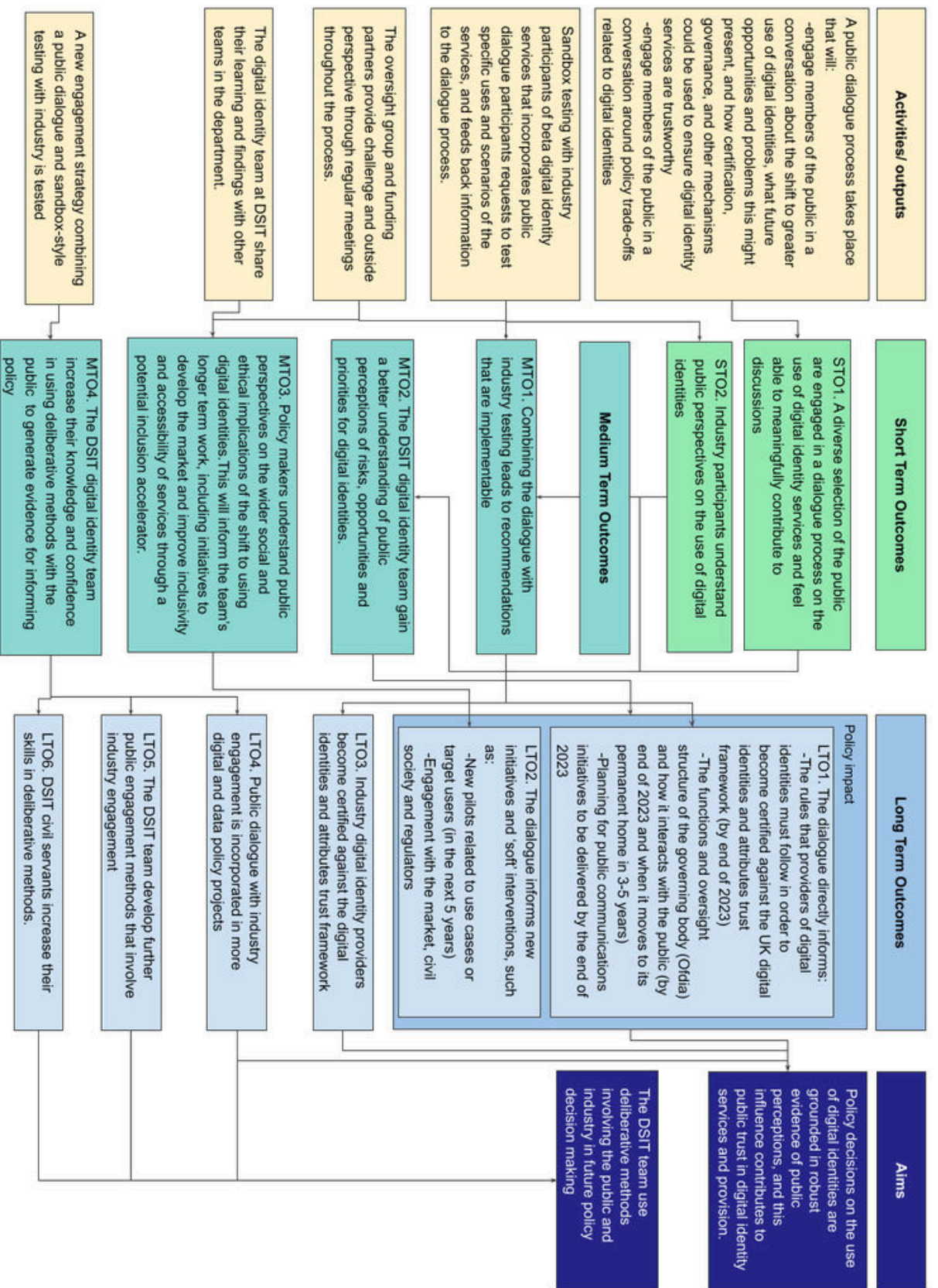
For evaluation instruments see Appendix 3.

Qualitative data from surveys, interviews and observations were transcribed and discussed within the evaluation team. This identified key elements which were then analysed thematically.

Logic model

In order to articulate the relationships between the dialogue activities and the intended outcomes and pathways to impact, we developed a logic model as part of the baseline review of the project.

Using this logic model, we developed an indicator framework which identified indicators of success for the outcomes and assumptions in the logic model. From this, we identified appropriate methods to explore and measure these indicators. The diagram below shows the logic model from the activities and outputs to the overall aims.



2. The dialogue

The dialogue was developed by HVM with input from the wider project team, and by participants at the dialogue design workshop which was held on 23rd March 2023.

2.1 The pilot process

The dialogue was tested with 8 participants in a pilot process with the following format:

- Context webinar 6-7:30pm 13th April
- Question review and scoping workshop 6-7:30pm 14th April
- Exploratory workshops 6-8pm on 17th, 18th & 20th April
- Final workshop 10am-12pm & 1-3pm on 22nd April

2.2 The main process

The main dialogue ran from 9th May to 7th June. It brought 96 people together for 20 hours of deliberation in online workshops and a further 2.5 hours for each participant working in an online space called Recollective.

They were split into two approximately equal-sized groups: one for participants from England (45 participants), and one for participants from Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland (51 participants).

Each of the two sub-groups was further sub-divided into small discussion groups of 7-8 participants who worked throughout with their own dedicated facilitator. 8 sub-groups ran for the Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland group, and 7 for the England group.

With 16 facilitators working with participants this was a significant dialogue in terms of size, scale and numbers of participants. The dialogue comprised a two-hour contextualising webinar, a question review workshop, three exploratory workshops of three hours each, and a six-hour concluding workshop.

Specialist input was provided by 16 speakers including digital identity providers and wider industry organisations, universities and research institutes, charities, and regulatory bodies. Professional perspectives were complemented by the perspectives of people with lived experience of the issues that were being discussed. This included people who have faced challenges obtaining identification documents or proving their identity, who have experience of digital exclusion, or who have experienced identity theft.

2.3 Participant-led approaches

The question review and scoping workshop gave participants the opportunity to raise issues of relevance to them. The HVM team made a commitment that they would respond to these issues.

There was also interaction with a sandbox, a parallel testing exercise for digital identity service providers to test their software against specific questions using synthetic data. This was intended to create an engaged community of digital identity service providers who could address questions coming out of dialogue sessions, the feedback from which could be used as inputs for dialogue materials in following sessions.

The testing itself consisted of various 'sandpits', where providers could use synthetic data to demonstrate how they would process customer data and deliver services. Bespoke sandpits were commissioned based on questions from the dialogue session, alongside those from DSIT.

2.4 Timetable

The timetable for the main dialogue process was as follows:

- Optional tech support session for all participants 4-5pm 9th May
- Online context webinar for all participants (2 groups running in parallel) 6-8pm 9th May
- Question review and scoping workshop for Wal/ NI/Sco 6-9pm 11th May
- Question review and scoping workshop for Eng 6-9pm 15th May
- Exploratory workshop 1 for Wal/ NI/Sco 6-9pm 17th May
- Exploratory workshop 1 for Eng 6-9pm 18th May
- Exploratory workshop 2 for Wal/ NI/Sco 6-9pm 24th May
- Exploratory workshop 2 for Eng 6-9pm 25th May
- Exploratory workshop 3 for Wal/ NI/Sco 6-9pm 31st May
- Exploratory workshop 3 for Eng 6-9pm 1st June
- Final workshop for Wal/ NI/Sco 10am-4pm 3rd June
- Final workshop (part 1) for Eng 6-9pm 6th June
- Final workshop (part 2) for Eng 6-9pm 7th June.

3. Dialogue influence and impacts

All evidence points to this being a well-run project in which participants felt able to engage freely and openly.

The project team worked extremely collaboratively throughout. Project team members commented on the way that this had been especially noticeable during periods where the timetable became especially compressed (such as during the design and report writing phases).

"[The process's success] comes down to the dialogue I think being very well run, and the participants being well informed to properly deliberate... the participants had really engaged with the process and the questions and had time to think about how they really felt... [discussions] felt really well thought-through and nuanced... [and generated] really meaningful findings..."

Oversight Group member

"I know it must be a difficult thing to run and organise, but it's well worth it, even for relatively obscure and difficult-to-understand topics. [...] Commit to this dialogue, it's very much worth it."

Contributor – written survey feedback

As further evidence of the extent to which people felt able to express their opinions, the findings were somewhat more radical than was expected by some within the Oversight Group, particularly in relation to the impact of digital identity services on marginalised groups.

"The work that the participants did was quite a big challenge [to DSIT because they said that digital identities] were only legitimate if they were beneficial; not just that they mustn't harm people... that was a pretty solid red line for them..."

Oversight Group member

"[The dialogue] was quite a beautiful piece of work... the eventual articulation of what they said about inclusion... how all these things really mattered to them. By the end [participants had] a better way of putting it than I've ever managed... I almost cried when I was reading it... it was inspirational in a lot of ways."

Oversight Group member

3.1 Participant experience

The baseline review identified that a key short-term indicator for the project’s long-term success was that a diverse selection of the public should be engaged in a dialogue process on the use of digital identity services and feel able to meaningfully contribute to discussions.

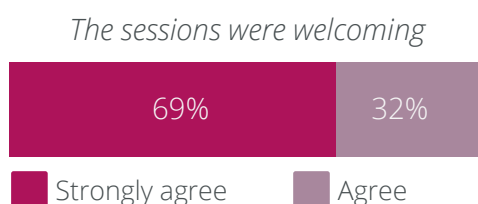
Participants felt very positive about their experience in general, with 97% stating they would be likely (35%) or extremely likely (63%) to recommend participation in a process of this type to someone they knew.

Practicalities of participation

In order that participants could feel able to meaningfully contribute to discussions, it was important that they were able to focus on the dialogue process itself, rather than being distracted by outside issues such as logistics and administration. In this way participants could feel comfortable and welcome, rather than anxious and unwelcome. This was a real strength of this process, with a unanimous sense among survey respondents that they had felt welcome in the sessions.

72% 9%
65%

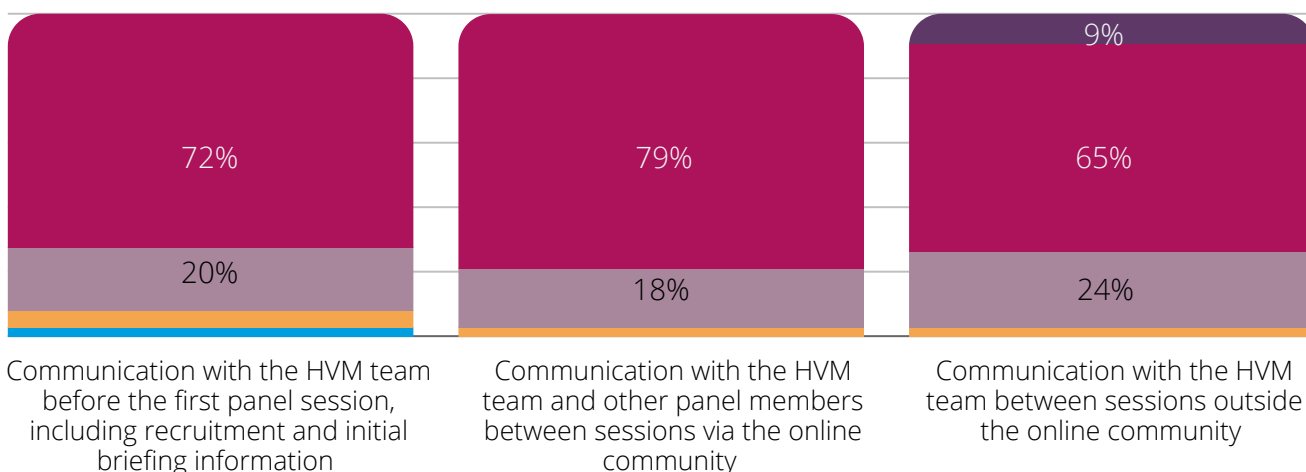
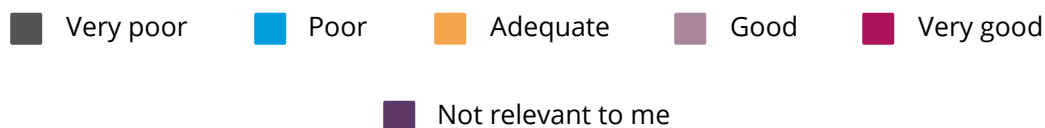
n=73. Total >100 due to rounding



Interviewees were almost unanimous in their praise for the administration of the process, using words like "straightforward" and "seamless".

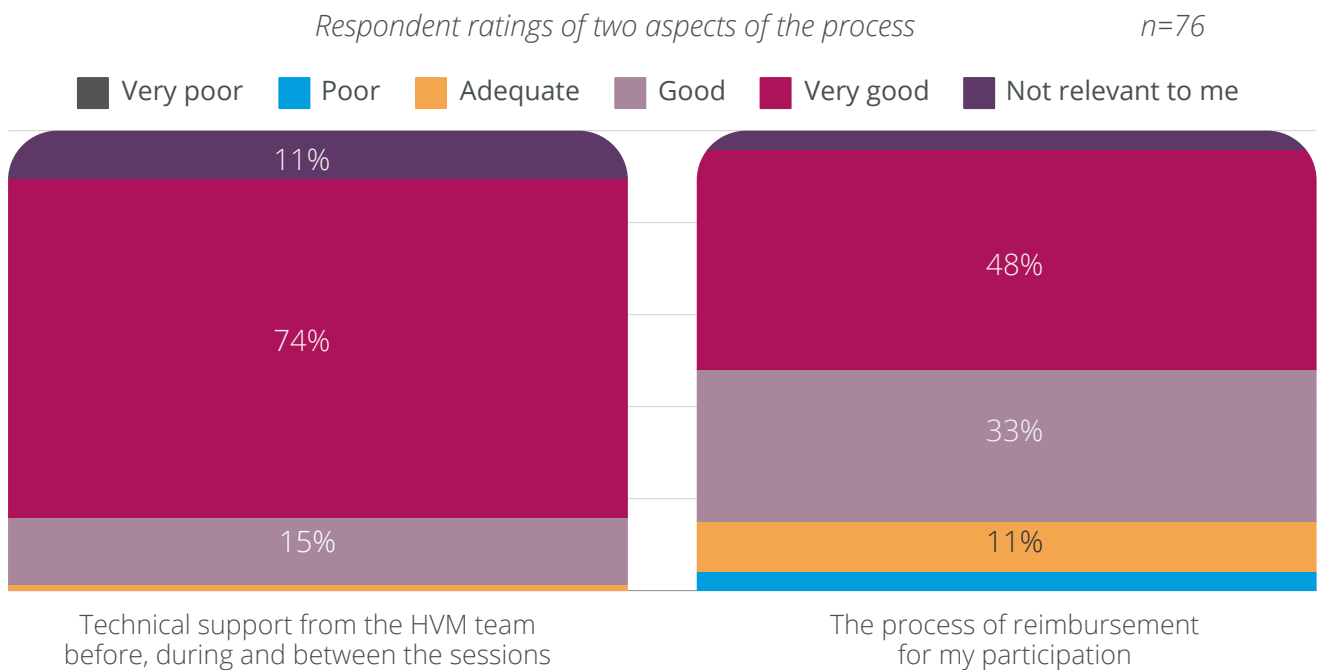
92% of respondents rated the communication before the dialogue sessions started, including their recruitment and the initial briefing information, as "good" or "very good".

Respondent rating of communication during various stages of the process n=76



Communication during the process was rated as “good” or “very good” by 97% of respondents, who seemed to particularly value the online community for communication both with the HVM delivery team and other dialogue participants.

Technical support before, during and between the dialogue discussions was rated “good” or “very good” by 98% of respondents who felt the question was relevant to them. 84% of respondents who felt it was relevant rated as “good” or “very good” the process of reimbursement for their participation.



Technical content

94% of survey respondents felt that the technical language used in the sessions was “easy” or “very easy” to understand.

Survey respondents were approximately evenly split on whether the amount of new information they had had to take in was “overwhelming”.

Respondents were asked whether they had spent less time on the dialogue than they had expected. 17% strongly disagreed, suggesting that for these people there had been a larger time commitment than expected, something which was also reflected in interview responses.

Notwithstanding the fact that this was a relatively lengthy process for a dialogue of this type, participants also frequently expressed that they had struggled to absorb the information that they were being given, and that they had wanted more time to reflect on it.

"The presentations were good but it was hard to keep up with what people were saying"
Participant: interviewee

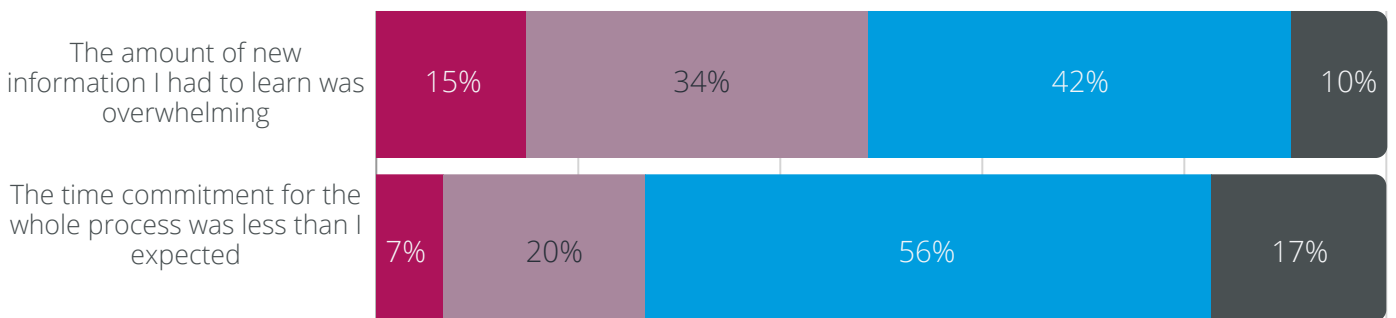
"Presentations were a bit quick - it seemed to be a race to the finish - it was the end of their day so they wanted to finish as soon as they could"
Participant: interviewee

"I still think that one presentation at a time is enough as doing them back to back inevitably means that some learning is lost as the new information overwrites the previous. It would be more meaningful to follow each presentation with a discussion in order to consolidate learning and to then fully explore the issues raised"
Participant: Post-session feedback (workshop 3)

Respondent ratings of two aspects of the process

n=74

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree



"The presentations were too rushed: presenters were literally gabbling. This was definitely how not to do it - don't go for back-to-back presentations. I felt so overwhelmed. I started to feel anxiety. We never had a meaningful discussion - it made me really angry - we didn't value their presentations. That's really disrespectful. I felt really frustrated. All the films and presentations had lots of value... [One presentation] was never discussed"
Participant: interviewee

"It was a lot and it got tedious sometimes... in the second session I didn't feel engaged, it was a lot of having to listen to powerpoints et cetera... Group discussion was really good, listening to lots of presentations was a bit much"
Participant: interviewee

Balance

In the earlier sessions participants heard more from those focussed on the benefits of digital identity services, in particular those looking to exploit its commercial opportunities. Participants were wary of being "sold to" by commercial organisations, but presentations were well received where participants felt presenters were being open and transparent.

"Today felt very propagand-y. People who want us to trust them talking AT us for 2 hours. What purpose does it serve to the research to bring involved parties to try and convince 100 people that they can be trusted? It doesn't feel right"
Participant: Post-session online feedback (workshop 2)

"Their presentations were nothing more than a sales pitch"
Participant: interviewee

Later sessions gave more weight to those who felt that the roll-out of digital identity services would have significant unintended negative consequences, and they introduced different perspectives and consideration of how different groups may use these services. Participants valued the way that this brought balance to the discussion.

"The speakers in this session were really interesting, their presentations provided a lot of food for thought about inclusion"
Participant: Post-session feedback (workshop 4)

"We got more clarity around how a provider would charge for this and how the data would be stored, which helped to answer a significant number of questions that most people had initially"
Participant: Post-session online feedback (workshop 3)

"Finally hearing about how providers make money/their motives. [The Privacy International] presentation was very enlightening"
Participant: Post-session feedback (workshop 4)


Facilitation

Overall, most participants really valued the discussions that they had, in particular during the final session, when the discussions were given much more time.



"I really enjoyed the very last session - as a group we got to discuss it in a lot more depth - things we had talked about earlier in the process"
Participant: interviewee


Facilitators were universally praised, although participants occasionally felt that their comments were being lost in the amount of work that the facilitator was being asked to do.



"[Facilitation was] very very good. [The Lead facilitator] did a very good job"
Participant: interviewee



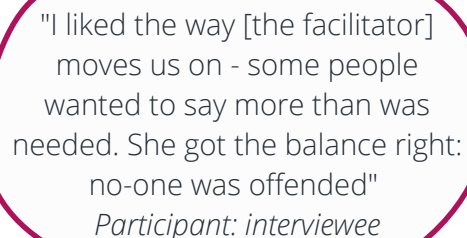
"The workshop small group discussions were imperative"
Participant: interviewee



"[Facilitators] had their own styles, really making you comfortable"
Participant: interviewee



"[Facilitator] was really nice and helpful, but struggled to keep up with the summarising of our points - she's got to hear it, analyse it, summarise it and type it. It might benefit from having two people"
Participant: interviewee



"I liked the way [the facilitator] moves us on - some people wanted to say more than was needed. She got the balance right: no-one was offended"
Participant: interviewee

Although the dialogue sessions and the Recollective discussion forums both saw participants making comments which some participants found to be offensive, the delivery team did a good job of managing this in a way that was felt to be fair by all concerned.

"[The Recollective discussion] got taken over by people who only had negative things to say about [digital identities]. I got told off because I was calling out conspiracy theories and anti-tory bias to do with ID cards... I had a topic removed and then a similar poll was put up with the same question: I thought it was probably a good thing - it was better phrased than I had put"

Participant: interviewee

Confidence in the findings



87% of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that DSIT will consider participant discussions as it develops its policies around the use of digital identities. However, their views were nuanced and varied widely.

"I'm very sceptical... I got the impression that this was a tick-box exercise and whatever the public say, they are going to go ahead and do what they were going to do anyway"

Participant: interviewee

"I think the framework we produced in the last session will go a long way... I'm impressed that DSIT are doing it"

Participant: interviewee

"[The timing of the dialogue] was quite shocking... The direction and speed of travel have all been set and now you're bringing people in"

Participant: interviewee

3.2 Experience of participant-led approaches

As discussed in 2.3 above, participants were invited to contribute to the agenda for the process in two ways: firstly via questions that would be responded to by contributors and facilitators during sessions and on the online community, secondly via questions that would be tackled using the sandbox.

Responses via contributors and facilitators

A concerted effort was made to invite questions and to respond to them. Questions were collected at several points early in the process, both during sessions and via the online community. These were responded to later in the process, being used as the basis for discussion within sessions. Despite this, participants' assessment of their influence varied.



Responses via the sandbox

The use of the sandbox as part of a dialogue about digital technologies was innovative. However, the way in which this might work was unclear in the business case. The possibilities only started to clarify once the project was underway.

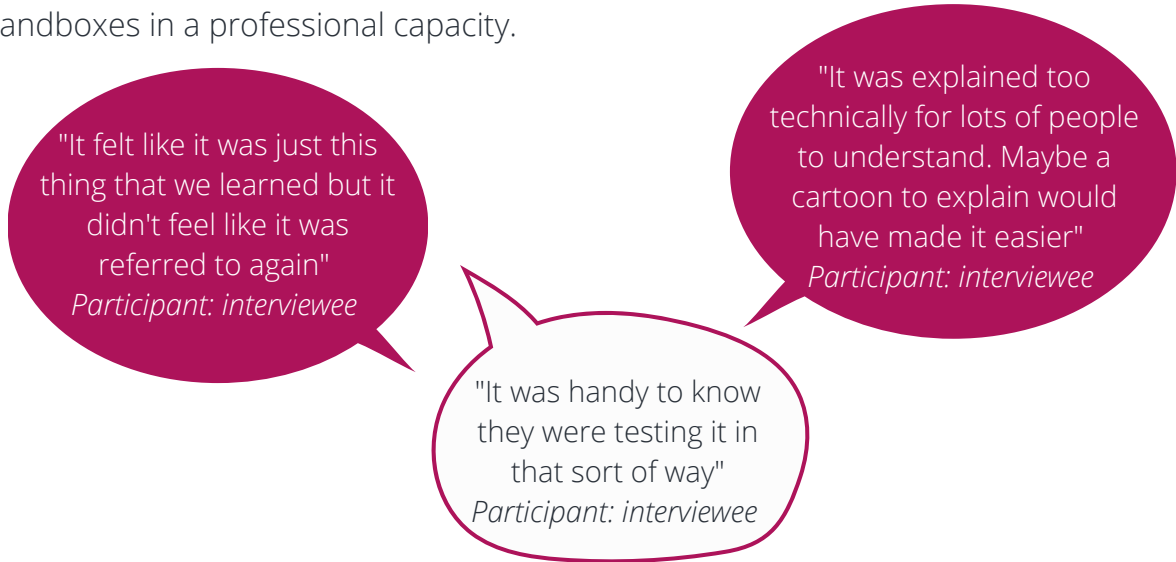
Part of the reason for this delay was terminological. The sandbox consisted of "sandpits", but elsewhere within UKRI (of which Sciencewise is part) a sandpit is a collaborative workshop where diverse participants come together to tackle problems. Some people involved in the process started out with this understanding of the term. However, in software development a sandpit is a closed data environment in which software can be tested. DSIT use the latter meaning, as a space where digital identity service providers can safely test their technologies.

A second aspect of the issue was that while questions were sought from participants, insufficient time was allocated to explaining what a sandbox was and how it might work. This led to some contradictory findings. When asked whether they understood the role

of the sandbox testing in developing digital identity services, 79% of respondents agreed that they did, and 72% felt the sandbox testing had contributed to the dialogue process.

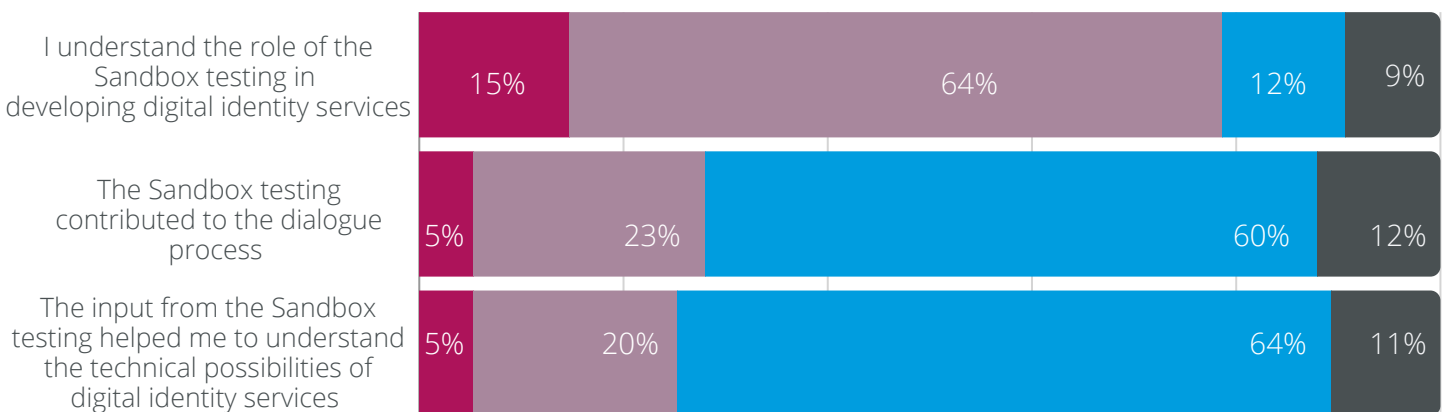
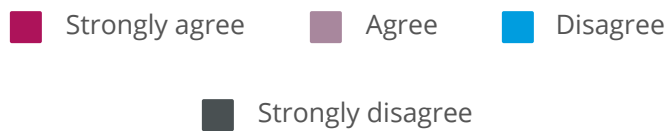
Similarly, 75% agreed that the sandbox testing helped them to understand the technical possibilities of digital identity services.

However, 6 of the 8 participants who were interviewed struggled to recall any information about the sandbox; and one of those who could do so had previously used sandboxes in a professional capacity.



Integration of sandbox testing with the dialogue process

n=75



The interactions between the results of the sandbox testing and the dialogue participants did not occur as outlined in the business case, and only a single round of questions from the dialogue participants was gathered from participants to be tackled in the sandbox. Their questions were then combined by the DSIT team into two broad questions around fraud and inclusion, which were unusual questions for the sandbox to tackle.

Although the sandbox was able to give some responses to these questions, the timelines for this did not line up effectively with the dialogue process, which meant that the outputs from the sandbox exercise were not effectively fed back to participants and did not meaningfully contribute to later discussions.

3.3 Stakeholder experience

Oversight Group

Oversight Groups are a standard requirement for Sciencewise projects. They provide project oversight, at the same time as ensuring that diverse perspectives are incorporated into the dialogue process. In this instance the Oversight Group performed both these functions effectively.

The Oversight Group included representatives of the digital identity providers and civil society, as well as government. DSIT's pre-existing and ongoing engagement with all those organisations meant that group members reported feeling able to robustly question the structure and content of the dialogue. This not only took place within formal Oversight Group meetings but also during the dialogue design workshop, and via email between the meetings.



“[We were] able to engage, challenge and reflect on the process... [this was] a really well done attempt by DSIT”
Oversight Group member



“I haven't really been communicated with post the Advisory Board: the only communication I've had is that the report had been published.”
Oversight Group member

However, since the end of the project in July 2023 interviewees from the Oversight Group felt that they had not been kept informed of progress, and some commented on the length of time between the process ending and the publication of the report (in February 2024).

Specialist contributors

There were 16 specialists who contributed to the dialogue process: these included those who had presented during dialogue sessions, as well as those who had contributed via short videos and interviews about lived experiences around issues relating to digital identity and attribute services.

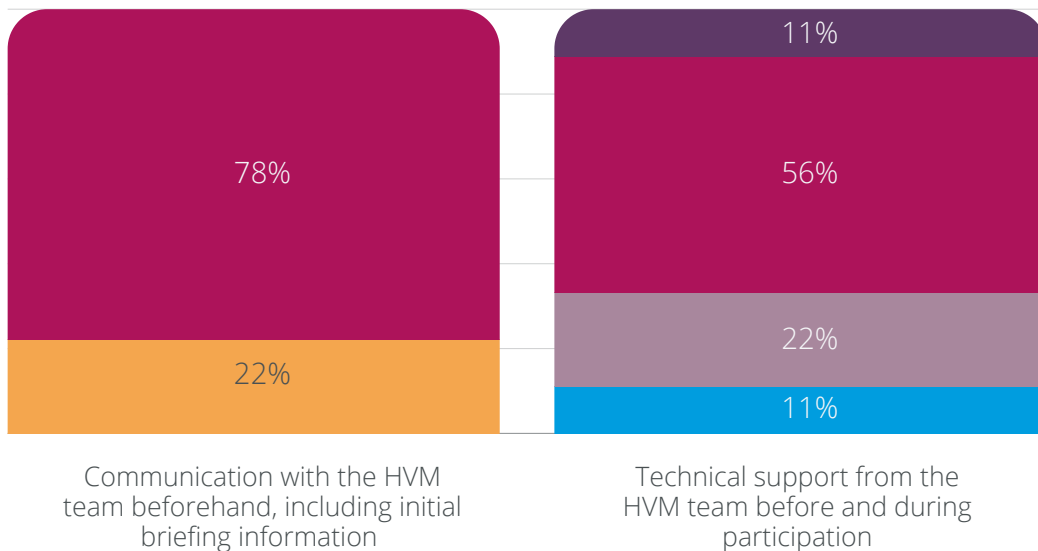
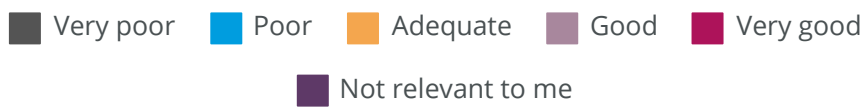
10 of these people responded to a survey asking them about their experience, nine of whom had contributed to the process via a presentation during a dialogue session.

Contributors commonly mentioned the importance of the topic as a reason for taking part. Other respondents wanted to share their perspectives or experiences, in order to introduce additional considerations for the dialogue participants.



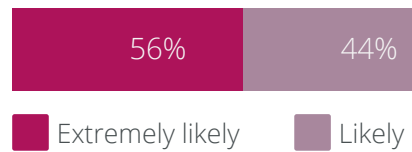
Contributors who responded to the online survey rated communication with the HVM team prior to participation highly. All respondents rated prior communication "very good" or "adequate". All but one respondent rated the technical support received as being "very good" or "good", with the other rating it as "poor" because of confusion as a result of emails arriving from multiple addresses.

Contributor ratings of two aspects of the process n=9



All contributors stated that they understood the purpose of the dialogue process, and that they felt supported throughout their involvement.

If someone you knew was invited to participate in a process of this type, how likely would you be to recommend they take part? n=9



All respondents indicated they would recommend that someone they knew should take part in a similar process.

When asked to make any other comments about the process, some contributors mentioned a desire for more information or support. This included receiving briefing information earlier, being given some context of the session and previous discussions and being able to test their slides before presenting them. For those who had contributed to the “lived experience” content, contributors expressed a desire to know how their stories landed. Others praised the process and did not mention any improvements to their experience.

When specialists were asked what advice they would provide to other potential contributors to a process of this type, they offered a number of comments.

“As a presenter, to be concise and clear in the evidence [you] present. To focus on evidence, not personal opinion. To cover evidence-based implications of an approach or a topic so that participants have evidence-based tools to deliberate on.”
Contributor - written survey feedback

“Don't be afraid to ask as many questions about the why/what/how/who/where/so what as you need to feel comfortable and confident.”
Contributor - written survey feedback

Some respondents indicated they would share the process in other sectors.

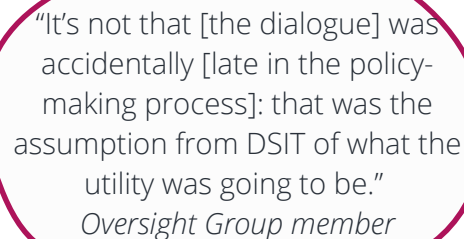
“I really enjoyed the whole process, and engagement with the team. It's fantastic work they're doing, extremely valuable not only for government, but hopefully for our understanding of digital identity more broadly. A true model of how these dialogues should be done. I am delighted I was able - in my own small way - to contribute to this research. I will be flagging it in international conversations and advocacy, on how to engage with a population on the digital identity topics.”
Contributor - written survey feedback

3.4 DSIT

The dialogue process had an impressive and meaningful set of outcomes. However, in order to be delivered in time to meet these objectives, the timescale to deliver the dialogue was very tight.

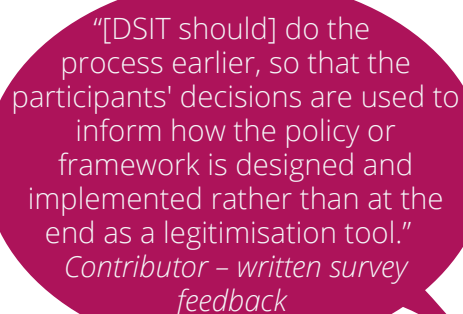
The compressed timetable led to early concerns that some aspects of the dialogue would need more time than was available. In particular, there was concern from some stakeholders over the extent to which the trust framework, being somewhat advanced in its development through consultation with stakeholders, would be open to comprehensive or fundamental change following the dialogue, with the dialogue's outputs being described in the business case as "one of many pieces of evidence to consider" at this point.

As noted in 1.2 above, the dialogue was deliberately positioned late in the policy-making process, which gave it an opportunity to affect the finer details of a policy, but which prevented it from being able to shape the broader policy direction.



"It's not that [the dialogue] was accidentally [late in the policy-making process]: that was the assumption from DSIT of what the utility was going to be."
Oversight Group member

However, some interviewees said the dialogue process should have been started earlier, to contribute to and inform policy and framework developments at an earlier stage.



"[DSIT should] do the process earlier, so that the participants' decisions are used to inform how the policy or framework is designed and implemented rather than at the end as a legitimisation tool."
Contributor – written survey feedback

In the event there was more time than originally envisaged: the business case had specified a launch date for the report on the dialogue process of "late 2023", but the report was eventually published on the gov.uk website in February 2024. The related legislation was passing through parliament at the point where the General Election was called (in May 2024) but it did not receive Royal Assent before the prorogation of Parliament in June. As a bill cannot be carried over from one parliament to the next it is for incoming ministers to decide how to progress this work. These unforeseen circumstances meant that the dialogue could have been delivered more slowly and have achieved a similar impact.

4. Outcomes

The project had six long-term outcomes (LTOs: see 1.4 for the logic model developed for that report).

Two of these long-term indicators (LTOs1 & 3) are now well enough advanced that they can be evaluated. The other four (LTOs2, 4, 5 & 6) have been assessed based on the relevant medium term outcomes (MTOs) that were also identified.

LTO1. The dialogue directly informs:

- **The rules that providers of digital identity services must follow in order to become certified against the UK digital identities and attributes trust framework (by end of 2023)**
- **The functions and oversight structure of the governing body (OfDIA) and how it interacts with the public (by end of 2023 and when it moves to its permanent home in 3-5 years)**
- **Planning for public communications initiative (planning to have taken place by the end of 2023).**

DSIT report that they have made significant efforts to incorporate the findings into the development of policy.

"We've taken the recommendations and we've stacked them up against - particularly - the next iteration of the Trust Framework, going point by point and going does the Trust Framework address this issue? ... We have had a number of decision points ... where we have had conflicting views from our stakeholders on what we should be doing, or we've had pushes to change things where we've thought 'We don't know if that's the right thing to do', and the information from the public dialogue has been our lodestar. So there have been some quite detailed policy decisions... which the public dialogue outcome was instrumental in"

DSIT representative

It has also informed how DSIT are thinking about OfDIA, in particular the extent to which OfDIA can be an intermediary between the public and the industry, as well as a formal governing body.

"When we've been prioritising what we do in OfDIA, how we talk to people... about what OfDIA is going to do and how it's going to operate: that has been very very directly influenced by the dialogue, because I think we now have a much better understanding of what really matters to people."


DSIT representative



"[The industry response to the report] has been really interesting because it suggests to me that OfDIA's role could include how we play back to industry some of the insights we get from the public, and [industry wouldn't see that as] government overly interfering in their business processes."

DSIT representative

However, the interaction between government and industry has not been visible to those outside government who were involved in the dialogue:



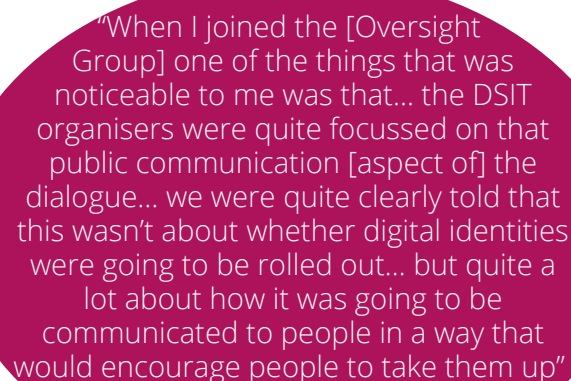
"It wasn't clear to me... whether the suggested amendments to the Trust Framework - which were really clearly laid out in the report... were going to be implemented or not"...

Oversight Group member

In addition the fact that the relevant legislation did not make it through parliament before the July 2024 General Election makes the long-term future of this area more uncertain than it would have been otherwise.

Communications

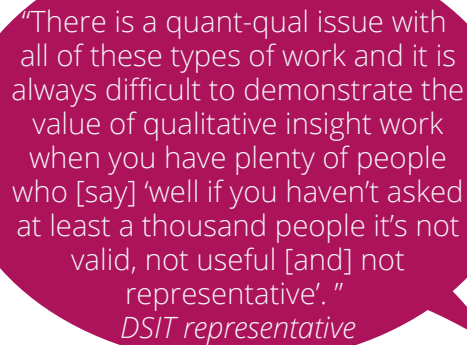
Communications (LTO1, bullet point 3) had been a major focus for the dialogue from the start.



"When I joined the [Oversight Group] one of the things that was noticeable to me was that... the DSIT organisers were quite focussed on that public communication [aspect of] the dialogue... we were quite clearly told that this wasn't about whether digital identities were going to be rolled out... but quite a lot about how it was going to be communicated to people in a way that would encourage people to take them up"

Oversight Group member

It was clear that the DSIT team had taken a lot from the process in terms of increased understanding of public views. In particular, they reported that the dialogue combined insights that sit between the sorts of quantitative data that are provided by a survey, and the sorts of qualitative data that are provided by a focus group. However, this leaves it open to criticism from those who prioritise quantitative methods over all others.



"There is a quant-qual issue with all of these types of work and it is always difficult to demonstrate the value of qualitative insight work when you have plenty of people who [say] 'well if you haven't asked at least a thousand people it's not valid, not useful [and] not representative'."

DSIT representative

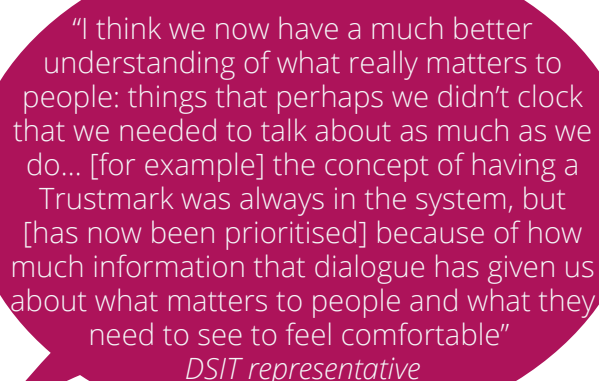
The DSIT team also report having a better grasp of the public's level of emotional engagement with the topic, with the dialogue giving them a set of publicly tested (and therefore defensible) red lines which can counter the tendency within government and industry to treat Digital Identity as an affectless technological question. In this regard the fact that several of those same stakeholders were involved in the process in some way gives reason to believe that they would give greater weight to the dialogue findings.



"Dialogue moved us along quite a lot in a really helpful way... [it has] so much potential to be a powerful tool, [in particular] in conversations with industry"

DSIT representative

As a result, DSIT report that communications strategies are being shaped by the findings, with a move away from a large, centralised campaign to smaller, more targeted campaigns which can respond more appropriately to particular issues.



"I think we now have a much better understanding of what really matters to people: things that perhaps we didn't clock that we needed to talk about as much as we do... [for example] the concept of having a Trustmark was always in the system, but [has now been prioritised] because of how much information that dialogue has given us about what matters to people and what they need to see to feel comfortable"

DSIT representative

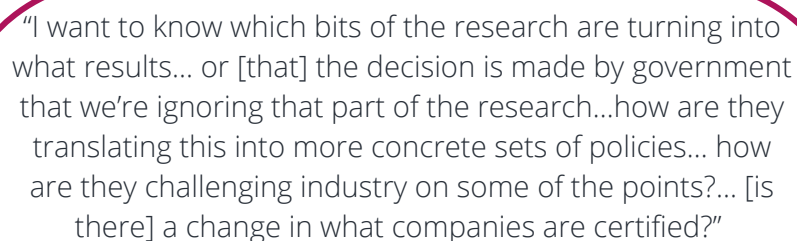
LTO2. The dialogue informs new initiatives and ‘soft’ interventions, such as:

- **New pilots related to use cases or target users (in the next 5 years)**
- **Engagement with the market, civil society and regulators**

At the time of writing it is too early to make a full assessment of this outcome, but its medium-term precursor was that the DSIT digital identity team would gain a better understanding of public perceptions of risks, opportunities and priorities for digital identity services (MTO2). As noted above, this has clearly taken place.

LTO3. Industry digital identity providers become certified against the digital identities and attributes trust framework

DSIT report that this is taking place, but as with LTO1 it is happening invisibly to those outside government.



"I want to know which bits of the research are turning into what results... or [that] the decision is made by government that we're ignoring that part of the research...how are they translating this into more concrete sets of policies... how are they challenging industry on some of the points?... [is there] a change in what companies are certified?"

Oversight Group member

LTO4. Public dialogue with industry engagement is incorporated in more digital and data policy projects**LTO5. The DSIT team develop further public engagement methods that involve industry engagement**

At the time of writing, it is too early to make a full assessment of these outcomes, but in both cases their medium-term precursor was that the DSIT digital identity team would increase their knowledge and confidence in using deliberative methods with the public, to generate evidence for informing policy (MTO4). This in turn rested on a project output relating to the exploration of a "new engagement strategy combining a public dialogue and sandbox-style testing with industry".

As noted in 3.2 above the sandbox process was an interesting experiment but one that did not work in the way that had been hoped. Learning from this may become useful to DSIT, but the ways it will be incorporated into their future work remain unclear. Some recommendations relating to the use of sandbox testing (and related methodologies) are made in Section 5 below.

LTO6. DSIT civil servants increase their skills in deliberative methods.

As above, at the time of writing it is too early to make a full assessment of these outcomes, but as with LTO4 and LTO5, the medium-term precursor for this outcome was MTO4 i.e. that the DSIT digital identity team would increase their knowledge and confidence in using deliberative methods with the public to generate evidence for informing policy.

This dialogue process has positively impacted the DSIT team's knowledge of public attitudes and how they perceive deliberative processes. Several members of the project team within DSIT have now moved on to other roles and they are taking their experience of the project with them: some of them report that they are intending to explore similar approaches in their new roles. Meanwhile, the team that is now working on digital identity is positive about the rhetorical value of the dialogue process, and the fact that it went beyond what they felt would normally be considered by government to be strictly necessary, which has unlocked the extra value that dialogue approaches can bring.



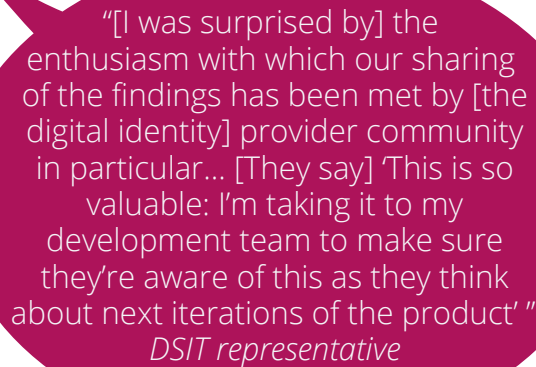
"Traditional government consultation was never ever going to get us where we needed to be on this. Industry will talk to us for as long as we open the door for, and that's great – we are very happy to talk to them but they're not going to give us that [public] voice".
DSIT representative

This means that the team now feel confident to weigh up the costs and benefits of dialogue approaches in future.



"I can see staging posts coming up over the next few years where getting that kind of rich insight, [public dialogue] would potentially be helpful, particularly if we don't have a very strong political steer... making sure that what we recommend as policy officials has been tested with the public in this rich way feels like I'm doing my job as a civil servant better..."
DSIT representative

Meanwhile contributors (who were drawn from government, civil society and corporate sectors) and those who have remained within the digital identity team now have an institutional memory of this process which might be expected to feed into their work in the future.



"[I was surprised by] the enthusiasm with which our sharing of the findings has been met by [the digital identity] provider community in particular... [They say] 'This is so valuable: I'm taking it to my development team to make sure they're aware of this as they think about next iterations of the product' "

DSIT representative

Other impacts

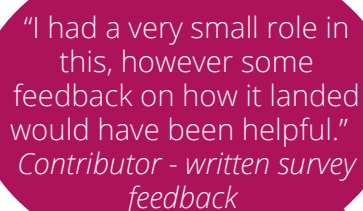
Although the report was not published until February 2024, it was used within government before then, and DSIT also report that there has been interest from other governments in the project.



"International partners have been really interested in the findings and our reflections on the process... we've had governments [of developed western states] specifically wanting conversations on the dialogue, its outcomes and our reflections on the process."

DSIT representative

The February publication date meant that at the time of the final fieldwork in April 2024 its use outside government had been limited, including by industry, academia, and third sector organisations who had been involved in the process itself. It also meant that knowledge of the report's findings had not yet spread as far as might have been hoped.



"I had a very small role in this, however some feedback on how it landed would have been helpful."

Contributor - written survey feedback



"I don't actually think I've seen anyone else talk about it. I met some [UK-based] researchers who are doing a quite in depth two- or three-year project on digital identities and weren't aware of the public dialogue:... they'd done a massive map of all the stakeholders... and they hadn't come across the dialogue."

Oversight Group member

5. Basic costs and future benefits

Sciencewise articulate six evaluation areas to explore when reviewing a dialogue. The last of these is 'what was the balance overall of the costs and benefits of the dialogue (basic costs compared to benefits including potential future costs saved)?'.

A formal cost-benefit analysis for this sort of work is impractical. As Warburton (2010) points out, "there is no existing economic analysis tool that will work to create a simple cost effectiveness model that will assign monetary values to the benefits of public engagement so that such benefits can be compared to actual costs and come to conclusions about value in any meaningful way*."

However, it is possible to say that its budget of £200,250 made it a medium-sized dialogue process in budgetary terms, involving 96 people in 22h30m of dialogue and deliberation. This is a relatively large number of people engaged over a relatively long period for a process of this type. Furthermore, it generated information that DSIT could not reliably have found any other way, and which some stakeholders felt was more radical than they would have expected. Just as importantly, it generated that information in a way that was relatively transparent to those (within government and industry) who will have to have trust in this dialogue process if it is to achieve its outcomes.

DSIT's assessment of the costs and benefits of the process is instructive in this regard:

"We have had a challenge as a team for how we really understand what people think of our policy area and this was suggested as a way of overcoming that challenge... [but] anything that looks new and different always comes with a slightly higher risk profile. The benefits I could see us getting made it worth pursuing... it was taking us to a deeper level of engagement than the one we'd been at before... particularly that really tricky bit that we've got of understanding what people think once they understand the concept. What we've found in the past is that we spend so much time explaining the concept that you don't actually get into the policy trade-offs that we grapple with."

DSIT representative

Nevertheless, there is a recognition from those involved that dialogue remains a costly and time-consuming process and will not be suitable in all cases.

*Warburton, D. (2010) 'Evidence Counts: Understanding the Value of Public Dialogue', (Sciencewise)

"This research shows that 'public opinion' is in line with what civil society has been saying to government; even on quite specific policy issues, like regulation. [So] on other issues facing government, consultation with civil society on privacy and inclusion issues is a valuable way of beginning to understand the concerns that will arise from the broader public. Not to replace government research into public attitudes, but it's a far easier and cheaper way of exploring these issues."

*Oversight Group member
- written feedback*

"It is resource-intensive and it takes time, so there's an opportunity cost... it wouldn't always be the appropriate route to take... we had to use up a lot of our people's goodwill to engage with it and make it valuable."

DSIT representative

However, given the findings of the dialogue it is clear that future policies which do not take account of public views in this area will be more likely to suffer from public scepticism leading to low take-up. This would mean that the benefits of digital identity services - which DSIT are aiming to unlock - would not be realised.

There is also a recognition that the involvement of Sciencewise is important, both because of the funding and advice that they provide, and the legitimacy that they give to the process.

"The involvement of Sciencewise and the rigour that they were able to put around it as a demonstrable tool for meaningful information and data gathering was very helpful, because what it did was give me more confidence when I was questioned by my seniors about why on earth I was spending money, resource and all the rest of it on something that was going to get the views of so few people that it wasn't worth the effort. The badge of the Sciencewise input gave me that additional level of credibility that was extremely helpful, [as] a proven and government-backed methodology... that has been through robust processes to make sure that it does deliver"

DSIT representative

6. Summary and recommendations

6.1 Summary

This was a well-designed and efficiently delivered dialogue process. The participants felt welcome and were able to express their views in an environment that was both safe and intellectually challenging, meaning that they became immersed in the questions surrounding digital identity services and engaged deeply with them. The outputs have been used within government and some of the longer-term outcomes have already been realised. For those that have not yet been realised there are good initial indications that they will become so in time.

When assessed against the Sciencewise Quality Framework (Appendix 1), 40 of the 44 indicators are clearly met. Those which have only been partially met relate to the fact that the report was not published until February 2024, and that those involved in the project were not kept informed of the reasons for that delay.

The process suffered, however, from requiring participants to absorb too much information in too short a time: this is at least partly a consequence of the compressed timescale that it had to fit within.

The combination of public dialogue with sandbox testing was not successful but provides some pointers for future attempts in this direction.



"We know what industry thinks, but the dialogue has given us a public insight"
DSIT representative



"[DSIT is] very conscious of the tradeoffs...[but decision making has previously been] relying on our moral imagination"
DSIT representative

6.2 Recommendations

Set a minimum time necessary to deliver a dialogue of this type.

Currently, Sciencewise's 'Requirements for funded projects' document is silent on likely timescales, and even though every project will be different there is still some useful guidance that can be given to government departments who will not be familiar with this way of working. On a more granular level, dialogue processes should ensure that there is sufficient time for participants to reflect on and discuss all inputs, including video presentations and Q&A time with presenters.

Dialogue delivery contractors should implement an oversight process for specialist presentations.

This may include requesting slides in advance, in order to minimise any input that strays beyond factual insight. Briefings for specialists (especially those from industry) should include guidance on transparency relating to their interests.

Sciencewise should explore sandbox approaches further

The sandbox was a potentially valuable addition to the dialogue process, but if it is to be used again then we suggest describing it in greater detail in the invitation to tender, so that contractors are clear about what is required. During the dialogue we recommend introducing the sandbox concept to the participants partway through the process, after they have been introduced to the topic of the dialogue and the broad issues that are to be discussed.

In this way the sandbox will become a discrete area of focus rather than being integrated into other discussions. This will hopefully enable the participants to generate meaningful questions. The outputs from the sandbox process should then be fed back in a separate session, with the sandbox provider also present in order to answer questions of detail.

Everyone involved in the dialogue (including participants, specialists and members of the Oversight Group) should be kept informed of progress during the report writing and publication phase of the project, and updated one year after publication.

It will be beneficial to review the ways in which participants are kept informed, to give them an approximate timeline, and give them confidence that their input is being used. This is especially the case here, given the intensity of the dialogue process, with participants having engaged closely over a few weeks, including 20 hours of direct contact, and having engaged emotionally with complex issues of social justice and the future direction of society.

The role of the different aspects of information gathering should be made clearer to participants.

In this way they can understand how session transcripts, the zoom chat, Recollective comments, Jamboards etc feed into the final report.

Once they have been recruited, all emails to participants should come from a single email address.

Appendix 1

Sciencewise Quality Framework Context

Timing	Did the dialogue happen at the right time to inform and influence the relevant decisions?
Boundaries of Influence	What was the potential for and limits to informing and influencing decisions?
Context setting	Was the dialogue set within the context of relevant current, previous or parallel activities?

Scope and Design

Rationale for using public dialogue	What was the rationale for using public dialogue?
Governance and management	Were the governance and management arrangements appropriate and effective to meet the objectives?
Resources	Were the resources of time, skills and funding sufficient to meet the objectives?
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?
Clear purpose	Was the purpose of the dialogue clear from the start? Were the objectives appropriate and clearly stated?
Topic focus	What was the main topic focus of the dialogue?
Questions to be addressed	Were the main questions to be addressed by the dialogue open, clear and appropriate?
Level of public participant influence	What level of influence were public participants expected to have over the process and outputs?
Delivery personnel	How was the responsibility for detailed design and delivery agreed and managed?
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?

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?
Number and location of workshops	How appropriate, robust and credible was the number and location of workshops with public participants in meeting the objectives?
Diverse perspectives	How was the inclusion of a diversity of perspectives ensured to reduce unwanted bias?
Specialist involvement	Were the right number and type of scientists and other specialists involved in the right ways?
Design of deliberative workshops	How appropriate, robust and credible was the design of the deliberative workshops with the public?
Meeting aspirations	How was the dialogue able to cover the aspirations and concerns of those involved?
Ethics, anonymity and data protection	Was due attention given to ethics, anonymity and data protection

Delivery

Focus on addressing agreed dialogue objectives	How well did the dialogue project address its original purpose and objectives?
Fair and balanced dialogue	Was the process fair with no in-built bias?
Appropriate types and numbers of participants reached	How appropriate, robust and credible was the set of participants involved?
Respect for public participants	Were public participants treated with respect and sufficiently supported?
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?
Sufficient information to support discussions	Did public participants have sufficient relevant information to enable them to contribute to the discussions?

Quality of facilitation	How well facilitated were the public discussions?
Depth of facilitation	How well were the detail, depth, complexity and richness of the discussions encouraged, explored and probed with participants?
Learning from practice throughout	How well were lessons from experience during the delivery of the dialogue identified and used to improve the process throughout?
Recording the dialogue	How well was the recording and data collection implemented?
Capturing agreement, disagreement and uncertainty	How well were agreement, disagreement and uncertainty among participants defined, identified and recorded?
Analysis of dialogue results	How was the approach to the analysis of dialogue results agreed and how well was the analysis undertaken?
Clear and coherent reporting of the dialogue results	How clear and coherent was the reporting of the dialogue?
Clear links between data and conclusions in reporting dialogue results	How clear were the links between data, interpretation and conclusions?
Reporting of wider implications of dialogue results	How well explained was the scope for drawing wider inference from the dialogue results?
Participant involvement in reporting the dialogue results	How were public participants involved in the drafting and production of dialogue results, if at all?
Sharing the dialogue results and final reports	There were some shortcomings in the way that those involved in the dialogue were informed of the final results, and the use of those results.

Impact

Achieving the purpose of the dialogue	How well did the dialogue achieve its original purpose and objectives?
Dissemination of the dialogue results	Dialogue results were initially disseminated within government, and there was then a period of 5 months before they were shared externally.
Credibility and use of dialogue results	How credible were the results to those who were expected to use them?

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?
Impact on public participants	Participants were not kept informed of the progress of the project once their direct involvement had come to an end.
Unexpected impacts of the dialogue	Did the dialogue have any unexpected impacts?
Reporting on impacts	Plans for immediate and longer term impacts to be shared with participants and other stakeholders are not well developed.

Appendix 2

Recruitment specification

Criteria for 96 participants	Target - a broad diversity of UK demographics
Gender	Appropriately balanced mix of people who identify as male / female / non-binary.
Age	Good age distribution across age groups from every adult life stage from 18 upwards. The sample should be boosted for 18-25 year olds e.g. each group of 24 should have at min. x6 from this age group.
Life stage	A broad range of life stages from students, young professionals, raising young children to empty nesters and those who are retired
Minority ethnic groups	A boosted sample so that for each group of 24 participants a min of 10 participants (e.g. 40 of 96) are from communities experiencing racial inequalities (CERI) above current census data. Asian, Asian British x 2 Black, Black British, Caribbean or African x 4 Mixed or Multiple ethnicities x 2 Other ethnic group x 2
Disabilities/ those with long-term chronic health conditions.	A boosted sample of 10 participants above current census data who are disabled/ have chronic illness.
Current working status and type	A range of people who are employed (part-time/ fulltime/ self-employed) and unemployed, plus those who are retired.
Social Grade	Mix of AB (4 participants) C1C2 (8 participants) DE (12 participants) for each group of 24 people
Household income	A balance from across socio-economic groups, but weighted (at least 8 participants in each group of 24 participants) for those in vulnerable financial circumstances.
Sexual orientation	Appropriately balanced mix
Geographic location	The group should be drawn from a UK sample. We suggest focusing on communities which have score higher in the indices of multiple deprivation. Each group of should include those from rural, urban, suburban and coastal regions.

<p>Experience of market research/ dialogue</p>	<p>Should not have taken part in a public deliberation/ Citizens' Jury/ Citizens' Assembly or public dialogue in the last 24 months particularly those run by HVM such as WGS for newborn screening; or heath and data use public dialogues for the National Data Guardian; programmes for WWF on land use; and dialogues for Genomics England on researcher access to discovery research.</p>
<p>Perspectives on screening/ data access</p>	<p>Awareness</p> <p>1. I have used a digital service to prove who I am within the last 12 months (e.g. facial recognition to access my banking app) Yes No</p> <p>2. I have not been able to access a service because I do not have proof of my age or identity in the last 12 months (e.g. using a supermarket checkout) Yes No</p> <p>Attitude</p> <p>Attitudinal questions should be asked in the screener to understand the range of views we have in the sample. They will not be used as inclusion/ exclusion criteria.</p> <p>1. Here are some of the ways in which data is collected about you every day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Store cards/ loyalty cards • Social media platforms such as Facebook or Instagram • Fingerprint or facial recognition to unlock a smart phone <p>Which, if any, do you have concerns about in terms of how the data is collected, stored, and used?</p> <p>2. On a scale of 1-5 (where 1=extremely concerned and 5=not at all concerned) please state how concerned you are about your data being collected and used for identification purposes.</p> <p>*Fieldworker to probe responses. We are seeking a balance of responses to these data privacy questions within each workshop with 20% of people being extremely concerned, 60% being at a mid-point (having not thought about it or being neither concerned or unconcerned) and 20% being not at all concerned.</p>

Appendix 3

“World’s Shortest Questionnaire”: survey sent to participants after each workshop

1. What three words would you use to describe the session?
2. What was the best thing about this session?
3. What advice would you give the team for next time?

Participant post-process survey questions

1. Which group did you participate in?
 - a. Northern Ireland
 - b. Scotland
 - c. Wales
 - d. England

2. How do you rate the following aspects of the dialogue process?

	Very poor	Poor	Adequate	Good	Very good	Not relevant to me
Communication with the HVM team before the first panel session, including recruitment and initial briefing information						
Technical support from the HVM team before, during and between the sessions.						
Communication with the HVM team and other panel members between sessions via the online community						
Communication with the HVM team between sessions outside the online community						
The process of reimbursement for my participation						

3. How much do you agree with each of the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The time commitment for the whole process was less than I expected				
The technical language used in the sessions was easy to understand				
I feel confident that DSIT will consider our panel's discussions as it develops its policies around use of digital identities in the future				
The amount of new information I had to learn was overwhelming				
The sessions were welcoming				

4. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I understand the role of the Sandbox testing in developing digital identity services				
The Sandbox testing contributed to the dialogue process				
The input from the Sandbox testing helped me to understand the technical possibilities of digital identities				

5. If someone you know was invited to participate in a process of this type, how likely would you be to recommend they take part?

Extremely likely Likely Unlikely Extremely unlikely

6. If someone you knew had just agreed to participate in a process of this type, what one piece of advice would you give them?

7. If DSIT or a different department of the Government were organising another similar process, what one piece of advice would you give them?

8. What other comments do you have about the process?

9. We would like to interview a sample of respondents to hear more about your experiences of the process. If you are happy to be contacted to arrange a short (approx. 30 minute) interview, please confirm below.

This will open a separate survey to share your contact details.

Are you happy to be contacted to arrange an interview about your experience of the dialogue process?

Yes

No

Thank You!

Specialist contributor post-process survey questions

DSIT dialogue on DIS - contributor survey

1. How did you participate in the dialogue process?

- a. I appeared in a film or video that was shown during the dialogue sessions
- b. I participated in an audio-only interview that was played during the dialogue process
- c. I presented live during a dialogue session
- d. I appeared in a video/ audio clip AND presented live during a session
- e. I participated in another way - please describe: _____

2. How do you rate the following aspects of your participation?

	Very poor	Poor	Adequate	Good	Very good	Not relevant to me
Communication with the HVM team beforehand, including initial briefing information						
Technical support from the HVM team before and during participation						

3. How much do you agree with each of the following statements?*

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The time commitment for participating was less than I expected				
I understand the purpose of the dialogue process				
I felt supported throughout my participation				

4. What was your main motivation for taking part in this process?

5. If someone you knew was invited to participate in a process of this type, how likely would you be to recommend they take part?

Extremely likely Likely Unlikely Extremely unlikely

6. If someone you knew had just agreed to participate in a process of this type, what one piece of advice would you give them?

7. If DSIT or a different department of the Government were organising another similar process, what one piece of advice would you give them?

8. What other comments do you have about the process?

Thank You!

Post-process participant interview schedule

Many thanks for agreeing to answer some questions about your experience with the Digital Identity dialogue process. We will be grateful if you can think about the whole process of taking part, from being recruited, right through to the final session a couple of weeks ago.

We expect that this interview will take 30 minutes to complete. I will not be recording the interview but I will be taking notes. Those will only be seen by the two external evaluators (Dom McDonald and Louisa Fox), and your responses will be anonymised before they are shared with anyone else.

After we have completed the interviews Dom and Louisa will analyse the responses and share their findings with the team who ran the process. They will use them to inform how they run such processes in the future.

If you want to remove yourself from the evaluation process at any point then you can tell me during the interview, or email afterwards, and we will remove all your answers from our data set. By completing this interview you agree to us using your data in this way.

Do you have any questions before we get started?

Deal with any questions or comments. Ensure that you have allowed space for them to withdraw consent.

Are you OK for us to proceed on that basis?

1. So tell me why you decided to take part in the process?

2. Having decided to take part, how did you find the process in the run up to the first session?

If it does not come up naturally, prompt:

How about technology aspects like internet access?

How about administrative aspects like making sure you got paid?

3. Once the sessions had started, how did you feel about your participation?

If it does not come up naturally, prompt:

How about the information that was presented during the sessions?

How about your interactions with the other participants?

How about the way that the sessions were structured and facilitated?

How about communication with HVM between the sessions?

To what extent did you feel that you, the participants, were setting the agenda?

4. This process was innovative in the way that it used the digital sandbox alongside the dialogue process. How do you think that went?

If it does not come up naturally, prompt:

Do you feel like you understood why the team wanted to incorporate the sandbox?

How did the sandbox testing inform your thinking during the process? [Probe to completion]

5. Now that the process has finished, how do you feel about how its outputs will be used?

6. A few minutes ago you said that [answer to question 1] was the main reason why you took part at the start of the process. Now you look back do you think that was the main thing you got from the process?

Depending on how much time they have available:

7. What else do you think I ought to take note of before we finish? [Probe to completion]

Thank them and reiterate that they can withdraw at any time by emailing Dom on emailthenavigator@gmail.com