

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Draft Minutes
Tuesday 30 April 2019
Boardroom, London

Present

UK Statistics Authority

Sir David Norgrove (Chair)
Mr Jonathan Athow
Professor Sir Ian Diamond (via telephone)
Professor David Hand
Mr Ed Humpherson
Dr David Levy
Ms Nora Nanayakkara
Mr John Pullinger
Professor Sir Adrian Smith
Professor Anne Trefethen

Also in attendance

Mr Nick Bateson
Mr Iain Bell
Mr Owen Brace
Mr Robert Bumpstead (Secretariat)
Ms Ashley Flaherty (for item 8)
Ms Sarah Henry (for item 12)
Vanessa Holden (Secretariat)
Mr Ben Humberstone (for item 10)
Ms Frankie Kay (for item 13)
Ms Liz McKeown (for item 10)
Ms Heather Savory
Mr Robert Kent-Smith (for item 9)

Apologies

Ms Sian Jones (Deputy Chair)
Professor Jonathan Haskel

1. Apologies

1.1 Apologies were received from Ms Sian Jones and Professor Jonathan Haskel.

2. Declarations of interest

2.1 There were no new declarations of interest.

3. Minutes and matters arising from previous meetings

3.1 The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 28 March 2019, were agreed.

4. Report from the Authority Chair

4.1 The Chair reported that non-executive directors had met ahead of the Board, to discuss the recruitment of a new National Statistician.

4.2 Sir David also reported on his activity over the last month. On 2 April, he had appeared with Mr Humpherson and Mr Pullinger before the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee, to discuss the governance of statistics. The Committee had completed its sessions with witnesses and was now understood to be compiling its report.

4.3 Ms Savory and Mr Humpherson had hosted a Data Landscape Workshop on 10 April. Attendees from a variety of government departments, arm's length bodies and other civil society organisations met to discuss their respective roles, and build a better understanding of gaps and overlaps across the data landscape.

4.4 On 18 April the Chair had written to Lord Bourne, regarding his use of rough sleeping statistics. Discussions between the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) and the Ministry for Communities, Housing and Local Government continues, on how best to improve these statistics, and their value in public debate.

4.5 *[This section of the minute has been redacted. It will be published in full following the publication of the Authority's response to the Lords Economic Affairs Committee.]*

4.6 Sir David and Mr Pullinger would meet Kevin Foster MP, Interim Parliamentary Secretary (Minister for the Constitution), on 30 April.

5. Report from the Chair of the Regulation Committee

5.1 Professor Trefethen reported on the work of the Regulation Committee, which had met on 11 April 2019.

5.2 At its meeting, the Committee had discussed the OSR's ongoing review of its strategic priorities and approved the OSR business plan and work-plan for the 2019/20 period.

5.3 Committee members had also considered:

- i. the quality, trustworthiness and value of UK trade statistics;
- ii. a draft report on the coherence of official statistics;
- iii. a presentation on the use of data on education funding, in public debate;
- iv. devolved public finance statistics; and
- v. progress in delivering the recommendations of the OSR's data linkage report.

6. Report from the Chief Executive: Review of the year [SA(19)18]

6.1 Mr Pullinger introduced a report which provided an overview of performance during the financial year 2018/19.

6.2 During the fourth year of the *Better Statistics, Better Decisions* strategy, Mr Pullinger reported that the statistical system had taken important strides in improving the UK's evidence base. Statisticians had both delivered significant improvements to existing outputs, such as crime, migration and trade, and established a range of new insights on previously unmeasured phenomenon. Analysis on loneliness and suicide had been welcomed by policy-makers and other users, and in the context of economics, ONS were increasingly delivering statistics and analysis to decision-makers more rapidly.

6.3 Over the course of the year, ONS had also continued to modernise its technology and systems, migrating business surveys online, developing the basis for the Administrative Data Research Programme, and transferring 200 datasets to the new Data Access Platform.

6.4 The year had also brought challenges, including:

- i. data access – while ONS had managed to secure access to a wide range of new datasets, it faced significant challenges in accessing several key datasets;
- ii. technology – more work was to be done to ensure that the whole organisation used and benefitted from new technology, such as the Data Access Platform; and
- iii. culture – while this year's People Survey showed improvements in the engagement of the Authority's workforce, it had also revealed that there was more to be done to improve diversity.

6.5 The Board thanked Mr Pullinger and his team for their work. They discussed the relationships between ONS and other actors across the data landscape.

7. Report from the Director General for Regulation [SA(19)19]

7.1 Mr Humpherson provided an update on regulation activity since the last Board meeting.

7.2 Following discussion at the Regulation Committee in April, the OSR would publish a position statement on their strategic priorities as an exposure draft in June. Mr Humpherson suggested that there was more the OSR could do to ensure its mission and work were well understood by stakeholders.

7.3 More generally, the OSR were focussing on how best to maximise the impact of its work. Mr Humpherson suggested that while the office achieved impact with immediate audiences (such as producers), there was scope to achieve wider recognition of the OSR's work.

8. HR update - diversity [SA(19)20]

8.1 Ms Flaherty introduced a paper which provided an overview of the diversity makeup of the organisation. She explained that the people and business services team had an ambition to make the ONS a brilliant place to work, where everyone is empowered to excel individually and collectively.

8.2 Ms Flaherty suggested that while the organisation had good practices and policies in place with respect to diversity, in some pockets of the organisation these practices could be improved. As Mr Pullinger had suggested within his Chief Executive report, a cultural shift was needed. To that end, ONS were developing a new People Strategy.

8.3 Board members welcomed the commitment made to improving the diversity of the workforce, and encouraged the people and business services team to consider what immediate actions might be taken to meet this long-term commitment. It was agreed that it would be important to consider how progress against any people strategy might be measured.

8.4 Board members would consider a draft People Strategy at the June Authority Board meeting.

9. Blue Book [SA(19)21]

9.1 Mr Athow and Mr Kent-Smith introduced a paper, outlining progress to date on the 2019 Blue Book.

9.2 Mr Rob Kent-Smith explained that the 2019 Blue Book, the data for which will be published in September, marks a fundamental change in how GDP and other measures are calculated. The introductions of these methodological changes also marked ONS's response to the final recommendations made by Professor Sir Charles Bean in his review of economic statistics.

9.3 Board members discussed: potential impacts of the changes upon estimates of Gross National Income (GNI); the challenges of communicating improvements in methodology; and, the potential interplay between Blue Book changes and productivity estimates.

10. Health Statistics [SA(19)22]

10.1 Ms McKeown and Mr Humberstone introduced a paper regarding work to improve the scope, coherence and impact of the UK's health statistics.

10.2 Board members heard that the OSR had instigated a systemic review of health statistics in 2015. At that time, they identified a complex landscape of statistics producers and outputs in England and a lack of coherence.

10.3 Ms McKeown and Mr Humberstone reported that since then ONS, in partnership with producers across the statistical system, had taken a range of steps to improve the coherence and coverage of health statistics. Statisticians had published a range of new analyses on issues including mortality, student suicide, and the deaths of homeless people. Board members heard, however, that challenges remained, particularly in the areas of adult social care, mental health and disability.

10.4 Mr Humpherson welcomed the work undertaken by ONS in responding to the OSR's recommendations on improving the coherence, impact and influence of health statistics, highlighting in particular the work undertaken on trends in mortality. He suggested that there remained more to do to encourage all producers of health statistics to drive improvement and join up data on health.

10.5 Board members recorded their thanks to all those analysts who had contributed to recent improvements on health statistics, and considered other areas in which statisticians might seek to make similar improvements.

11. Business Plan [SA(19)23]

11.1 Mr Bateson introduced a draft business plan for the Board's approval, prior to publication.

11.2 Board members discussed plans for 19/20 to 20/21, and agreed to the publication of the business plan, subject to changes being made to more closely align the plan with the Authority's strategy, and to address presentational issues.

11.3 The board also discussed the upcoming Spending Review, requesting an update from Mr Bateson on plans at the Board's June meeting.

12. Data acquisition [SA(19)24]

12.1 Ms Henry introduced a paper which provided an update on the status of data acquisition for statistical production and research under the Digital Economy Act 2017.

12.2 Since Ms Henry's last update to the Board, ONS had acquired several key datasets (including Higher Education Statistics Agency data, VAT data from HMRC's new system and data on the digital uptake of driving licenses, from DVLA). Nonetheless challenges remained in accessing new administrative data sources. The negotiations to secure agreement to share, and the associated work to put in place necessary arrangements had sometimes proven protracted and difficult.

12.3 The Board heard that the National Statistician had convened an advisory panel on data-linkage to support the organisation in managing the challenges which had arisen in the context of data access. The panel was expected to report back to the National Statistician ahead of the summer, at which time further advice would be provided to the Authority Board on next steps.

12.4 Board members thanked Ms Henry and her teams for their work in securing access to new sources of data for statistical and research purposes, and offered their support in responding to emerging challenges.

13. Census update: Legislation [SA(19)25]

- 13.1 Mr Bell, Ms Kay and Mr Laffan provided an update on plans for Census Legislation.
- 13.2 Board members heard that the main stages to securing necessary legislation for conducting the Census were:
- i. primary legislation to give the questions on sexual orientation and gender identity the same legally voluntary status as the question on religion;
 - ii. the Census Order, which gives the date of the Census and sets out the details of the information to be collected from the Census questions. Currently agreed with the Cabinet Office to aim for this to be passed by December 2019; and
 - iii. Census Regulations, which describe the delivery and collection methodology, prescribing the measures to ensure the security of the completed forms and confidentiality of the data in the field, and details of the questions to be used. The Regulations are subject to the negative resolution procedure of both Houses. Current agreement with the Cabinet Office and Welsh Assembly is to aim for this to be achieved by April 2020.
- 13.3 Board members discussed and approved the draft *Census (Return Particulars and Removal of Penalties) Bill*.

14. Census update: Dress Rehearsal preparations

- 14.1 Mr Bell and Ms Kay reported that progress on the Census and Data Collection Transformation Programme remained positive.
- 14.2 Operational preparations for the 2019 collection rehearsal, due to be held in October, continued. The Board heard that a detailed Census Operational Delivery Plan had been completed, a review of the end-to-end design for communal establishments undertaken, and further testing conducted, to help shape incident management processes.
- 14.3 Board members discussed the possible impacts of data acquisition challenges on the Census enumeration strategy. They thanked Mr Bell and Ms Kay for their update and asked the Authority's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee consider programme reporting in further detail, on behalf of the Board.

15. Any other business

- 15.1 Ms Savory reported that this was her last meeting of the Authority Board, before she commenced a new role. She thanked the Data Capability team for their work in transforming the technology available to the UK's statisticians. Board members thanked her for the leadership she had provided since joining the organisation in 2015.
- 15.2 The Chair also thanked Dr Levy for his contributions, ahead of his departure from the Authority Board on 31 May. During his seven years on the Board, Dr Levy had played an invaluable role in working with the ONS and the OSR to improve the communication of official statistics.
- 15.3 The Authority Board would meet next on Tuesday 18 June 2019 at 10:30 in Titchfield.

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Agenda

30 April 2019, 09:15 to 14:00, Boardroom, London

Chair: Sir David Norgrove

Apologies: Ms Sian Jones

Attendees: Ms Ashley Flaherty (for item 6), Ms Sarah Henry (for item 10), Ms Frankie Kay (for item 11), Mr Robert Kent-Smith (for item 7), Ms Liz McKeown (for item 8)

09:15 – 09:45: Non-Executive Session

1 09:45-09:50 5 mins	Minutes and matters arising from previous meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declarations of interest 	Meeting of 28 March 2019
2 09:50-10:05 15 mins	Report from the Authority Chair	Oral report Sir David Norgrove
3 10:05-10:10 5 mins	Report from Committee Chair <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulation Committee 	Oral report Prof. Anne Trefethen
4 10:10-10:45 35 mins	Report from the Chief Executive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the year 	SA(19)18 Mr John Pullinger
5 10:45-11:00 15 mins	Report from the Director-General for Regulation	SA(19)19 Mr Ed Humpherson
6 11:00-11:30 30 mins	HR update - diversity	SA(19)20 Ms Ashley Flaherty
7 11:30-11:55 25 mins	Blue Book	SA(19)21 Mr Jonathan Athow Mr Rob Kent-Smith

11:55-12:15: Lunch

8 12:15-12:30 15 mins	Health statistics	SA(19)22 Ms Liz McKeown
9 12:30-12:55 25 mins	Business Plan	SA(19)23 Mr Nick Bateson
10 12:55-13:25 30 mins	Data acquisition	SA(19)24 Ms Sarah Henry
11 13:25-13:55 30 mins	Census update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme Update • Legislative plans 	SA(19)25 Mr Iain Bell Ms Frankie Kay
12 13:55-14:00 5 mins	Any other business	

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Chief Executive's Report: Review of the Year 2018/19

Purpose

1. This report provides the Board with an overview of performance during the financial year 2018/19 to help guide finalisation of the Annual Report and set the scene for the work programme for the year ahead.
2. This paper sets out how we have delivered against our strategy, 'Better Statistics, Better Decisions' (BSBD) during 2018/19. It identifies a number of key achievements and the challenges faced together with a brief summary of our direction for 2019/20.

Summary

3. 2018/19 is the fourth year of our strategy, 'Better Statistics, Better Decisions'. From the outset, we had envisaged stages of implementation, each building on the other.
4. During 2018/19 we have looked to embed the deliverables from across the strategy period and continue to progress elements of our planned transformation that are as yet incomplete.
5. We continue to make progress on our transformation programmes developing our internal systems and the outputs we generate. This includes progressing our Census and Data Collection Transformation Programme (CDCTP); and the Economic Statistics Transformation Programme (ESTP).
6. We have recognised the risks that balancing our support for legacy systems, core to the delivery of established outputs, raise in the context of developing our people and systems to deliver transformation of the entire system in line with our strategy. We will continue to develop more capable systems, develop our technical and analytical skills and deliver more innovative and helpful statistics to build upon the delivery of established outputs and the ways of working that give ONS and the GSS our reputation.
7. Our strategic risks also recognise the challenges present in the external environment we operate in, particularly as the delivery of our transformation programmes progress; and the complexity of the data and digital environment, continues to develop. It is perhaps inevitable that during this time the organisation will face increases in complexity and potentially increased, or changing, risk. How we manage these risks has been and will continue to be critical to our ongoing success. We need to ensure our framework for corporate governance and control fully supports this. Operating in a post EU Exit environment will place pressures on GSS as we seek to provide the clearest possible picture of the impact of this change on the United Kingdom.

Review of the Year

8. We have set out some of the key highlights for 2018/19 in the bullets below.
 - i. We have brought together stakeholders to address gaps in evidence, notably in the areas of health and housing.
 - ii. We have improved our range of analysis to impact nationally and locally both across economic statistics and key public policy areas including loneliness, the ageing society and young people.
 - iii. Through Economic Statistics transformation and the recommendations stemming from the Bean Review we have continued to develop and embed new ways of working in this area. This has included developing trade statistics in the context of EU Exit; the publication of monthly GDP estimates; and a revised reflection of student loans in the National Accounts. We have also advanced preparations for Blue Book 19 which will present the culmination of a significant degree of development across Economic Statistics.

- iv. We have started work to provide analysis and fill gaps across areas of society that are hard to reach such as in respect of homeless people, bereaved children, and in understanding the disaggregation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
 - v. Critically in respect of CDCTP we have put in place the key contractual and legislative building blocks that will underpin Census 2021, including the publication of the Census White Paper. We have made further progress on the design of the Census and delivered the initial technologies for our first Census user journey. We have continued our build up to Census rehearsal in Autumn 2019.
 - vi. This work has been achieved in parallel with the continued migration of business surveys online and the development of testing of social surveys.
 - vii. In terms of our Field Force we have introduced significant changes in the technology deployed and have decommissioned legacy corporate systems used in this area aligning it with the rest of the organisation. These changes will deliver long-term benefits in terms of flexibility and productivity.
 - viii. To bolster our role and reinforce the importance of the use, management and security of data we have published a full suite of policies.
 - ix. We have developed the basis for the Admin Data Research Programme, which will make admin data accessible for accredited research purposes.
 - x. To date we have successfully transferred 100 individual data sets to our Data Access Platform, but still face significant challenges with access to some data which would yield the highest impact.
 - xi. We have expanded the reach and impact of the Data Science Campus – including delivery of projects across economic indicators and public health and continued to deliver trained data scientists for government.
 - xii. We have embedded delivery of our security strategy, including substantially improved monitoring of threats and risks.
 - xiii. We have realigned our governance structure and have made progress in driving clarity through our planning and the monitoring of our key deliverables, workforce and finances. Together with a bolstering of our governance around procurement activity and income generation we enter the new financial year on a sounder footing. This is a work in progress with more tangible benefits anticipated during 2019/20.
 - xiv. We have achieved signed off Business Cases and secured ongoing funding to the end of the current Spending Review (SR) period in respect of ESTP and Bean and have successfully bid for additional funding to enable us to carry on our work supporting EU Exit on trade statistics.
 - xv. We have also celebrated a range of milestones in terms of our engagement with the statistical profession including 50 years of the Government Statistical Services and 10 years of UK Statistics Authority; hosted the Commonwealth Heads of Statistics conference; held the Economic Statistics Centre of Excellence conference; and established the Data Science Advisory Board.
9. While our successes during the year have been significant, we have also faced challenges and certain areas have not progressed as quickly as we had originally planned.
- i. The House of Lords report on the Retail Prices Index (RPI) increased the focus on the quality of RPI in the context of the breadth of its usage across government and commercial contracts.
 - ii. The Census programme turned Amber/Red in December. It is at a critical phase of its delivery with a tight timescale for a meaningful dress rehearsal. A stronger focus on design and assurance would have helped the programme develop quicker and made the timescales for the year ahead less restricted. That said, we are confident that we can make up lost ground and have initiated action plans during the latter part of 2018/19 and through 2019/20 to recover.

- iii. Social Survey transformation has delivered significant change to the social survey teams. This has resulted in a dip in response rates. Similarly, we are addressing this through an action plan support our field teams.
- iv. Quality issues have presented challenges during the period with the revised role of the Statistical and Analytical Priorities Group aimed at mitigating the issues faced. We have had the highest recorded number of major and minor errors during the 2018/19. There remains a high reliance on off system mechanisms and tools and key risks around systems resilience which will need further action to address during 2019/20.
- v. While we have access to and the ability to link increasing amounts of data from government and commercial sources, we are yet to gain access to data sets that will form the basis of key economic indicators and the basis of an administrative data focused replacement system for population and migration statistics. In particular, we have experienced continual delays in gaining access through our colleagues elsewhere in government to critical data sets such as PAYE/RTI and NINO – which poses a real threat to our overall delivery progress in 2019/20.
- vi. We have made significant progress in improving our corporate technology estate and key outdated technology such as that in support of Life Events statistics; but the core technology that supports the production of statistics still needs to be resolved. We have plans in place across Economic Statistics to resolve significant elements of our technology; but the extent of progress in this area and across Population and Public Policy is dependent on investment in the next Spending Review and the success of our approach to administrative data.
- vii. Our transformation has focussed on developing significant changes to our front-line staff and supporting technologies, but our corporate functions need to be a focus for the future so that the organisation is supported and enabled effectively. We need to improve our overall co-ordination at a corporate level and ensure that we plan our usage of resources and people effectively.

People

10. For the third consecutive year, ONS has seen general increases in engagement scores as measured by the Civil Service People Survey. This is a positive outcome given the uncertain environment dominated by a complex change agenda.
11. Whilst engagement has been incrementally improving, it still falls short of where we would like to be. Following the loss of an Employment Tribunal case we are redoubling our efforts on diversity and inclusion to ensure that all staff get opportunities and can realise their potential. Key actions agreed by the executive team, following People Survey recommendations, are to:
 - continue to tackle bullying and harassment through evidence-based insight;
 - enable all employees to understand and communicate both theirs and the organisations purpose; and
 - create more mechanisms for employee voice, ensuring we are communicating and seeking feedback at the most appropriate times.
12. Our approach is feeding through into our revised People Strategy under the three themes: creating a high performing culture; developing a flexible and capable workforce and; becoming an innovative and competitive employer. Key Performance Indicators will be delivered to support the measurement of the People Strategy as it is socialised across the organisation.

Financial Position

13. In terms of financial management during the year we have seen a gradual improvement with our overall position being managed much closer to budget throughout the year. We have however still experienced positions during the year where forecast demand has

significantly exceeded supply. Management to budget still requires a significant degree of central control.

14. During 2018/19 we have achieved the efficiency target originally set out as part of SR15 for the year. This continues the trajectory for prior years within this SR period. There remains a risk however that during 2019/20 we will face pressures in achieving the last year efficiency target. Discussions are ongoing with HM Treasury around our overall achievement of financial objectives for the SR15 period.

Challenges Ahead

15. Our current business plan to the end of the strategic period is in draft and has been the subject of iterative review through successive Authority Board, NSEG and Portfolio and Investment Committee discussions. The plan represents a continuation of delivery towards our strategy but provides greater clarity and focus around our outcomes, priorities, revised strategic risks and critically a refresh of our Key Performance Indicators to ensure their fitness for purpose. The current iteration of the plan is included with the papers for the Board.
16. It is clear there are challenges in the delivery of the plan, be it acquisition of data, improving how that data is disseminated from across the statistical system, ensuring our data security and handling frameworks are effective, putting the technology and methods in place for new products and services, improving our internal governance and control around investment, and driving the transformation of the GSS.
17. Moving forward into 2019/20 and beyond into the next strategic period there will be a degree of reflection required in terms of how we intend to continue to progress in certain areas and an element of completion of certain outstanding objectives.

Conclusion

18. The last year has been an important year in the delivery of the strategy. There has been good progress in some areas, and less progress in others. If we can keep our focus and manage risks well, I believe we can be confident of a successful year ahead.

John Pullinger, April 2019

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Report from the Director General for Regulation

Purpose

1. This paper provides an update on regulation activity since the last Board meeting.

Recommendation

2. Members of the Board are invited to note the activities and proposed actions.

Discussion

3. Key activities since the last Board meeting include:
 - i. *Business plan and work programme*: We publish our annual business plan and detailed work programme on 25 April. The business plan is more streamlined than in previous years, and the work programme has been cut back from the 2018/19 programme, which was too large and over-optimistic. I think we have learned the lessons from last year's planning round.
 - ii. *PACAC*: At the evidence session, we explained our approach and thinking. The hearings (ours and the preceding evidence sessions) did make me think we need to do more to raise our profile.
 - iii. *Strategy*: Following the Board meeting in March and subsequent Regulation Committee, we have modified our proposals on strategy. We will not now publish a 2019-23 strategy until there is a new production strategy for ONS and the Government Statistical Service (GSS), to which we will respond. However, the PACAC hearings have convinced me that the regulatory side of the Authority is not well explained or presented, and we could do a lot more to raise understanding of what we do and why. We will therefore publish a position statement – effectively our mission – as an exposure draft in June. This will explain what OSR is and what we do, and provide the framework against which we publish annual business plans and develop work programmes. By publishing as an exposure draft, we will enable stakeholders to provide input, and we will aim to hold a series of stakeholder events over the summer.
 - iv. *Data landscape workshop*: The Authority hosted a workshop that brought together a wide range of entities with some role in the data governance landscape, including ONS, OSR, the Geospatial Commission, the Information Commissioner, the National Archives, and several others. Attendees were very positive about the Authority playing this convening role. There was also a clear appetite to develop a common understanding of key underlying concepts like “ownership”, “public good” and “trust”. We will look to reconvene to make progress on these questions.
 - v. *Education statistics*: Following the Regulation Committee, I continue to consider the content of a general stock take of the Department for Education's use of statistics. This remains a frequent source of complaint from members of the public.
 - vi. *Skills*: We published our systemic review of statistics on skills on 9 April. The review highlighted the strengths of statistics on skills and brought out gaps, both in coverage (e.g. on outcomes from apprenticeships) and in accessibility to underlying data.
 - vii. *Homelessness*: We continue to be concerned about MHCLG's rough sleeping statistics, and just before Easter the Chair wrote to the Department's Minister in the House of Lords about statements on the reduction in the numbers of rough sleepers, which placed a weight on the statistics that they cannot bear.
 - viii. *Health*: We are starting to focus on social care and mental health, both of which will be the focus of systemic reviews in the course of 2019/20.
 - ix. *Police*: We published our policing review on 27 March. It did not create the negative coverage that the Home Office feared. We consider that it is a ground-breaking

report for us, highlighting the public uses of statistics to a greater extent than many of our past reports.

- x. OSR development: We are re-advertising for the role of head of our Edinburgh office.
 - xi. External engagement: My main external engagements have been the PACAC hearings and the data landscape workshop.
4. The main challenges on my mind are profile and impact. We do good work in a focused and effective way, yet our organisational profile is not as high as I would like. Whilst we have an impact on the immediate audiences – the producers and users of a particular set of statistics – I think there may be scope for wider recognition of our work. The Skills and Policing Reviews – both strong outputs – illustrate this phenomenon. This will be a recurring theme for 2019/20.

Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation, 23 April 2019

List of Annexes

Annex A Regulatory Activities

Regulatory Activities April 2019

Economy	Business, industry, energy and trade	Health and social care	Labour Market and welfare
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment: HM Treasury's PESA: Country and Regional Analysis – presented to Reg Com 11th April.. • Compliance Check: HMRC Measuring Tax Gaps draft report share with HMRC. ONS Experimental Labour productivity statistics – draft shared with ONS • Systemic Review: Public Value of devolved public finance statistics – looking to publish findings using multi-media platforms by May. • Economy Domain Plan 2019-20: Shared with Devolved Nations' economics leads and with ONS orally endorsed the programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction Output and Prices: Designated as National Statistics on the 7th of March. • UK Trade: Developing triangulation asymmetry analysis, paper at the April Reg Comm. • Annual Purchases Survey – OSR's initial analysis being drawn together. Meeting conducted with ONS Supply and Use team. • CC: Initial analysis currently being undertaken into insolvency statistics and their reliability as a measure of predicting economic prosperity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systemic Reviews: Mental Health review now underway. Social Care review work ongoing: Wales report due in May, Scottish roundtable scheduled for June, England report to be discussed in July Reg Com. • Casework: Letter published on NHS England's A&E winter performance. Private letter to academic following complaint about MHCLG's use of FGM statistics. Published investigation into the impact of late registrations of death on mortality statistics. • Published: Blog about the clinical review of NHS access measures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance checks: Completed DWP CCs and expecting to publish letter early May.
Crime and Justice	Housing, planning and local services	Children, education and skills	Agriculture and Environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systemic Reviews: Policing statistics review paper published and project closure report completed. Media analysis ongoing, the report to be published in summer. • Compliance check: Starting work on Northern Ireland Safer Communities Survey CC. This will be the second of three CCs resulting in an assessment report. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance checks: Started CC of Welsh Govt Affordable Housing in Wales. • Systemic reviews: ONS published their updated workplan on 4 April along with a blog. OSR published response blog on 5 April. • Casework: Letter published on MHCLG's rough sleeping statistics following use in HoL debate. • Domain activities: Attending Scot Housing Policy Conference on 24 April jointly run by UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence and Policy Scotland. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Casework: Set up project team to review RSS concerns regarding Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework. Currently meeting stakeholders. Progressing further casework on school cuts, use of DfE figures around academy performance and Ofsted ratings. • Skills Systemic Review: Published review on 9 April. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment: Reviewing producer evidence for assessment of Defra's air quality and emissions of air pollutants statistics. Sharing findings with Defra in early May.
Security, defence and intl relations	Travel, transport and tourism	Population	Culture and Identity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domain Activity: EH meeting with DfID DG on 18th March. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment: Starting National Rail Passenger Survey Assessment with Transport Focus. • Compliance Checks: Continuing CC of GB Road Safety Statistics. • Domain Activities: Engaging with Dept for Transport and Office of Rail and Road on Vol Application of Code by Transport organisations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment: Engaging with 3 census offices on phase 1 assessment. Submission of TQV statements on progress expected end of March. • Compliance Check: Wrote to ONS, NRS and NISRA re CC of National population projections • Migration statistics: Reviewing stats published in Feb and awaiting spring update on progress on transformation programme. • Domain activities: Attending ONS roadshows – 'our transformation agenda and the 2021 Census' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance Check: Preparing CC into Industry Statistics produced by Gambling Commission. • Casework: Publishing a letter to Arts Council England following a query raised about its official statistics.

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

A Brilliant Civil Service: becoming the UK's most inclusive employer

Purpose

1. To provide the Authority Board with an overview of the diversity makeup of the organisation. In light of the Board's discussion on gender diversity at its February meeting, it will focus on the organisation's priority area of 'gender at senior leadership levels.'

Recommendation

2. Members of the Board are invited to:
 - i. note the diversity makeup of the organisation and our progress against our diversity and inclusion goals;
 - ii. note the initiatives in place to improve gender diversity; and
 - iii. suggest areas of focus which will feed into the broader work of the People Strategy.

Background

3. We have an ambition to make the ONS a brilliant place to work, where everyone is empowered to excel individually and collectively. To achieve this, we think we should focus on three themes:
 - i. creating a high performing culture;
 - ii. developing flexible, diverse, capable teams; and
 - iii. being an innovative and competitive organisation.
4. People should feel that they can be themselves at work, valued for the distinct perspective they bring, and able to go as far as their talents will take them - irrespective of their sex, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, faith, age or socio-economic background.
5. To create this inclusive culture, the Authority has developed its own Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, which is aligned to the Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. Following the loss of an Employment Tribunal case, we are redoubling our efforts on diversity and inclusion to ensure that all staff get opportunities and can realise their potential.
6. To guide and monitor our progress, there is a Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Steering Group chaired by the National Statistician. The Deputy National Statisticians are diversity and inclusion champions, who regularly and visibly promote inclusive working practices. Our Steering Group is supported by our various network groups, which cover all the protected characteristics.
7. Each business area is required to include a diversity and inclusion element into their local business plans and every employee is required to have a personal diversity and inclusion goal as part of their performance and development plan.
8. Within the People and Business Services Directorate there is a diversity and inclusion specialist, who provides advice on D&I matters and who guides the D&I Strategy.
9. There are Civil Service diversity and inclusion goals that have been centrally set around the priority areas of gender, ethnicity, disability and sexual identity. In line with the Civil Service D&I Strategy, the Authority has set stretching incremental goals from 2018 to 2022. The gender focus is to increase the representation of women at Senior Civil Service (SCS) level and in the feeder grades.

10. In addition, the Authority considers the travel to work population, other Government departments and Civil Service data to monitor our progress. We are currently making good progress, but we clearly need to maintain this.

Discussion

The Authority's diversity make-up

11. **We consider** the Authority's progress against the wider Civil Service make up and the Annual Population Survey comparison where applicable.¹ We also monitor our progress at each Authority site against regional travel to work data.
12. As at 31 December 2018, 55.5 per cent of our employees are women. 6.4 per cent are from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME) background. 11.9 per cent are disabled. 4.2 per cent are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Other (LGBO).
13. Over the past three years our representation of disabled, BAME and LGBO employees has steadily increased. However, we have made quicker progress in increasing our disabled employee representation than in our BAME and LGBO representation.
14. Our disabled employee representation at 11.9 per cent is above Civil Service representation of 10.0 per cent but below the wider working population of 14.0 per cent.
15. In contrast, our BAME employee representation of 6.4 per cent does not compare favorably with either the wider Civil Service of 12.0 per cent or the wider working population representation of 12.7 per cent.
16. Our LGBO employee representation of 4.2 per cent is broadly in line with the Civil Service of 4.6 per cent. The representation of the wider working population is unknown.
17. Our disabled, BAME and women employees are mainly employed in the Authority's junior grade roles. Our progress in more senior grades, specifically at the Senior Civil Service (SCS) level has been small, so there is no significant improvement in the areas of disability (3.6 per cent) or BAME (2.0 per cent) to report. However, the number of women in SCS roles has risen from 28.6 per cent in December 2016, to 34.0 per cent in December 2018.

People Survey 2018 highlights

18. The annual People Survey looks at attitudes to and experiences of working in the Authority. Several of the People Survey questions relate to inclusion and the 2018 survey results highlight that there are differences by demographic characteristics in inclusion related scores.
19. Women have slightly higher levels of engagement compared to men, 64.4 per cent compared to 62.0 per cent. However, they also report higher levels of discrimination in the workplace, 11.1 per cent compared to 9.4 per cent. Whilst this is concerning, it should be noted that overall scores for engagement and inclusion and fair treatment have seen a positive steady rise over the years.
20. The top five reasons given for discrimination in the 2018 People Survey were; grade/pay/responsibilities; other grounds; working pattern; age; and gender.
21. Despite gender appearing as one of the top five reasons for discrimination, women, who make up 55.5 percent of the Authority's workforce, are more likely than men to be promoted and offered temporary promotion. However, this switches at the more senior grades in favour of men.

¹ The Annual Population Survey (APS) is a combined survey of households in Great Britain. For the purpose of this paper, it has been taken to be the whole of the UK to best compare the UK Statistics Authority as a whole.

Gender Pay Gap

22. The Authority's 2018 gender pay gap highlights a gender pay gap in favour of men. The mean hourly wage for women was 11.8 per cent lower than for men; and the median hourly wage for women was 11.2 per cent lower than for men.
23. Progression through our pay ranges is equally applied to all employees, however, our gender pay gap is largely driven by women occupying 62.0 per cent of the lowest paid jobs and only 45.0 per cent of the highest paid jobs.
24. Whilst 44.0 per cent of the Authority's women received a bonus payment in 2017/18, compared to 39.0 per cent of men, the data shows that the median bonus pay for women was 2.2 per cent lower than men's and the mean bonus pay for women was 12.5 percent lower than men's.
25. In 2018, we introduced a real-time reward and recognition scheme. There are three levels of reward; peer to peer, team and individual. Whilst this new scheme is more inclusive towards all protected characteristics, the full year results have highlighted that whilst more women than men receive an award, men receive higher monetary awards. This has negatively impacted on our bonus pay gap. Addressing this issue is a key action for us in 2019/20 and a review of best practices and improvements is already in progress.
26. An area that will have the greatest impact on our gender pay gap is to increase the number of women at SCS and feeder grades within the Authority and particularly at SCS 2 and above.

Benchmarking against other U.K. organisations

27. The Authority has good flexible working and family friendly policies in place.
28. The Authority regularly benchmarks itself against U.K. organisations. We are a Disability Confident employer and in the past year have taken part in the Working Families Top Employer Benchmark, the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index and the Mind Workplace Wellbeing Index.
29. We placed top 40 position for the Working Families Top Employer Benchmark in our first year of application.
30. We ranked 135 out of 445 in the Stonewall Workplace Index. An increased focus on transgender issues within the organisation would have placed us within the Top 100.
31. We received a Silver Award in the Mind Workplace Wellbeing Index in our first year of application.
32. Furthermore, in 2018, we commissioned Chwarae Teg, Wales leading gender equality charity, to undertake its Fair Play Employer benchmark. The purpose of this was to review the key issues around women's equality within the Authority and to understand more about the culture of what we do well and what we need to improve. The survey of the Authority's employees shows that it matches or out performs the average of other public sector organisations in the benchmarking group (345 organisations).
33. Feedback from these benchmarking activities has informed the development of our recent diversity and inclusion activities and plan for 2019/20.
34. Whilst we have good flexible working and family friendly policies in place, we need to focus our efforts on a cultural shift towards embracing part-time and job share working patterns as the norm and design our jobs and work accordingly. The Authority's full-time/part-time split highlights that when you exclude our Field Force employees, circa 80 per cent of our employees work full-time.

Conclusion

35. The Authority is committed to developing an organisation where everyone is valued for the distinct perspective they bring. This needs to be a whole organisational focus and not just one for HR. Progress has been made in developing an inclusive workplace and there are many areas of good practice. However, there is still more to do. Increasing diversity at senior levels is a priority, in particular, increasing the number of women, BAME and disabled employee representation.
36. We have many good policies in place to support a flexible and inclusive workplace, however, the integration of our strategy with culture, needs to improve. Embedding consistent practices across the organisation and identifying and eliminating areas of poor practice is a priority.
37. We need to invest more in this area and will be doing so as part of the People Strategy, as well as the development and strengthening of the HR team, which is currently in train.
38. The Diversity and Inclusion Strategy will be revised in 2019/20, with the ambition of becoming far more holistic and integrated into our business practices and most importantly our culture.
39. We will continue to use evidence-based assessment to drive our decision making, set challenging goals and monitor our progress.

Philippa Bonay and Ashley Flaherty, People and Business Services, 23 April 2019

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Update on 2019 Blue Book production

Purpose

1. This paper outlines progress to date on the 2019 Blue Book, which marks a fundamental change in how GDP and other measures are calculated.

Recommendations

2. The Board is invited to:
 - i. note the complexity of changes being made to the production of Blue Book 2019;
 - ii. note the summary of progress to date; and
 - iii. note the stakeholder communications plan.

Background

3. The Blue Book is the annual statement of the UK's National Accounts, including the latest estimates of GDP and other related macroeconomic indicators. We also use each Blue Book to introduce improvements to methods and new data sources.
4. The 2019 Blue Book, the data for which will be published in September, marks a fundamental change in how GDP and other measures are calculated. The changes are complex and arguably the biggest change to underlying methods in a generation. They will bring us into line with international best practice and were also recommendations of the Bean review.
5. We announced planned improvements in October 2018. The first data from the new methods and processes – annual data up to 2017 – will be published in June. We then publish further information over the summer before having a final dataset published on 30 September.

Discussion

6. Our current processes operate on two broad, but fairly rigid, principles:
 - i. the core components of the national accounts are set in nominal terms and locked down before we take account of price changes, meaning we cannot reassess the nominal data in the knowledge of the impact of price effects; and
 - ii. an assumption that the prices of goods and services sold by companies moves in the same way as the inputs of goods and services companies buy, which does not account for different ways that companies price their products.
7. The rigidity of these principles makes calculations easier, but less realistic. The new processes and methods address both limitations and gives us more flexibility in how the numbers are produced.

Methods

8. Our new framework allows a more holistic approach. It utilises all available data in deriving GDP, particularly over how we take account of inflation (known as 'deflation'). We are now able to use a full range of price information to account for price change for all GDP components, in a consistent and coherent way.
9. This new way of calculating the National Accounts is complex computationally, and we have had to rebuild our IT systems to accommodate it. We have now completed and tested the IT and it is working well.
10. The challenge with the Blue Book data is its complexity. The Blue Book dataset includes hundreds of thousands of data points that must all reconcile. The National Accounts include 114 separate products/industries (e.g. car production) and the quarterly data goes back in some cases as far as 1955, and annual data back to 1948.

11. The remaining challenges in our methods are two-fold:
 - i. checking that the results are plausible and explicable. Our data will come under scrutiny and we need to be able to explain changes over time and differences with previous estimates. This needs to be done for each of the 114 products/industries across 8 sectors; and
 - ii. how we use the flexibility that underpins our new methods, for example how to take account of inflation. The new approach gives us the scope to use a greater number of data sources, blending them to get the best conceptual mix.
12. These challenges are connected. If the initial results are implausible, the new flexibility will allow us to reassess the source data to provide higher quality estimates.
13. Importantly, the new flexibility must be used within certain constraints e.g. the sum of every industry must add to the total.
14. In summary, we are confident in the new approach and encouraged by the initial headline numbers. The challenges are below the top-level statistics and we will have to accept some variation in quality between the data for the different industries. In addition, this new approach will show the strengths and weaknesses of the various data inputs, for example, are we measuring the price of IT goods and services well enough? We are therefore likely to come out of this process with a 'snagging' list of issues to deal with in future Blue Books.

Risks and next steps

15. There are two main risks to delivering the ambitious programme of change for Blue Book 2019:
 - i. timeliness of delivery – failure to deliver Blue Book on time; and
 - ii. being unable to explain fundamental shifts in the current or historical economic data, especially where they may seem counter intuitive. This may, in turn, lead to questions about the quality of our data.
16. This second risk is of greatest concern. Previous challenges with the Blue Book have arisen from the failure to explain why our view of the economy has changed.
17. We have improved the way we explain significant improvements in recent years. We have set out a plan to manage our communications in three main steps:
 - i. developing a clear story about what has changed in our methods and what this means for our measurement of the economy. Most importantly why new methods are improvements;
 - ii. proactively managing our main stakeholders to ensure we are aware of any concerns. The main stakeholders are HM Treasury, the Bank of England and the Office for Budget Responsibility; and
 - iii. releasing data and information as it becomes available, to minimise the 'surprise' from the revised data.

Conclusion

18. We are on course to deliver the Blue Book to timescale and implementing the key changes we planned for. The timeframe for delivery is pressured, specifically going through each of the 114 products/industries to ensure the results are credible. While there are still unknowns in the round, we are confident we will have a good set of statistics ready for publication in September 2019.

Jonathan Athow, Deputy National Statistician, Economic Statistics
Rob Kent-Smith, Deputy Director, National Accounts Coordination

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Health Statistics Supporting Longer Healthier Lives for All

Purpose

1. This paper provides an update on the development of scope, coherence and impact of health statistics in ONS and across the Government Statistical Service (GSS).

Recommendations

2. Members of the Authority Board are invited to:
 - i. note progress on the scope, coherence and impact of health statistics; and
 - ii. note that there remains much to do – the priorities for the year ahead are **set out** in more detail below.

Background

3. Health statistics are produced across the GSS, from statistics measuring health services and outcomes, through to lifestyle risk factors (including smoking, drinking and drug use), and including mortality by cause for different groups of the population.
4. In 2015 the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) instigated a systemic review of health statistics. They discovered a complex landscape of statistics producers and outputs in England and a lack of coherence. In response to this, the English Health Statistics Steering Group (EHSSG) was established.
5. This paper updates on progress made to improve coherence, current priorities and future challenges.

Discussion

Making progress

6. Over the last twelve months ONS has made substantial progress in putting user's requirements at the heart of our analysis and improving the evidence base for decision makers in health.
7. To support users, a new "health landscape" has been published. This enables users to identify the current evidence base on a wide range of health themes and get up to date statistics in one place, irrespective of the producer organisation. This work has been nominated by the chair of the Royal Statistical Society (RSS) Health Stats User Group for the Champion Award for Official Statistics.
8. Innovative methods have enabled ONS to produce new analysis of key trends and patterns, shining new light on key policy issues identified as priorities by our users. These have included:
 - i. Mortality trends – new statistical analysis demonstrating the flattening of mortality improvements from 2011, which had previously persisted for 100 years. ONS is working with PHE to establish the cause for this change and its likely consequence for life expectancy.
 - ii. Student suicide – linkage of Higher Education Statistics Authority data to death records have resulted in new support services targeted at the most vulnerable students. This work has been nominated by the Chair of the National Suicide Prevention Group for the RSS Champion Award for Official Statistics.
 - iii. Deaths of homeless people – the first official estimates of this vulnerable group, including cause and geography of the deaths. This was created by linking death

records to lists of shelters, hostels and estimating for missingness. Coverage of this analysis had the highest user engagement scores (i.e. users reading beyond the headline) of any report on the BBC website on the day of release, despite competing with the story of the closure of Gatwick Airport due to drone activity. This work has been nominated by a Guardian journalist for the RSS Champion Award for Official Statistics.

9. There has been a clear improvement in the impact of health statistics and analysis produced by ONS. To ensure that the level and scale of impact is sustainable, several strategic changes have been made.
10. The Health Analysis and Life Events Division have set a clear direction for health statistics across ONS with a strategy identifying how the organisation contributes to the delivery of *Better Statistics, Better Decisions*. This prioritises the areas of focus, and the role that ONS plays in the production of health statistics across government.
11. ONS have taken a leadership role across the GSS on health statistics through its chair of the EHSSG. Regular outputs and analysis have been aligned and made more coherent. For example, ONS and Public Health England (PHE) have collaborated on the production and dissemination of cancer survival statistics, bringing together domain expertise on cancer registration and statistical expertise on quality, and dissemination/publication. Another example is the smoking theme, where disjointed publications from three organisations (ONS, PHE and NHS Digital) have been replaced with a coherent set of publications on the same day, with an overarching joint document pulling out the key points for users.
12. EHSSG theme groups have been established, looking at cross-cutting health themes from lifestyle risk factors (smoking, obesity, drugs and alcohol) through to health service provision (efficiency). These report to EHSSG and have workplans related to evidence gaps in their area of expertise.
13. Internationally, ONS has taken a leadership role in the production of UK figures on health and social care. For example, it has taken over the production of key health service indicators for the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) from NHS Digital. ONS is also leading for the UK on the development of the new International Classification of Disease 11 (ICD-11) coding framework with the United Nations working group.

Current work

14. Our current work builds on the foundations and the direction set by the health strategy.
15. The Cabinet Secretary is chairing a Spending Review strategy group on “Longer, healthier lives for all”. ONS is contributing to the development of the policy response through the provision of data and analysis, and critically through the development of a new “health index” for England. This was recommended by the Chief Medical Officer, and initial work by ONS has proposed an index comprising of three domains:
 - i. Healthy people – e.g. disease prevalence, healthy life expectancy;
 - ii. Healthy lives – e.g. modifiable risk factors such as smoking, alcohol/drug consumption, exercise, obesity; and
 - iii. Healthy places – e.g. housing quality, air quality, transport, employment and crime.
16. In addition to the health index, ONS is currently working on the feasibility of health projections. These would work in tandem with the population projections and give an estimate of the future health of the population, as well as the numbers. This project is supported by HM Treasury and Department for Work and Pensions and will be important for future work force planning through the Industrial Strategy.

17. ONS have carried out rapid evidence reviews for both Adult Social Care and disability in conjunction with the Cabinet Office. The work on Adult Social Care is helping to inform a forthcoming government green paper, and we are working with Cabinet Office on a Disability dashboard to help inform and evaluate the impact of policy on key indicators.
18. New data sharing powers under the Digital Economy Act 2017 have been used for the first time to access Hospital Episode Statistics. ONS will be using these data to try and model healthy life expectancy at small geographic level. Currently the difference in absolute life expectancy between those living in the wealthiest areas and the poorest areas is about seven years, whereas the difference in healthy life expectancy is close to 20 years. Utilising the administrative data will enable the development of person-based estimates on an annual basis (rather than the area-based estimates using three years' worth of Annual Population Survey data as at present).
19. ONS is working with Department of Health and Social Care to bring together data, analysts, domain expertise and infrastructure to help answer key policy questions. The pilot for this approach is analysis of the social, economic and environmental characteristics associated with common mental health disorders. This project will link administrative data relating to health, benefits and income to Census and mortality data.
20. ONS is working with the "four nations group on health statistics" to build on the improvements in coherence across the English health statistics landscape. This will help promulgate the lessons learnt in each of the four nations, and share innovations, such as the analysis of the deaths of homeless people. This will improve comparability of statistics and enable analysis at the UK level, which is particularly important with plans for the analysis of the forthcoming 2021 Census.
21. Plans are in place to develop analytical capacity in health. A new apprenticeship, led by PHE, has been established (Health and Social Care Intelligence). The specification of this apprenticeship has been developed by PHE with the Health Stats User Group and ONS.
22. ONS is helping with capability building across the GSS. The Health landscape is being used by other departments, including the Department of Transport, as an example of how to make sense of a complex statistical landscape.

Challenges

23. Despite the good progress to develop health statistics across the GSS, there is a lot to do to establish an effective and comprehensive evidence base for decision-makers.
24. The health landscape for England dashboard has made it possible to review evidence gaps. After liaising with statistics users and decision-makers across government we have identified three key gaps – adult social care, mental health and disability.
25. Access to data and analytical resource will be critical to fill these gaps. For example, the data for adult social care is fragmented and inconsistent being collected by 150 local authority providers and numerous private sector providers, without common data standards or consistent definitions. Spending Review bids for resource, data and systems to plug these gaps are being developed. These will be led by ONS on behalf of the GSS in conjunction with the four nations group for health.
26. ONS is collaborating with several external organisations and academic groups to help with this work, including the Health Foundation and several Economic and Social Research Council funded centres on the economic and social value of health and adult social care. This makes the most of synergies across the health analysis sector and avoids unnecessary duplication. However, the Digital Economy Act 2017 precludes research access to health data and we are establishing new ways of working to maximise collaboration.

Conclusion

27. Improving the coherence across English health statistics was the first step in identifying the evidence gaps and data needs to build a comprehensive picture of health across England. These lessons will now be applied to the wider UK picture through the four nations group. Utilising innovative methods, new sources of data and the opportunities afforded by the Digital Economy Act are enabling ONS to shine a light on the health-related issues of some of the most vulnerable in society. By focussing on the social, economic and environmental impacts on health and vice versa, ONS has carved out a unique role at the centre of Government, supporting policy in a new way with new insight.

Ben Humberstone, Health Analysis and Life Events, 30 April 2019

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Business Plan

This document has been published on the UK Statistics Authority website, at:

<https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/strategy-and-business-plan/>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Data Acquisition under the Digital Economy Act – update report

Purpose

1. This paper provides an update on the status of data acquisition for statistical production and research under the Digital Economy Act 2017 (DEA), highlights the risks and describes mitigation plans.

Recommendations

2. The Board is invited to:
 - i. note the progress made to date and the plans set out in the Methods, Data and Research (MDR) Business Plan; and
 - ii. note the challenges and risks associated with data acquisition.

Background

3. At the Authority Board meeting in September 2018, members discussed the successes and challenges ONS faced in the acquisition of data for statistical production and research under the DEA.
4. ONS has ambitious plans for using non-survey data, to deliver our strategy *Better Statistics, Better Decisions*. ONS uses the powers of the DEA to acquire data, which gives a right of access to data for statistical and research purposes. There are substantial potential public good benefits that could be derived from linkage of data as set out in the OSR report 'Joining up data for Better Statistics'. However, by linking data there may be an increased security risk.
5. This paper provides an update on the successes and challenges of working with data suppliers to acquire non-survey for statistics purposes, the expected impact on our transformation plans, and outlines ONS' approach to data acquisition, including the plans to transform the Data as a Service (DaaS) team that leads this work for the office.

Working with supplier organisations to acquire data

6. ONS regularly receives and uses hundreds of different datasets, from both public and private sector organisations. When appropriate arrangements for a dataset have been put in place with a supplier, regular delivery is usually routine and trouble-free. The work that underpins the initial delivery includes putting in place agreements to share the data. This covers the roles and responsibilities of each party and specifically ONS' role in storing and using the data securely.
7. ONS has identified many new datasets for acquisition. We continue to make good progress against those plans for many acquisitions. Since our last update in September 2018, we have acquired key datasets, including: Higher Education Statistics Agency Student Record data, Hospital Episode Statistics and Patient Register from NHS Digital, VAT re-supply from HMRC's new system, and Digital Uptake of Driving Licence data from DVLA.
8. While the DEA was given Royal Assent in April 2017, with the Codes of Practice published in 2018, data suppliers are still grappling with the best way for them to comply with ONS requests for data. The landscape is increasingly complex with GDPR and concerns over national security seemingly competing with the equally important requirement to share data for public benefit. As a result, challenges include:
 - i. Negotiations to secure agreement to share, and the associated work to put in place the legal and other arrangements can be protracted and difficult.

- ii. The cost to organisations of extracting and providing data can be high. ONS has paid the cost of data extraction in some cases, but we expect costs in 2019 / 20 to be high, possibly around £2million.
 - iii. Data suppliers, concerned about the risks of sharing data with ONS, are frequently seeking assurance from other agencies. In many cases, these agencies do not see their role as making a decision for a data supplier.
9. The DEA includes mechanisms for the Statistics Authority to escalate and enforce the legal right of access to data either through notices (other public authorities, commercial organisations) or by reporting cases of non-compliance to Parliament (Government Departments). ONS has not yet used these mechanisms, choosing instead to explore all options through collaboration, engagement and informal escalation. ONS has only issued one enforcement notice to NHS Digital, at the request of this data supplier.
10. When things are not progressing to plan for an acquisition there is a clear escalation route. Through the divisional director of DaaS, the key account holder (usually director) is informed and resolution is sought with the relevant counterpart at the organisation. If this is not successful, wider ONS SCS colleagues are informed and further attempts are made to resolve any blockers. Ultimately it is raised to the National Statistician if there remain issues. Resolution is sought at Permanent Secretary level before using the available legal powers.
11. Our biggest challenges to date in data acquisition have arisen with two government departments. The highest priority datasets that are needed to support transformation of both economic statistics and population and migration statistics are HMRC's PAYE RTI and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) CIS data. Discussions are taking place between the Permanent Secretaries of DWP, HMRC and ONS, and the Technical Director at NCSC.
12. The National Statistician has established an Advisory Panel on Data Linkage. The panel has been convened by the National Statistician to assess the impact on the benefits arising from alternative approaches to mitigating security risks and to advise accordingly. The conclusions of the panel will be used by the National Statistician, and the Permanent Secretaries of HMRC and DWP to understand the risks and possible mitigations of sharing data, and to make a risk-based decision on how the datasets could best be shared with ONS.
13. Given that the position with HMRC and DWP is fast-moving and changing daily, an update on the latest position will be provided at the meeting.

Implications for our public commitments

14. The extended timescales for HMRC's PAYE RTI and DWP's CIS data are leading to increased concerns in ONS around data acquisition under the DEA, and this is impacting on delivery confidence around some of the transformation plans. Business areas have been asked to ensure that the plans for 19/20 incorporate mitigation and make best use of the data and technology that is available.
15. **Economic statistics:** The greatest impact on Economic Statistics Transformation deliverables and realisation of benefits has been caused by delays in the acquisition of PAYE RTI data. We originally anticipated that data would be incorporated into economic statistics by September 2019. The delays have caused us to split out our milestones and move them to the right. Short term statistics transformed using PAYE is now planned for December 2020 and fully transformed monthly labour market statistics for December 2021. We have moved the transformation of structural labour market statistics from our SR15 to our SR19 plans. PAYE RTI was an enabler for the transformation of the Labour Market and Households division, we have reviewed proposals to identify areas that can be transformed without PAYE RTI data e.g. moving from legacy to strategic systems to

reduce the impact benefit realisation. In terms of benefits the biggest impact of these delays is on our 'better informed decisions' and 'improved ONS reputation'.

16. **The Census:** Council tax is one of the most important sources for quality assuring the Census, and for validating field outcomes during the data collection phase. We have acquired data from over 100 Local Authorities and are targeting our acquisition activity to meet Census deadlines of December 2019 deadline for use in field collection, and July 2020 for validating outcomes. HMRC RTI and self-assessment (SA) data and DWP CIS data are also needed to quality assure the Census and to produce local area income statistics - a commitment in the Census White Paper.
17. **Population and migration statistics:** DWP CIS and HMRC RTI is fundamental to the success of the Admin Data Census, which would provide population stocks and flows. We need CIS, RTI (and other critical datasets) available by June 19 to deliver the Transformation milestone to put admin at the core of population and migration statistics by Spring 2020. Home Office data are key for identifying non-VISA migrants (e.g. EU citizens) and meeting the quality needs for an admin first approach for migration statistics- data are needed by Summer 2019 if we are to meet Spring 2020 milestone.
18. **Household finance statistics:** Council tax data, RTI and CIS are also needed for household finance statistics, to deliver quality improvements and cost reductions through replacing survey questions with administrative data. We need the admin data to ensure income, poverty and inequality statistics don't exclude key parts of our population and are of sufficient quality.

ONS approach to data acquisition

Data as a Service

19. Data as a Service (DaaS) was established to lead and co-ordinate ONS data acquisition activity. DaaS actively support supplier organisations through the process to acquire data. For many, this is the first time that they have needed to provide large datasets outside of their own organisations. ONS supports both their internal decision-making process, providing the justification for the supply of data and the technical teams handling the request. The 'set up' of these supplies is complex and unique to each data supplier but the process for supplying data regularly is more straightforward, not least because the agreements with each supplier addresses the long-term nature of our requirements.
20. It is becoming increasingly apparent that acquiring data is not always quick or easy. External data holders can struggle to meet ONS ambitions, and there are few real ways to support suppliers who do not fully cooperate. The issues are systemic, and ONS through DaaS, needs to engage at a more senior level to win hearts and minds of decision makers, in addition to working on the technical aspects of the data shares. In parallel, work is underway to assess the true cost of supplying data especially for organisations who have outsourced their IT.
21. MDR is about to launch a consultation on a new Target Operating Model for DaaS. The ambition is that we have more professional roles with the seniority to lead conversations with senior suppliers. To deliver this, we need to increase our capability and skills. We need to be stronger leaders, more confident and empowered, skilled in negotiating and influencing senior stakeholders.

Research Support

22. ONS is part of the Administrative Data Research – UK partnership (ADR UK), an ESRC investment to significantly increase secure access to, use of and the impact from Government data. One of ONS's roles in ADR UK is to source data for research projects, and we are doing this in three ways:

- i. where ONS are acquiring data for use in the production of statistics, we also seek permission to make de-identified extracts of some of these sources available for research;
- ii. engaging with Departments to identify data that they would support research use of, and providing a service to help them achieve this using our established processes and systems; and
- iii. working with other ADR UK partners to identify Government data of strategic research interest, that could answer a range of research questions aligned to Government priorities, and then negotiating for access to these.

The investment in ONS was received in March 2019. Prior to that ONS started building the Research Service and Data Access team at risk and secured early wins relating to Education research using the National Pupil Database and other education data sets. Conversation continue in relation to Longitudinal Educational Outcomes (LEO). Other examples include the National Energy Efficiency Data from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and homelessness data from the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), who are planning to make data available in the secure research service next year.

Conclusion

23. The DEA offers opportunities to improve statistics using administrative and transactional data. However, while the legal right of access is an important enabler, there are other challenges and difficulties associated with the acquisition of data, especially first-time around. High priority datasets have been identified, working across ONS, and we are actively managing discussions with the owners of these datasets to set up and maintain their supply. We continue to make improvements to our approach and processes in line with the lessons we have learned from our experience to date.

Sarah Henry, Methods. Data. Research, ONS, April 2019

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Census

Part One: Rehearsal – Update

Purpose

1. This paper provides the Authority Board the latest update on plans for the Census 2021.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Board are asked to note:
 - i. progress of the programme remains positive, with activities continuing at pace for operational readiness, outstanding actions on the recovery plan completed from across the organisation and baselining of the plan. Whilst ongoing risks remain, the scope of the rehearsal remains confirmed and includes all elements, with the option to treat Communal Establishments (CEs) online or paper based still open. Both options provide a meaningful test with a paper-based approach still testing all integrations;
 - ii. the Gateway 0/3 review, as mentioned at the last Board meeting, was held in March and gave the programme a status of Amber;
 - iii. progress on the submission of the Full Business Case; and
 - iv. work is continuing to develop contingency options around available administrative data.

Programme Status

3. Metrics to monitor progress are being developed. Further refinement on these continues each month, however, to note, the build decision around CEs is still pending and this is reflected in the Build metrics (at tab 15 of this pack).
4. A Gateway 0/3 review was held in March 2019. The review team found the programme “in a good place” with people “working together with a passion for a successful outcome”. They noted that “processes are improving, and senior attention is being paid to improve governance and reporting”. They acknowledged the challenges of the last 6 months and felt that the programme “is moving in the right trajectory and successful delivery appears feasible”. Therefore, they gave the programme a status of Amber.
5. The build and test of digital products continues, with the simplest user journey “Hannah” now at v0.3 and the most complex, “Fred”, at v0.1. Build activities for peripheral systems have also progressed, for example, bulk files are now loadable into the Field Work Management Tool, the Field Staff Data Repository has been built and the base build of eQ has now moved off the original Labour Market Survey (LMS) format to its own Census one.
6. The milestone to deliver a fully integrated service design (incorporating suppliers’ design) was achieved on 29 March as planned.

Census Collection Rehearsal

7. Operational preparations for the collection rehearsal continue. Progress includes:
 - i. completion of the detailed Census Operations Delivery Plan which includes all lower level Operational Plans and the Field Operation design for Households, Communal Establishments (CEs) and Census Coverage Survey (CCS). These continue to be refined with internal delivery partners to ensure alignment with operational milestones;
 - ii. a full review of the end-to-end design for CE’s was undertaken in March 2019 to establish requirements for DST, with particular focus on hand delivery of questionnaires and UACs required for Care Homes. Further work will be completed during April to review CE field procedures for other communal establishment types;

- iii. a further Operational Management quarterly test was executed to exercise the Operational Governance, this also lightly practised an Incident Management (IM) resolver group, helping to shape the IM process and system testing. The front-end solution for the central Management Information (MI) solution was agreed during this period; and
 - iv. initial volumetric dependencies were delivered to the Questionnaire Print Supplier to schedule to allow the print run of test materials.
8. Commercial activities also continue with the final remaining procurements and the key suppliers now on boarded. Additionally:
- i. the contract for Census Field Operations Technology has been awarded and the contract recommendation for the Lone Worker Devices has been agreed at Census Approvals Group (CAG);
 - ii. monthly Key Suppliers whole day meetings are now being held. These enable a strong focus on the Operational Delivery Plans and Testing schedules. At the most recent event on 05 April 2019, the suppliers gave an update of their current progress and interface working. Without exception all were reporting positive progress and collaboration;
 - iii. Contacts for Assisted Digital and Field Self Help have now been awarded;
 - iv. A contract variation has been agreed with Total Mobile for the delivery of the Field Work Management Tool (FWMT) to support the Rehearsal and 2021 Census. Agreement has been reached with NISRA about how key design differences will be met.
9. Census Field Operations have now commenced with the “Early Starters” recruitment process which began on 16 April 2019, with the first field staff in post due to commence their initial training on 17 June 2019. General field recruitment starts on 21 June 2019;
10. The CCS field operations team has also undertaken a test of digital property listings in Ceredigion, highlighting connectivity and access problems in rural areas. All CCS materials were tested in a completed for the public consultation on CCS which took place on 01 March 2019. Following this consultation, final drafts will have further testing by Data Collection Methodology.

Processing and Outputs Rehearsal

11. Collaborative work between business, MDR and DST teams have taken place to ensure a shared understanding of the Census rehearsals and the required deliverables for the Processing and Outputs rehearsal in February 2020. The full scope of the rehearsal will be presented for sign off at the Transformation Board on 29th April.
12. Progress has been made in the development of code in the Data Access Platform (DAP) for the cleaning and coding activities. However, challenges remain within the technical space, particularly with the interface between eQ, database management and the provision of a statistical analysis system (SAS) server within DAP.
13. Work with the Data Science Campus progresses to create a 2021 data set in the volumes required for rehearsal (15-20 million records) to allow a full test of the end to end flow of this volume of data through the Processing environment. This data will then flow into a simulated live environment to produce simulated Outputs.
14. Work continues to ensure continuing collaboration of all teams ready for a go/no go assurance point on 13 January 2020.

Business Case Submission

15. The Business Case has now been updated, presented to key holders and signed off at the Portfolio Investment Committee on 09 April 2019. Once approved by the CDCTP Programme Board at the end of May 2019 it will be approved by the National Statistician and the Chair of the UK Statistics Authority before submission to HMT mid-May 2019. A

Treasury Approval Point will then be held and approval is expected to be given at the end of July 2019. In the meantime, HMT have granted a six-month period of cover (to September 2019).

Conclusion

16. We remain aware of the need to retain focus on key deliverables and milestones to ensure a successful rehearsal. Further work continues to ensure the rehearsal is as meaningful as possible – including decisions on whether communal establishments will be online or paper-based.

Iain Bell, Deputy National Statistician for Population and Public Policy

Frankie Kay, Director of Transformation, Population and Public Policy, 23 April 2019

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Census *Part Two: Census Legislation*

Purpose

1. This paper provides the Authority with an update on Census legislation and seeks approval of a draft Bill and accompanying documents, to make questions on sexual orientation and gender identity legally voluntary.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Board are asked to discuss and approve the following documents at the Board meeting:
 - i. discuss and approve the draft Bill (at **Annex A**); and
 - ii. discuss and approved the draft Explanatory Notes (at **Annex B**);
 - iii. note progress with the Census Order and Regulations; and
 - iv. note that a handling plan is currently being drafted and the Authority will be asked for their views and input into this as soon as a draft is available

Summary

The White Paper and Census Legislation

3. The Census White Paper, published in December 2018, set out the Government's position on our proposals for conducting the Census, including the information to be collected through the Census.
4. The main stages to securing the necessary legislation for conducting the Census are:
 - i. primary legislation to give the questions on sexual orientation and gender identity the same legally voluntary status as the question on religion;
 - ii. the Census Order, which gives the date of the Census and sets out the details of the information to be collected from the Census questions. Currently agreed with the Cabinet Office to aim for this to be passed by December 2019; and
 - iii. the Census Regulations, which describe the delivery and collection methodology, prescribing the measures to ensure the security of the completed forms and confidentiality of the data in the field, and details of the questions to be used. The Regulations are subject to the negative resolution procedure of both Houses. Current agreement with the Cabinet Office and Welsh Assembly is to aim for this to be achieved by April 2020.

Primary legislation

5. In the Census White Paper, we recommended two new questions on sexual orientation and gender identity, for those who are aged 16 and over. We also said that nobody will need to tell us their sexual orientation or gender identity if they don't want to and that the UK Statistics Authority and the government would consider how to ensure this is the case.
6. The Government's preference is to make these two questions voluntary on the same basis as the religious question. This requires primary legislation to amend the Census Act.
7. Parliamentary Counsel have now drafted the Bill to enable the asking of voluntary questions in the Census on Sexual Orientation and the Gender Identity in England and Wales. The Bill is planned for submission to Parliamentary Business and Legislation Committee on 30 April.

The Census Act

8. Under the Act, only particulars which are listed in the Schedule to the Act can be included in a Census return. These are:
 - 1 Names, sex, age.
 - 2 Occupation, profession, trade or employment
 - 3 Nationality, birthplace, race, language.
 - 4 Place of abode and character of dwelling.
 - 5 Condition as to marriage or civil partnership, relation to head of family, issue born in marriage.
 - 5A Religion
 - 6 Any other matters with respect to which it is desirable to obtain statistical information with a view to ascertaining the social or civil condition of the population.
9. Religion was added to the Schedule through the Census (Amendment) Act 2000. As religion was not considered a matter of either social or civil condition at the time the Act was introduced, it was not considered within scope of subsection 6 of the Schedule. As part of the debates on this amendment it was agreed the question on religion should be voluntary. This was achieved by removing the penalty for refusing or neglecting to answer this question.
10. Ministers are yet to agree whether to extend the Bill to cover Northern Ireland; the Bill attached has been revised to also make questions on these topics voluntary in Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland Census is covered by separate legislation.
11. Subject to Ministers agreeing to extend the Bill to cover Northern Ireland, we will be working closely with the Northern Ireland Office and Northern Ireland Statistics Research Agency. It should be noted that while Northern Ireland are planning to ask the sexual orientation in their Census, they are not planning to ask the gender identity question.

Draft Bill

12. The Draft Bill:
 - i. adds "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" to the particulars listed in the Schedule to the Census Act 1920;
 - ii. adds "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" to section 8 (penalties), subsection 1A of the Act such that no person shall be liable to a penalty for refusing or neglecting to state any particulars in respect of sexual orientation or gender identity; and
 - iii. makes equivalent changes to the Census Act (Northern Ireland) 1969.
13. This mirrors the approach taken for the Census (Amendment) Act 2000. It would also mirror the scope of the Bill introduced into the Scottish Parliament in October to include these questions in the Scottish census and remove the penalties for non-response.
14. While sexual orientation and gender identity are considered to fall within the remit of subsection 6 of the Schedule, including them explicitly in the schedule is expected to make clear to which particulars the penalties do not apply.

Accompanying documentation

15. The Cabinet Office and ONS have been working on the documentation to accompany the Bill, and drafts are attached.
16. The draft explanatory notes explain what each part of the Bill means in practice, provides background information on the development of policy, and provides additional information on how the Bill will affect existing legislation in this area. (Annex B)

Secondary legislation

17. The Census Act 1920 (the Act) requires two stages of secondary legislation, which must pass through Parliament in sequence. A Census Order (affirmative Order in Council) and Census Regulations (negative procedure). This secondary legislation needs to be in place by April 2020, to enable the Census preparations to be made in time for census day in March 2021.
18. The Census Order is also currently being drafted with the aim to introduce it in the Houses of Parliament in the late Autumn. The Order is well advanced and we aim to gain clearance within ONS and by the Board in the Summer.
19. The Census regulations are currently being drafted and will follow the Order. The regulations need to be in place by April 2020 to enable the recruitment of a large temporary workforce which includes community engagement officers who are essential in reaching out to hard to reach communities, and to confirm the content and wording of the questionnaire to finalise these aspects of the online and paper data capture.

Risks

20. The Bill and Order are being worked on in parallel to mitigate against the uncertainty of the timing of the Bill. If the Bill is substantially delayed, the Order could be introduced in the House early Autumn prior to the Bill being introduced later in the year.
21. The Bill has been tightly drafted and while there is likely to be debate in particular around gender identity, Parliamentary Counsel do not think there is a risk for the Bill to be used to add on additional topics, tick boxes or questions to the Census.
22. However, risks remain around challenges seeking to amend the Census Order and mitigation plans are currently being drafted. The Cornish MPs who submitted an amendment to include a Cornish tick-box in the 2011 Census Order and failed, are very likely to seek to amend the 2021 Census Order in the same way.

Timing

Census Bill

23. The Cabinet Office are aiming to have the draft Bill and accompanying documentation ready for a possible Parliamentary Business Legislation (PBL) meeting on 30 April 2019, in readiness for a parliamentary slot being available subject to Brexit. Events are moving quickly, and Iain Bell will provide a further verbal update to Board on 30 April 2019. We will seek early comments from Sir David Norgrove and John Pullinger in advance of the PBL meeting and in parallel to further comments from all Board members.

Census secondary legislation

24. The timetable for the secondary legislation is consistent with the previous Census. The passing of the regulations by April 2020 provides sufficient time to meet the logistical needs for online questionnaire design, printing, and the recruitment of the field force.

Conclusion

25. The Board is asked to note that this agenda is fast-moving and that we will keep them up to date with progress.

Iain Bell, Deputy National Statistician for Population and Public Policy

Frankie Kay, Director of Transformation, Population and Public Policy, 23 April 2019