Online Identity Assurance National Stakeholder Group

Paper number: OIASG-07

Paper title: Online Identity Assurance – Outline Plans for Alpha

Response: for information

Online Identity Assurance – Plans for Alpha

Purpose

1. For the National Stakeholder Group to note the proposed next steps of the Scottish Government's Online Identity Assurance Programme 'Alpha' phase.

Detail

2. The Plans for alpha at **Annex A** sets out what will be involved in the alpha (prototyping) phase of the programme.

Recommendation

3. That the Group notes the content of **Annex A**.

Scottish Government Online Identity Assurance Team

October 2018

Annex A

Online Identity Assurance Programme

Plans for Alpha

Context

1. The aim of the programme is to deliver the commitment to develop a common public sector approach to online identity assurance, as part of digital public services.

2. The intention is to create a common approach, which could apply across multiple public services. This would enable individuals to create a digital identity, which then can be used and re-used for secure access to personalised public services.

3. This would contribute to a simplified landscape to support access to public services, which is consistent across multiple providers and easy to use for individual citizens.

Work to date

4. Between January and May 2018 a discovery project comprising of service design and technical research was undertaken.

5. The discovery outputs concluded that a Scottish approach should:
   - be convenient, accessible and safe
   - allow for multiple digital identity solutions
   - allow for integration
   - support a common user experience
   - use alternative data sources where appropriate to assure the identity of those individuals without no financial footprint or proof of address

6. Since the conclusion of the discovery, the Online Identity Assurance Team have been engaged in pre-alpha planning work, in partnership with stakeholders. This has focused on ensuring that that there is sufficient readiness to move to the next stage and on finalising plans for a six-month alpha phase, planned to begin in November 2018.

Aims for Alpha

7. The alpha project is the programme's proof of concept phase, where a prototype solution will be developed and tested. The alpha aims to:
   - Explore the interaction of technical infrastructure, public service providers and identity provider solutions
   - Continue to embed the Scottish approach to service design with a strong focus on user testing and understanding user experience
   - Build a long term business case, including understanding costs and benefits
   - Help to decide if the programme should continue, stop, or if should be re-structured
   - Inform the approach to a future 'beta' (testing) phase, taking the work closer to providing a live service.

Plans for Alpha

8. The alpha work is planned to include two distinct work streams.

Stream One – social security and local authority 'proof of concept'

9. To provide a technical prototype for the creation and re-use of digital identities for access to Child DLA and the Single Person Council Tax Discount.

Scenario

10. Individuals applying for either:
    - Child DLA (Disability Living Allowance for Children, which helps with the extra costs of looking after a child with a disability) – involves Social Security Agency
    - Single Person Council Tax Discount (a discount that is applied if there is only one adult liable to pay council tax living in a property) – involves Local Authority

Detail

11. This project will involve both Social Security Agency and a Local Authority as the relying parties (within the model 'relying parties' are the public services which seek a proof of an individual's identity). This will test how well the approach supports the identity assurance required for progressing an individual's application for Child DLA or Single Person Council Tax Discount. The project will also test how an individual will also be able to re-use a digital identity created elsewhere within the prototype streams.

Stream Two – standards and interoperability

12. This is a desktop exercise to establish what standards are required for a Scottish approach to online identity assurance, and how this differs from those standards currently in use (e.g. those used by myaccount and GOV.UK Verify). Standards, within this context, are the rules for identity proofing an individual, and how the those rules would apply to organisations providing public services, technology or

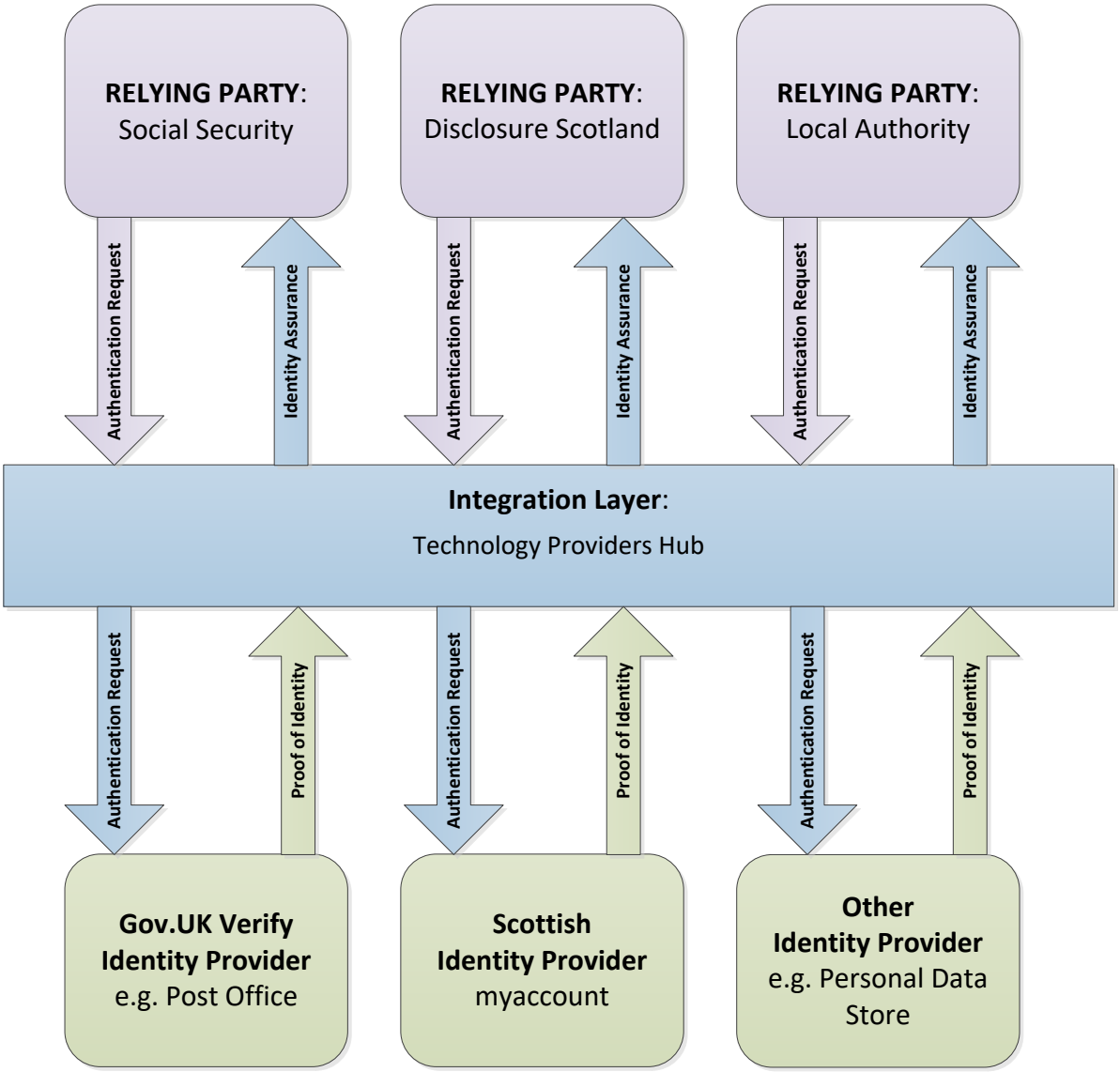
identity services. This work will look at GOV.UK Verify standards and other systems and explore how different routes, including commercial models, could meet those standards and provide best value for the Scottish public sector. This project will involve Disclosure Scotland and a Local Authority.

How the Alpha will work

13. Within the alpha, the proposal is to build and test a prototype model. The diagram over the page illustrates the path a relying party may take to assure an individual's identity, in order to progress their application for a service.

14. The initial design for the prototype is proposed to involve the following steps:

    a. An individual applies to access a public service online. The individual will provide certain information to help prove their identity (e.g. name, address, date of birth).
    b. The relying party sends an 'authentication request' to technology providers, acting within an 'integration layer'. The design involves an 'integration layer' as this would provide the means for several relying parties to interact with several identity providers in a standardised way. One of the benefits of doing this is to provide future flexibility to change the different parties involved on each side. There are also benefits for protecting an individual's privacy: e.g. identity provider organisations wouldn't be able to tell what public service the individual is seeking to access; and an individual applicant would potentially have a choice of identity provider.
    c. The technology provider within the integration layer will then direct the authentication request to one or more identity providers. The identity providers are organisations which will provide the proof of identity.
    d. Confirmation of the individual's identity is then sent from the identity provider back to the integration layer.
    e. The integration layer then provides confirmation of the individual's identity back to the relying party.



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