

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Minutes

**Meeting of Friday 22 July 2011
Board Room, Drummond Gate, London**

Present

UK Statistics Authority

Sir Michael Scholar (Chair)

Lord Rowe-Beddoe (Deputy Chair, ONS)

Professor Sir Roger Jowell (Deputy Chair, Official Statistics)

Mr Richard Alldritt

Dr Colette Bowe

Mr Partha Dasgupta

Ms Jil Matheson

Mr Stephen Penneck (not for items 8 to 10)

Professor David Rhind

Sir Jon Shortridge

Secretariat

Mr Robert Bumpstead

Mr Mervyn Stevens

Other Attendees

Ms Roma Chappell and Ms Penny Hallett (Office for National Statistics) for item 5

Mr Joe Grice and Mr Paul Auckbarally (Office for National Statistics) for item 6

Apologies

Ms Moira Gibb

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1. **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Ms Gibb.

2. **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **Minutes, matters arising from the previous meeting**

3.1 The minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 June were accepted as a true and fair account.

3.2 The meeting noted that the Cabinet Office had announced on 6 July that Professor Dame Janet Finch had decided to withdraw her candidacy for the position of Authority Chair, and that Sir Michael Scholar had agreed to continue as Chair while a successor was being found. The Cabinet Office would be carrying out a further selection process in the autumn. The meeting noted that it had been proposed by the Chair of the Public Administration Select Committee (PASC), Bernard Jenkin MP that a parliamentarian should be included on the selection panel for this recruitment.

3.3 Dr Bowe reported that she had held one meeting with a group of statistical Heads of Profession (HoPs) with regard to the monitoring review of statistical releases and publications that she was chairing. This meeting had been very useful in getting the various perspectives of HoPs and two further meetings with other HoPs would be held shortly.

4. **Reports from Authority Committee Chairs**

Audit Committee

4.1 Professor Rhind reported on the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 24 June. The meeting had considered two Internal Audit reports and had received the Head of Internal Audit's Annual Report for 2010/11. The findings of the National Audit Office (NAO) audit completion report on the external audit of the Authority's Accounts for 2010/11 had also been considered. The Committee had reviewed the draft Annual Report and Accounts for 2010/11 and had recommended that the Accounting Officer should sign these, as submitted.

4.2 The Authority noted that the Comptroller and Audit General (C&AG) had certified the Authority's Accounts on 14 July with an unqualified opinion, and that the Annual Report and Accounts 2010/11 had been laid before Parliament on 18 July. The Report and Accounts had also been laid subsequently before the three devolved legislatures.

Assessment Committee

4.3 Professor Jowell reported on the meeting of the Assessment Committee held on 1 July. The meeting had considered seven draft Assessment Reports and had recommended that two of these should be further considered by the Authority Board. These would be discussed later in the meeting.

4.4 The Committee had considered the future evolution of Assessment and had agreed that the current programme should conclude in the summer of 2012. The meeting had considered ways in which the last phase of the current programme might be carried out. It was agreed that further proposals on how this might be achieved and on the future development of Assessment beyond that should be made to the next meeting of the Committee. The Committee had also agreed that the Code of Practice should not be revised before the current programme of Assessments had been completed.

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- 4.5. The Assessment Committee had been concerned to learn that the Scottish Government had granted pre-release access to the Statistics Published in Rural Scotland Key Facts for 40 people and that the list of those granted this pre-release access was not published. The Board understood that this was available on request. It was agreed that the Authority would write to the Scottish Government requesting more information about the pre-release access recipients of its statistics.

Office for National Statistics Board (ONS)

- 4.6 Lord Rowe-Beddoe reported on the meeting of the ONS Board held on 8 July. The meeting had considered a report from the Director General of ONS and had reviewed risks and progress with major programmes and projects. The meeting had received an update on progress with delivery of the new ONS website and the Census Coverage Survey.
- 4.7 The ONS Board had then held a workshop at which its effectiveness against certain key criteria was assessed. The outcomes of the discussions would assist in setting the forward agenda for the ONS Board over the next year or so.

5. Census 2011

- 5.1 Ms Chappell and Ms Hallett provided the meeting with an update on the plans over the next year for the release of key outputs from the Census. Prosecutions for non-compliance with the statutory requirement to complete the Census form would start in the autumn.
- 5.2 The meeting noted these developments.

6. ONS Website Development Programme [SA(11)50]

- 6.1 Mr Auckbarally presented an overview of the functionality of the new ONS website which would be launched on 28 August. The website would continue to be maintained and enhanced following its launch.
- 6.2 All non-market sensitive releases would be released promptly at 09:30 a.m., and all key figures on market sensitive releases (where additional security controls were required) would similarly be released instantaneously at 09:30 a.m., with the full statistical bulletin published within one minute after that.
- 6.3 The Authority noted these developments and confirmed that it was content with the proposed arrangements for ONS releases at 09:30 a.m.

7. Draft Monitoring Brief: Climate Change Statistics [SA(11)51]

- 7.1 Mr Alldritt introduced a draft of a Monitoring Brief on the accessibility and coherence of statistics about climate change. The views of the Met Office had been received on this draft and these would be discussed with the producers of the statistics in the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC), and with the National Statistician.
- 7.2 The meeting discussed the draft and agreed that a further draft should be submitted to the next meeting of the Authority.

8. Assessment Reports for Approval [SA(11)53]

- 8.1 The Head of Assessment reported that he and the Assessment Committee had recommended that the following five Assessment Reports be published:
- i. Statistics on Vehicles (Department for Transport);

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- ii. Statistics on Scottish Sea Fisheries (Scottish Government);
- iii. Statistics on Scottish Offender Management (Scottish Government);
- iv. Statistics from Lifestyles Surveys (NHS Information Centre for Health and Social Care); and
- v. Statistics Published in Rural Scotland Key Facts (Scottish Government).

8.2 The meeting approved these Assessment Reports for publication.

9. Draft Assessment Reports 126 and 131 [SA(11)54 and 55]

9.1 The meeting noted that the following draft Assessment Reports had been considered at the meeting of the Assessment Committee on 1 July, when it had been agreed that these reports should be considered further by the Authority Board:

- i. AR 126: Statistics on UK Sea Fisheries [SA(11)54]; and
- ii. AR 131: Statistics on Scottish Patient Experience [SA(11)55].

9.2 In approving these Assessment Reports for publication, the meeting was pleased to note that the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) had, for the most part, already implemented the recommendations made in earlier drafts of Assessment Report 126: Statistics on UK Sea Fisheries. The Authority commended the prompt and positive response made by MMO to the outcome of the assessment process and agreed that other producers should be encouraged to respond similarly.

10. Statistics Produced by the Bank of England

10.1 Mr Alldritt reported on discussions with the Bank of England regarding the possibility of the assessment of statistics produced by the Bank of England.

10.2 The meeting noted developments.

11. Any other business

11.1 Ms Matheson reported that the Consumer Prices Advisory Committee (CPAC) would be making a report to the next meeting of the Authority on its activities over the last year and on progress against its work plan.

11.2 Ms Matheson reported that the Home Secretary, Rt. Hon. Theresa May MP had written to her on 18 July in response to the report of her National Statistician's Review of Crime Statistics which had been published. The Home Secretary had accepted the recommendations in the report and Ms Matheson was drafting the terms of reference for the Independent Advisory Committee on Crime Statistics, and developing the business case for the transfer of the publication of crime statistics from the Home Office to ONS. In noting these developments, the Authority reaffirmed its view that, in order to demonstrate independence and transparency, the majority of members on the Advisory Committee on Crime Statistics should be non-executives from outside government and the police.

11.3 The meeting noted that replies had not been received from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rt. Hon. George Osborne MP or the Secretary of State for Health, Rt. Hon. Andrew Lansley MP to the letters from the Chair sent on 26 May and 23 March to them respectively. It was agreed that the Chair would write again to both of them, and that these further letters should be copied to the Chair of the Public Administration Select Committee (PASC), Bernard Jenkin MP.

11.4 There was no other business.

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY***Agenda******Friday, 22 July, 2011******Board Room, Drummond Gate, London, 11:15 - 15:00*****Chair: Sir Michael Scholar****Apologies: Ms Moira Gibb**

1	Minutes and matters arising from previous meeting Declarations of interest	Meeting of 240611
2	Reports from Authority Committee Chairs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Audit Committee ● Assessment Committee ● ONS Board 	Oral Reports Professor David Rhind Professor Sir Roger Jowell Lord Rowe-Beedoe
3	Census 2011	Oral Update Ms Roma Chappell Ms Penny Hallett
4	ONS Website Development Programme	SA(11)50 Mr Joe Grice Mr Paul Auckbarally
5	Draft Monitoring Briefs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Climate Change Statistics ● Parliamentary Constituencies 	SA(11)51 SA(11)52 Mr Richard Laux Mr Ross Young
6	Assessment Reports (AR) for Approval <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● AR 126: Statistics on UK Sea Fisheries ● AR 131: Statistics on Scottish Patient Experience 	SA(11)53 SA(11)54 SA(11)55 Mr Richard Laux
7	Statistics Produced by the Bank of England	Oral Report Mr Richard Alldritt
8	Any other business	

SA(11)50 – ONS Website Development Programme

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(11)50

ONS Website Development Programme

The new Office for National Statistics website is now available at:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/index.html>

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SA(11)51

Draft Monitoring Brief: Climate Change Statistics

This document is due to be published on the UK Statistics Authority website in due course.

The document will be available at:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/monitoring/monitoring-briefs/index.html>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(11)52

Monitoring Brief: Parliamentary Constituencies

Consideration of this paper was deferred to a future meeting of the UK Statistics Authority.

This Monitoring Brief will be published on this website at:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/monitoring/monitoring-briefs/index.html>

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SA(11)53

Assessment Reports for Approval

These documents have been published on the UK Statistics Authority website.

To see these documents go to:

Assessment Report 126: Statistics on UK Sea Fisheries: SA(11)54
<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-126---statistics-on-uk-sea-fisheries.pdf>

Assessment Report 131: Statistics on Scottish Patient Experience SA(11)55
<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-131---statistics-on-scottish-patient-experience.pdf>