April 20, 2015

City of Surrey
Attn: Sean Simpson

Dear Mr. Simpson,

I am contacting you today on behalf of the Open Definition Advisory Council regarding our review of the Open Government License - Surrey version 2.0 for conformance as an open data license as defined by the Open Definition.

The Open Definition sets out principles to define ‘openness’ in relation to content and data and is widely recognized as the international standard to evaluate license openness.

It is an excellent indication of the City of Surrey’s commitment to open data that you have wished to ensure conformance with the Open Definition, and we are very grateful that you have engaged with us. You will recall that we sent our recommendations for the previous version, the Open Government License - Surrey 1.0 on January 31, 2015. Thank you for your quick response and for your willingness to address the concerns we outlined.

We have reviewed the Open Government License - Surrey 2.0 and have found it to be conformant with the Open Definition.

However we also wanted to bring to your attention a separate concern that was raised during our evaluation process. It was reported in our discussion list that someone from your organization may have indicated to a data user that if they were to use Surrey Open Data, then they would be required to publish the whole of any works they create under the Surrey License.

We realize this is not a requirement of the Open Government License - Surrey 2.0. Nevertheless it may be worthwhile checking with members of your organization who might be giving advice to users to make sure there is a common understanding that users can re-publish using any compatible license, so long as they meet the conditions in the Open Government License - Surrey 2.0 including the attribution requirement.

We appreciate you taking the time to participate in the license review process with the Open Definition Advisory Council. We hope that you will be able to keep in touch with future discussion of open licenses and the Open Definition, and contribute if you wish, by joining our mailing list [1].

Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of further assistance.

Kind regards,

Herb Lainchbury, Chair
on behalf of the Open Definition Advisory Council

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[1] https://lists.okfn.org/mailman/listinfo/od-discuss