Report and Actions from DPC Planning Day November 2009

Introduction
1. Board members are invited to discuss and approve recommendations that emerged from a Planning Day held in York in November. A report of the Planning Day is attached. The Board is also invited to discuss whether a second planning day on the topic of membership structure should be prioritised in the light of these recommendations.

Risk Register and Opportunity Registers
2. In response to the DPC Strategic Plan 09-11, the Planning Day created two operational documents to assist the management and planning for the DPC: a Risk Register (DPC1109F) and an Opportunity Register. The latter is attached at the end of this document.

3. It is proposed that these documents are presented and reviewed as standing agenda items for the DPC Board.

Rewarding long term subscriptions
4. The strategic plan identified flexibility and longer term planning as necessary conditions for a more sustainable coalition. The Planning Day reviewed the current phasing of subscriptions, noting that short term commitment from members reduced the DPC’s ability to create a compelling forward plan. However there are currently no incentives for members to commit for more than 12 months – indeed the relative increase in risk acts as a modest disincentive.

5. A lively discussion followed on a proposal to encourage longer-term subscriptions. The recommendation was that the DPC should offer a 10 percent discount to organisations willing to commit to three years of subscription – either as single up-front payment or as a contractual undertaking over three years. This will consolidate the existing base of the membership and facilitate the creation of a more compelling value proposition to prospective members. Modest increases in subscription to account for inflation were discussed, with a view that rates and discounts would be fixed from the point of subscription, not retrospectively.

6. The table below describes the proposed new subscription model for different levels of member.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership</th>
<th>Commitment</th>
<th>Payment interval</th>
<th>Payment amount</th>
<th>PA equivalent</th>
<th>Discount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Board</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board</td>
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<td>Annual</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board</td>
<td>36 months</td>
<td>Triennial</td>
<td>27,000</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate</td>
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<td>Annual</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>36 months</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>1,800</td>
<td>1,800</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>36 months</td>
<td>Triennial</td>
<td>5,400</td>
<td>1,800</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. An allied proposition on penalties for shorter term payments was also presented. The group recommended that 12 months be the minimum period of membership. Mutually convenient payment intervals could be arranged to suit members and the DPC but must not prejudice this minimum commitment.

8. A proposal on variations to the financial year was considered impractical and not necessary if the longer

9. A proposal on personal membership was also discussed but turned down in the form presented. However a lively discussion of the membership structure ensued and it was agreed that personal membership should be included in the membership restructure proposed within the strategic plan.

**Membership structure**

10. Although not strictly within the terms of reference for this Planning Day the topic of Membership Structure was frequently raised. Topics such as the differential between board and associate membership, personal membership, and the scalability of the current board configuration were discussed.

11. The Board may wish to consider whether a 2nd planning day specifically on the topic of restructuring the membership should be held in 2010 before the subscription date of 1st August 2010.
Report from DPC Planning Day
November 2009

Introduction
1. In November 2008 the DPC board and AGM of members adopted a new 3-year strategic plan for the period 2009-11. The plan included a rudimentary risk register which outlines some basic risks but which is incomplete and is likely to have changed since it was drawn up. The principal risk to the DPC pertains to loss of subscription revenues. The preponderance of publicly-funded bodies and the current dependence on annual subscriptions means that changes in the outlook of public finances would have a disproportionate impact on the DPC’s operations at a fixed point each year. Conversely, the DPC has only rudimentary tools to evaluate and respond to opportunities that might increase the DPC’s impact or portfolio.

2. The objective of the day was to make the DPC’s a more flexible organisation in the medium and longer term, better able to respond to the needs of its members and the threats and opportunities associated with its work. The group:
   - Undertook scenario planning for DPC.
   - Reviewed and updated the DPC’s risk register.
   - Created and reviewed the DPC’s opportunity register
   - Reviewed possible changes to DPC subscription structures

3. Specific outcomes from the day included:
   - Extended risk register with agreed responses to be adopted and reviewed at board meetings
   - DPC opportunity register to be adopted and reviewed at board meetings
   - A discussion and recommendations on revised membership subscription structure to facilitate longer term planning and lower barriers to membership

4. Sessions one and two were open to board members. The following attended: Bruno Longmore, Tim Gollins, Neil Grindley, Patricia Killiard, Cate Newton and Richard Ovenden. Katie Pekacar attended for Tola Dabiri, Iain Fleming attended for Patricia Kernaghan, Graham Pryor for Chris Rusbridge, and Adam Farquhar for Helen Shenton.

5. Sessions three and four were open to all members: Stephen Grace, Sarah Higgins and Dave Thompson joined the group.

Session One – scene setting
6. BL welcomed the group and reminded participants of the request to treat certain of the papers and discussions at the meeting in confidence (specifically Sessions one and two). This will facilitate more open discussion. WK then gave a brief account of the current state of the coalition. He noted the spread and nature of the membership, the status of several prospective members, the outputs for the current year, the calendar of events for the current year, staffing levels and the budget plan. He noted the healthy carry forward on the
balance and introduced a financial planning spreadsheet that allows forward projections of budget plans. A wide ranging and informed discussion with question and answer followed.

**Session two – scenario planning**

7. BL invited participants to this session and gave a brief review of the proceedings of the previous night. A wide ranging and informed discussion followed on the threats faced by the coalition, but principally on the opportunities which the coalition had, and how we might begin to exploit them.

**Session three – risk and opportunity assessment**

8. BL introduced this session. WK then explained that the strategic plan included a rudimentary risk register, but that this had not been thoroughly scrutinised or updated in the previous year. Moreover, recognising the opportunities that the coalition might develop, there is no explicit planning framework that identifies genuine opportunities as against apparent opportunities that in threatened the strategic plan. He invited participants to split into two groups and create a risk and opportunity register. Both of these, in particular the risk register would become part of the coalition’s routine management functions and are recommended for review at Board meetings.

9. Participants in the Risk Assessment group indentified a set of ‘event-based’ risks, their consequences, impact and likelihood. A series of mitigation strategies were identified and a new risk profile created that took account of this mitigation. The resulting risk register is appended (DPCPD09RR).

10. Participants in the Opportunity Assessment group created a typology of thematic opportunities that the coalition can exploit, focussing on those which were most likely to be of benefit and least challenging to realise. Notes of this discussion are appended (DPCPD09OR).

**Session four – three propositions**

11. WK introduced this session by noting the difficulty in creating a long term business plan for the DPC owing to annual funding cycles and a dependence on current board members. He noted the expectation of undertaking a membership re-structure, but as a separate task. He introduced three simple propositions relating to how subscriptions are gathered. Discussion followed on these three topics.

12. Participants were invited to discuss a new ‘three year’ membership. In principal, a longer term subscription period would improve planning and therefore improve our articulation of the value proposition of the coalition. It could reduce administration. In order to create an incentive, a discount for longer term subscriptions was proposed. Similarly a more flexible package based on quarterly payments was proposed which could support members with shorter planning cycles, but with a small increment to cover additional costs.
13. A lively and wide-ranging discussion ensued. The group concluded that a three year subscription would be advantageous, either as a single up-front payment or as a staged payment with three annual instalments agreed on a contractual basis. The group recommended a 10 percent discount for those who would commit to three years, and that the price would be fixed from the year the subscription was taken out. A number of participants said they would be willing and able to take out this subscription package, and because of the discount they would find it easier to ‘sell’ to their managers in the current financial climate.

14. A distinction was drawn between period of subscription and the interval between payments. Consequently, the group recommended a minimum of 12 months. The interval between payments could be quarterly so long as there was a commitment to complete the payment within the year. There was little appetite for a penalty for those who pay on short intervals, though participants recommended an absolute requirement that they commit to a minimum 12 month period.

15. A conversation followed on whether the discounting policy could be different for Associate and Board level members and on the large difference between the two rates (2K v 10K). It was noted that a review of the membership structure was already planned: discussions about the rewards and incentives of different kinds of membership can be progressed at that point.

16. Conversation also included the difficulty of creating an annual statement of member benefits. A longer planning horizon, such as would be created by allowing three year subscription, will permit this. Therefore a new annual statement of member benefits will be created and distributed before members are invoiced.

17. A second proposition was discussed on the topic of permitting members to vary their subscription date. It was noted that all subscriptions currently become due in August following the academic calendar and that this is not particularly convenient for those who use more traditional financial year ends. However the group felt that the effort and risk involved in shifting the year end seemed disproportionate to the rewards. A longer term planning horizon is more easily achieved by having a three-year commitment from members.

18. A third proposition was discussed on the topic of setting up ‘individual’ memberships through a new allied body. There was some agreement that individual membership was worth exploring, but that this should most properly be explored within the planned membership re-structure than as a temporary ‘fix’. The unused facility within the constitution to create ‘Allied Individuals’ was noted as a category of honorary membership – also to be explored in the planned membership restructure.

**Recommendations**
19. The planning day provided a good forum for discussion about the DPC but any changes proposed have to be adopted by the DPC Board in the first instance. Therefore, the planning day makes the following recommendations to the Board:

- That the Risk Register developed at the Planning Day be adopted and reviewed periodically by the Board (see 9 above)
- That the Opportunity Register developed at the Planning Day be adopted and reviewed periodically by the Board (see 10 above)
- That a three year subscription is offered and that members who commit to membership for that duration receive a ten percent discount in their annual fee in return for a contractual commitment that binds them to the coalition. The rate used to calculate this subscription will be three times the annual subscription on the year the commitment is made. Members may pay this as a lump sum or in three parts. (see 12-15 above)
- That a review of the DPC membership structure be carried out that better spells out the advantages of Board versus Associate membership, and which includes consideration of personal membership. (see 15 and 18 above)
- That an annual statement of member benefits be produced (see 16 above).
DPC Planning Day - Notes from ‘Opportunities’ Breakout session

(Neil Grindley, Richard Ovenden, Katie Peckacar, Adam Farquhar, Sarah Higgins, Carol Jackson)

Approach we used was to try and list all the opportunities that occurred to us (in a relatively unconstrained and open way) and then try and prioritise a list consisting of the top 5 preferred items.

**Top Five Opportunities for the DPC**
1. Engagement with Libraries and Archives Schools and Museums courses
2. Policy consultancy (+ positioning DPC as expert accreditation/skills audit organisation)
3. Engage with government and related initiatives that are addressing digital change management issues
4. Growing the membership in parallel with resolving the scale and remit of DPC executive and defining which opportunities match that remit (tying in with the strategy and the constitution)
5. Focus on training materials at appropriate levels (inc. Preservation for Dummies)

**The long list:**

*Neil*
Accreditation and related issues such as skills auditing. Position the DPC as an organisation that is capable of identifying and kite-marking levels of expertise in preservation

Online services. E.g. hosting and being the administrative home for the international file format registry. (i.e. take over running of the UDFR or similar) or an expert’s register or an organisational funding matchmaking register – etc …

Make available preservation workflows, templates, decision trees – online tools, toolkits, infokits.

Advice and guidance to preservation post-graduate curriculum designers. Try and align curricula approaches and terminology with workplace environments

Take the focus on ‘Access’ as the marketable face of preservation and make sure that DPC has a sufficient focus and offers reasonable resources for people to ensure that they have reasonable policies, technology and expectations in place around the discovery of and access to preserved material.

*Adam*
Get Preservation higher up the national agenda by engaging with incoming government ministers.

Sustain expertise by taking over from other groups. If the DCC is laying off staff, perhaps DPC can absorb some of that expertise. Other groups, organisations or missions that DPC could swallow up?
Move more determinedly into the international space, recruit members, work with international partners and coalitions

Aggressively engage with commercial entities and go through the FTSE100 index and identify target organisations

Align DPC more firmly with practitioners and communities of practice (rather than dealing with member organisations at full or associate level)

Identify and point to a range of high quality resources that meet basic practitioner needs. E.g. the paradigm workbook, maybe the preservation action handbook I’m contemplating commissioning from UKOLN

Preservation policy consultancy

Design a success action plan so that we know what success looks like.

Richard
Working with Library and Archives Schools and coordinating training and education offerings using input from DPC/DCC/ULCC/MLA … Get the library schools to join the DPC

Targeting and strategic connection with different sectoral players. Big publishers top of the list. DPC could easily identify organisations with a big preservation problem.

Carol
We should target the organisations that we can help

Hire another person (possibly 2 days a week) who has digital preservation expertise to complement William’s knowledge and add further expert capacity to the DPC core. Katie – perhaps do this via secondment, Adam – 18 months ago PLANETS might have contemplated leveraging the value of having one of their staff engaging with all the DPC members and enquirers by way of a user requirements gathering exercise. They would need to have expert knowledge. Richard - Maybe a DPC Fellowship? Maybe two posts – lo-expertise but keen and willing intern … and hi-expertise hi-value Fellow. Katie – How about a post-doc from one of the library schools for the intern? Sponsored intern? The Wiley-Blackwell intern? (who we then christened ‘The Wiley Intern’ … a rather cunning assistant with a hidden agenda!)

Go for EU funding (Carol suggested this with reservations)

Develop a proper marketing strategy that is tied into the strategy document

Katie
Engage with government opportunities, e.g. Technical Strategy Board, the Olympics

Link in with Tim Berners-Lee Linked Data and Public Information agenda
Extend the DPC reach by getting invited to sit on a whole bunch of committee tables. Who has got the reach to do what we can’t do?

Sarah
Engagement with Library, archive and museum schools and courses. They aren’t emerging with right skills. They have no support networks. We need to skill up at a lower level.

Adam – There is an opportunity over the next few years as the ratio of people dealing with printed materials/digital materials goes from – 20:1 at the moment (in the British Library at least) to perhaps 4:1. These are Adam’s finger in the wind figures. I’m surprised that the ratio is that high in favour of print!!

Need practical interventions that focus on mid-career reskilling and influence policies to match this approach. Empower the non-technologists to join in with basic preservation measures.

Support information specialists to have effective conversations with people on the IT technical side. There is a language interpretation problem and a need for support with articulating service requirements

The Short List
Sarah
1. Policy consultancy
2. Engaging with library and archive schools
Katie
1. Leveraging government
2. Working in the policy area
Carol
1. Engaging with library and archive schools
2. Preservation for Dummies guide
Richard
1. Engaging with libraries and archive schools (+interns and fellows)
2. Accreditation and engaging with policy advice and strategy
Adam
1. Leveraging government
2. Libraries and Archive Schools (growing the membership)
3. Organisational development and tracking the paradigm shift
Neil
1. Policy work
2. Growing the membership by embracing various opportunities and defining value propositions