

Meeting 12 jun 2005

LOLA International Board - EU Chapter

Meeting at London Heathrow on the 12th June 2005

Present:

Britt-Inger Lindell KommITS
Johan Van de Waal VIAG
Arend van Beek VIAG
Louis Massagé V-ICT-OR
Luc Stinissen V-ICT-OR
Caroline Ishola-Burrows Socitm
Bob Griffith Socitm

1. Welcome and Introductions – JvdW welcomed attendees. It was noted that Antionette has given birth to a little girl and both are doing well.

2. Minutes of 20th February 2005 – agreed.

3. Matters Arising:

(a) Attending the meeting – BI-L requested that the next LOLA EU Chapter meeting be deferred until after a KommITS planning meeting has taken place. The 9th/10th October 2005 starting at 4pm was agreed in Stockholm. As a result it was agreed to move the following meeting to the 29th/30th January 2006 in Amsterdam.

(b) Arrangements for LOLA EU Chapter – it was agreed that financial arrangements should be considered at the Amsterdam meeting. KommITs needs to consider its strategic direction and whether it can afford the time to support the LOLA EU Chapter arrangements. KommITS has a strong focus on EU funding and it has to decide how it will work in future. Socitm has adopted a far more commercial approach so that it is very proactive in the UK. This has resulted in major financial benefits to local government IT management (such as the Open Source Academy). BI-L noted that she does not have enough time to follow up all the initiatives. JvdW noted a recent conference that VIAG organised to give messages to central government. There was discussion about how VIAG and Socitm were formed and grew.

Microsoft – since the last meeting VIAG and V-ICT-OR have noticed much more support from Microsoft which has been of considerable benefit. JvdW has written to the resellers and negotiated better discounts, with the same prices as the UK. KommITS noted that MS are more attentive. The aim must be to get education prices for everyone. BG noted some Open Source initiatives. JvdW reported (after attending a European Solution Sharing Summit) that Newham had deployed an 'Open Application Sharing' platform (<http://oas.newham.gov.uk/>) in partnership with Microsoft (as part of their Solutions Sharing Network initiative. Under the terms of that partnership, Microsoft donated the platform licensing which included Sharepoint and Windows. The Newham OAS allows open access to a number of UK LRG solutions (e.g. the Borough of Kingston's e-Ticketing solution) as well as the LASC subscription community. For more information on the Microsoft Solutions Sharing Network initiative, please visit <http://www.microsoft.com/presspass/press/2004/nov04/11-08SSNPR.msp>.

(c) BG is trying to obtain a list of the software that MS has donated to Open Source. JvdW said that David Rowe from Microsoft understands the issues faced by LOLA members.

4. International Contacts for LOLA – BG produced a list with a LOLA

contact person. If any issues arise with a specific country then the LOLA contact should be informed. JvdW reported on the recent City Clerks Conference.

5. Better Connected International – BG quickly covered the background to the project which has been costed at £50,000. JvdW has invited Oracle to meet with LOLA to see if they can sponsor the project. Oracle is keen to support organisations that can communicate with customers more effectively.

6. Translating Documents from one Society to Another – JvdW has spoken to a person in Brussels who is involved with translation facilities. It was agreed that this should be a topic for the next meeting (JvdW will arrange).

7. EU Contacts – it was agreed that each Society would contact a local MEP (Member of the Economic Parliament) with regard to promoting the LOLA objectives. BG will produce a briefing paper to guide the contact.

8. Benchmarking – B-IL queried how Socitm benchmarks the local government services. BG provided background to the Socitm/UK use of KPIs which are free to use but extra chargeable services (benchmarking clubs, database, consultancy) are also available. The Socitm approach is that an authority measures its progress year on year by comparing against itself.

9. 2010 Vision – Socitm (SIAG Group) has held a workshop to define what local authorities will look like in 2010. BG described the process and this can be made available to LOLA members. JvdW noted that VIAG undertake a strategy meeting each year to indicate what VIAG needs to do to meet future challenges.

10. Association of City Clerks – an EU wide organisation that comprises SOLACE, VGS etc – it has EU wide conferences, workshops on specific topics etc so it is already ahead of LOLA. They are having problems regarding translation services, EU contacts etc. All the documents are provided in English. JvdW has spoken to the Secretary (Danish) and has seen the agenda for their international conference in Malta and mostly it was about ICT. It was agreed to invite the President and the Secretary of the City Clerks to Stockholm to meet and discuss common issues (8pm and dinner). Then we will all meet with the EU translator the next morning.

11. Microsoft – BG will ask Nigel Bates for an update on progress on the issues raised at the last meeting.

12. Meeting with Oracle – Mel Proudfoot from Oracle UK attended the meeting. JvdW welcomed MP and introduced everyone from LOLA. BG described how LOLA was formed. AvB described how VIAG operates, LM described how V-ICT-OR operates, B-IL described how KommITS operates and BG described how Socitm operates. BG then described the objectives of LOLA – better communication, sharing best practice, value for money, inform suppliers of the public sector of ICT needs. MP described his role in Oracle and covered the briefing produced by EMEA. Oracle worldwide has regions through which it sells its products. There are also industry groups which have their own information needs, one of which is public sector (with its own EMEA Vice President) which includes central government, local government, defence, justice and public safety. Herman Whilemans leads local government in EMEA. MP is a Senior Director in Herman's team and specialises in public safety and the public sector international organisations (NATO, EU and Institutions). Oracle has sales teams for most sectors but not public sector where their expertise is spread about within the various countries. The UK has the largest public sector team in EMEA and it is mainly independent. There is also a team in Budapest for the Eastern European countries. There are various Oracle communities that address issues and use the Oracle communications to pool expertise based on common core issues but with significant local variations. Oracle products do not have regional variations but there is a concept of add-ons which work on the core product.

BG raised the issue of the International Better Connected Project. Oracle EMEA feels that the EU is the best organisation to contact because it represents 25 countries. It was noted that LOLA members are focussed on communication with citizens rather than high level messages to which most citizens cannot relate. LOLA sees that its members have much in common and it wants to do things together that will benefit citizens. Oracle is looking at back office integration, multi-agency working and multi-channel service delivery but from an individual country point of view. There are no projects that involve various countries and therefore the LOLA concept is different. Oracle has seen that almost all its major customers are moving towards a single integrated architecture because it is easier to manage. In the UK Oracle sees that users need applications based on transactions and so Oracle are supplying pre-populated software. LOLA members want to share this service but how can Oracle make this available? Oracle has Global Exchange where it stores information and this is supported by emails, monthly meetings, etc so that everyone knows what is going on. NATO shares information and Oracle provides support. Oracle has many conflicting demands on its resources and needs to be convinced of the benefits of working with LOLA. MP is particularly interested in local authority channel strategies (example is the case of fly-tipping in Hull in the UK). MP queried the value of working with LOLA to deliver local solutions and the project currently identified by LOLA is International Better Connected. Oracle see hosting as the major future issue and as a result it is now providing hosting facilities for local authorities, possibly as part of a local authority type organisation. MP agreed to follow up:

(a) How can LOLA work with Oracle?

(b) How can LOLA find out what Oracle have done?

(c) Will Oracle participate in the International Better Connected project?

JvdW thanked Mel for his contribution and noted that he will wait for a response from Herman Whileman on behalf of Oracle EMEA. MP left the meeting.

13. Close-out – it was agreed that we should not accept substitutes for speakers as they do not have the authority. The outlook for co-operating with Oracle is not good for the International Better Connected project. If we cannot get supplier support then can each Society get together a team to look at the websites in their country only and produce an electronic summary which Socitm could then combine into an International Report? VIAG and V-ICTOR will see if they can co-operate on this and KommITS we see if the national agency will work to the Socitm Methodology (PLAN B).

14. Future Meetings:

9th/10th October 2005 – Stockholm

29th/30th January 2006 – Amsterdam

Bob Griffith

Socitm

June 2005