

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Minutes

Meeting of Friday 26 November 2010
Board Room, Newport

Present

UK Statistics Authority

Sir Michael Scholar (Chair)
Lord Rowe-Beddoe (Deputy Chair, ONS)
Mr Richard Alldritt
Dr Colette Bowe
Mr Partha Dasgupta
Ms Moira Gibb
Ms Jil Matheson
Mr Stephen Penneck (to item 13)
Sir Jon Shortridge

Secretariat

Mr Robert Bumpstead
Mr Mervyn Stevens

Other Attendees

Mr Joe Grice (Office for National Statistics) for item 6
Mr Richard Laux (Monitoring and Assessment) for items 8 to 14
Mr Neil Jackson (Monitoring and Assessment) for items 11 to 14

Apologies

Professor Sir Roger Jowell (Deputy Chair, Official Statistics)
Professor David Rhind

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1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Professor Jowell and Professor Rhind.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes and Matters arising from the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 October 2010 were accepted as a true and fair account. There were no matters arising.

4. Reports from Authority Committee Chairs

Assessment Committee

- 4.1 In the absence of Professor Jowell, the Chair reported on the meeting of the Assessment Committee held on 12 November 2010. Fifteen draft Assessment Reports had been discussed and twelve of these would be considered later in the meeting. The Assessment Committee had also endorsed proposals to streamline the process for approving Assessment Reports and these too would be considered later in the meeting under Paper SA(10)82.

Office for National Statistics Board (ONS)

- 4.2 Lord Rowe-Beddoe reported on the meeting of the ONS Board held earlier that day. The meeting had received a report from the Director General of ONS and had considered Information Technology (IT), finance, audit and property issues.
- 4.3 Lord Rowe-Beddoe reported that he had officially opened the UK Data Capture Centre for the 2011 Census in Manchester on 24 November 2010. He also informed the meeting that he would be meeting with ONS Departmental Trade Union Side later in the day as part of a regular series of meetings.

5. Spending Review 2010 (SR10) Update and Finance Report 2010/11 [SA(10)78]

- 5.1 Mr Penneck reported that the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Rt. Hon Danny Alexander MP had confirmed the Authority's funding for the next four years under the Government's Spending Review 2010 (SR10).
- 5.2 On 1 November ONS had published a public consultation document on the ONS website which set out the potential changes to the ONS work programme resulting from the SR10 budget reductions. There was a closing date of 24 December for responses to this consultation.
- 5.3 The meeting noted these developments.

6. Update on Well-Being

- 6.1 Ms Matheson reported that the Prime Minister had invited her to lead a national debate on measuring well-being and that she would be taking forward a programme of work with ONS to deliver an appropriate measure. This initiative, which reflected similar developments internationally, had been announced in a televised press conference chaired by the Prime Minister on 24 November and a public consultation had been launched by ONS. The measure would be determined and disseminated independently of government and the National Statistician was establishing an advisory forum to provide advice to her on its development. As an initial response, ONS would be including additional questions in its Integrated Household Survey from April 2011.
- 6.2 The meeting noted these developments and agreed that a presentation for the

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Authority on this project should be arranged as soon as possible.

7. Post-Legislative Scrutiny [SA(10)79]

- 7.1 Mr Bumpstead reported that the Cabinet Office had informed the Chair on 2 November that the Cabinet Office were carrying out a preliminary assessment of the operation of the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007*. This was in order that the Cabinet Office could send a memorandum to the Public Administration Select Committee (PASC) regarding this post-legislative scrutiny. It would then be for PASC to determine on the basis of the memorandum whether a further investigation should be carried out. The Cabinet Office had requested the Authority's response by the end of November.
- 7.2 The meeting noted these developments and agreed that the Head of Secretariat should write to the Cabinet Office setting out the Authority's response to this scrutiny.

8. The Way Forward on Monitoring [SA(10)80]

- 8.1 Mr Alldritt presented a paper which summarised the monitoring work carried out by the Authority to date and made further proposals for future Monitoring Briefs. Monitoring Briefs would be substantially shorter publications than Monitoring Reports and were the Authority's response to issues of concern. They would be based more on in-house research and three or four of these could be in progress at any one time.
- 8.2 The meeting noted these proposals and agreed that draft Monitoring Briefs, which should include evidence on why the scrutiny was considered necessary, should be submitted to the Authority for approval in due course. It was also agreed that a priority for a Monitoring Brief should be a review of the implementation and impact of recommendations made by the Authority in its first three years of existence, in order that this could be reported in the Authority's Annual Report for 2010/11.

9. Progress with Monitoring Brief: Official Statistics about Climate Change [SA(10)81]

- 9.1 Mr Laux reported on progress with the production of a draft Monitoring Brief on official statistics about climate change. Work on this Monitoring Brief had progressed steadily during 2010 and, while the original scope for this work was environmental statistics generally, the work had concentrated more recently on statistics related to the drivers and the measurement of climate change.
- 9.2 In noting these developments, the meeting agreed the review should continue to focus particularly on what more government might do to improve the clarity and accessibility of statistical information about climate change and that, to this end, the Monitoring and Assessment team should consult with representatives of non-governmental organisations, media commentators and experts in this field as appropriate.

10. Process for the Approval of Assessment Reports [SA(10)82]

- 10.1 Mr Bumpstead introduced a paper which made recommendations to streamline the process of approving draft Assessment Reports which, if implemented, would make the most effective use of Authority Board members' time.
- 10.2 After discussion, the Authority approved these proposals for immediate implementation.

11. Retail and Consumer Price Indices: Overview and Update [SA(10)83]

- 11.1 Mr Bumpstead introduced an overview of recent developments with regard to the Retail Price Index (RPI) and Consumer Price Index (CPI). The National Statistician had written to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on 2 November regarding the inclusion of owner occupier housing (OOH) costs in an expanded CPI and the Consumer Prices

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Advisory Committee (CPAC) had published its report on the ONS website on 3 November.

11.2 The meeting noted that ONS had published its response to the public consultation on the redesigned CPI statistical bulletin in early November. The ONS response included an agreement to publish the latest RPI 12-month rate on the front page of future bulletins and this and other agreed changes had been implemented in the publication of the October 2010 release.

11.3 The Authority had previously agreed that the Assessment Report on Consumer Price Indices should be considered further alongside the draft Monitoring Brief: Communicating Inflation. These were represented for consideration at this meeting.

11.4 The meeting agreed that the Chair should write to the President of the Royal Statistical Society (RSS) about these and other developments with regard to the RPI and CPI..

12. Monitoring Brief: Communicating Inflation [SA(10)84]

12.1 Mr Alldritt introduced a draft of Monitoring Brief: Communicating Inflation.

12.2 The Authority approved the Monitoring Brief for publication subject to agreed amendments.

13. Assessment Report 66: Consumer Price Indices [SA(10)85]

13.1 Mr Laux presented draft Assessment Report 66: Consumer Price Indices. A draft of this Assessment Report had been considered at the last meeting and it had been agreed that it should be considered further at the next meeting alongside the Monitoring Brief on Communicating Inflation.

13.2 After discussion it was agreed that this Assessment Report should be published at the same time as the Monitoring Brief: Communicating Inflation. The meeting also agreed that a statement, which would provide an explanatory overview of these and other recent publications on the RPI and CPI, should be published on the Authority's website to coincide with the publication of the Assessment Report and Monitoring Brief .

14. Draft Assessment Reports 67 to 79 [SA(10)86 to 98]

14.1 Mr Laux presented the following thirteen draft Assessment Reports which had been considered previously by the Assessment Committee:

- i. Assessment Report 67: Statistics on Child Protection in Scotland;
- ii. Assessment Report 68: Statistics on Adoptions;
- iii. Assessment Report 69: Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure;
- iv. Assessment Report 70: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation;
- v. Assessment Report 71: Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation;
- vi. Assessment Report 72: Agricultural Accounts, Agricultural Price and Farm Business Statistics;
- vii. Assessment Report 73: Annual Employment Statistics from the Business Register and Employment Survey;
- viii. Assessment Report 74: Statistics on Higher Education in Northern Ireland;
- ix. Assessment Report 75: Statistics on Life-Long Learning in Scotland
- x. Assessment Report 76: Statistics on Post-16 Education in Wales;
- xi. Assessment Report 77: Statistics on Higher Education in England and the UK;
- xii. Assessment Report 78: Statistics on Further Education and Skills; and
- xiii. Assessment Report 79: Statistics on Benefits, Employment Programmes, Sanctions and Vacancies.

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14.2 In respect of Assessment Report 67: Child Protection in Scotland, the Authority confirmed that the National Statistics designation should be removed from the statistics on the number of child protection referrals.

14.3 Following discussion all of these Assessment Reports should be published subject to agreed amendments.

15. Any other business

15.1 The Chair informed the meeting that he had replied earlier that day to a complaint from Full Fact about the presentation of statistics by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). This correspondence had been published on the Authority's website.

15.2 The Chair also informed the meeting that he had attended a meeting at the Cabinet Office to discuss what might be required to provide demographic statistics beyond the Census 2011. The need for a national address register had been discussed and agreed at this meeting.

15.3 There was no other business.

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Agenda

Friday, 26 November, 2010

Board Room, Statistics House, Newport, 11:15 - 15:00

Chair: Sir Michael Scholar

Apologies:

1	Minutes and matters arising from previous meeting Declarations of interest	Meeting of 221010
2	Reports from Authority Committee Chairs: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Assessment Committee● ONS Board	Oral Reports Professor Sir Roger Jowell Lord Rowe-Beddoe
3	Spending Review 2010 (SR10) Update	SA(10)78 Mr Stephen Penneck
4	Update on Well-Being	Oral Report Ms Jil Matheson
5	Post-Legislative Scrutiny	SA(10)79 Secretariat
6	The Way Forward on Monitoring	SA(10)80 Mr Richard Alldritt
7	Progress with Monitoring Brief: Official Statistics about Climate Change	SA(10)81 Mr Richard Laux
8	Process for the Approval of Assessment Reports	SA(10)82 Secretariat
9	Retail and Consumer Price Indices <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Overview and Update● Monitoring Brief● Assessment Report 66	SA(10)83 84, 85 Secretariat Mr Richard Alldritt Mr Richard Alldritt

SA Agenda 261110

.	Other Draft Assessment Reports (AR)	Mr Richard Alldritt Mr Richard Laux
10	AR 67: Statistics on Child Protection in Scotland	SA(10)86
11	AR 68: Statistics on Adoptions	SA(10)87
12	AR 69: Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure	SA(10)88
13	AR 70: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation	SA(10)89
14	AR 71: Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation	SA(10)90
15	AR 72: Agricultural Accounts, Agricultural Price and Farm Business Statistics	SA(10)91
16	AR 73: Annual Employment Statistics from the Business Register and Employment Survey	SA(10)92
17	AR 74: Statistics on Higher Education in Northern Ireland	SA(10)93
18	AR 75: Statistics on Life-Long Learning in Scotland	SA(10)94
19	AR 76: Statistics on Post-16 Education in Wales	SA(10)95
20	AR 77: Statistics on Higher Education in England and the UK	SA(10)96
21	AR 78: Statistics on Further Education and Skills	SA(10)97
22	AR 79: Statistics on Benefits, Employment Programmes, Sanctions and Vacancies	SA(10)98

Next Meeting: Friday, 17 December, 2010
Statistics House, London, 11:15 - 15:00

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(10)78

Spending Review 2010 (SR10) Update

Purpose

1. This paper provides the Authority with an update on:
 - the outcome for the Authority's funding for the next four years under the Government's Spending Review 2010 (SR10); and
 - the launch of a public consultation on the Office for National Statistics (ONS) work programme for the SR10 years.

Recommendation

2. Members of the Authority are invited to note these developments.

Discussion

3. At the last meeting members of the Authority were informed of the outcome for the Authority's funding for the next four years under SR10. The Authority's funding has now been confirmed by HM Treasury.
4. The Authority also considered at the last meeting a draft public consultation document on the potential changes to the ONS work programme resulting from the Spending Review 2010 (SR10) budget reductions. The consultation document was published on the ONS website on 1 November with a closing date of 24 December.

UK Statistics Authority Secretariat, November 2010

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SA(10)79

Post-Legislative Scrutiny

Purpose

1. This paper provides an update regarding the post-legislative scrutiny of the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007*.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Authority are invited to:
 - note the current position with regard to this scrutiny; and
 - agree that the Head of Secretariat should write to the Cabinet Office setting out the Authority's response.

Discussion

3. At the last meeting the Authority were advised [SA(10)67] that the Minister for the Cabinet Office had stated in an answer to a Written Parliamentary Question on 6 September 2010 that the Cabinet Office would carry out a post-legislative scrutiny of the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007*. This was in accordance with government policy to review all new legislation three to five years after receiving Royal Assent. At the time of the last meeting neither the Authority nor the National Statistician had been consulted by the Cabinet Office on this matter.
4. It is understood that on 22 October stakeholders, primarily internal to government but including the Royal Statistical Society (RSS), were approached by the Cabinet Office requesting their input to the review.
5. The Authority Chair was contacted in an email from a Cabinet Office official on 2 November informing him that the Cabinet Office were carrying out a 'preliminary assessment' in order to inform a Cabinet Office memorandum to the Public Administration Select Committee (PASC). It would then be for PASC to determine on the basis of the memorandum whether a further investigation should be carried out. The Authority's input to this preliminary stage has been requested by the end of November.

Secretariat, UK Statistics Authority, November 2010

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SA(10)80

The Way Forward on Monitoring

Purpose

1. This paper builds on discussion at the Committee for Official Statistics (COS) in July 2010 [SA(COS)(10)15] and at the Authority Board in September 2010 [SA(10)61]. It presents some revised and updated proposals in relation to Monitoring Briefs.

Timing

2. Not urgent but decisions taken will guide work over the remainder of the financial year.

Recommendations

3. The Authority Board is invited to consider the proposed way forward for the development of Monitoring Briefs, and;
 - i. the more specific considerations at paragraph 12,
 - ii. the proposed three priorities for forthcoming Briefs at paragraph 14, and
 - iii. the seven other topics at paragraph 15, which together form the full short-list.

Discussion

4. Monitoring has developed into a distinct strand of the Authority's scrutiny function, separate from assessment against the Code of Practice. It provides a means of establishing, and publicly reporting, the Authority's views on any matter of concern. The Statistics Act says at section 8, the Board may report any concerns it has about quality, good practice or comprehensiveness of official statistics.
5. The paper for the September meeting of the Board proposed that we should normally plan to have one Monitoring Report in production at any given time and complement that with a series of Monitoring Briefs that would be shorter and take less resource to produce. Further experience with Briefs currently in production suggests that this distinction is probably not viable and that we should rather think in terms of a programme of Monitoring Briefs of more variable length, depending on the topic and the wishes of the Board. This approach would also tend to free up resource to enable us to prepare reports on cuts and changes to statistical work across government, the proposed Statistical Expenditure Reports [SA(10)54].
6. There is pressure across the civil service not to produce official reports in printed formats. Whilst we regard 'online only' as a less satisfactory approach, it does offer savings in time and money and, for the moment, we would propose that Monitoring Briefs follow that policy.
7. The full list of Monitoring Reports and Briefs (previously called Monitoring and Assessment Notes) produced so far is at **Annex A**. Monitoring Reports have usually related to substantive research exercises, each overseen by a project board including external experts in most cases, and undertaken in close consultation with producers, users and relevant experts. They were designed to provide authoritative views, and usually recommendations, on particular topics based on extended exploration of the issues. The Authority has published seven Reports styled as Monitoring Reports although some of these have focused on determining the Authority's own arrangements rather than being on specific statistical topics. Whilst Monitoring Reports have proved effective as a vehicle for substantive comment, they have required a large commitment of Monitoring and Assessment resources and we are not sure that they are optimal in terms of delivering clear conclusions and recommendations as

efficiently as possible. Often the conclusions are clear long before the drafting and editing is completed or the process of clearance and publication has progressed far. Establishing and running a project board and preparing papers for it, and preparing reports from the project board to COS and to the Authority Board, has added both to both the work and time required. However, whilst we are moving away from this approach, if there were a case in which the Authority decided it needed to carry out a more formal review of an issue, a Monitoring Report could still be produced under the chairmanship of a non-executive Board member and with full project management board and controls. As a rule of thumb, we think this is about four times as much work as a Monitoring Brief.

8. Monitoring Briefs are more explicitly the work of the Monitoring and Assessment Team and intended to be seen, first and foremost, as advice to the Authority Board which is then, subject to discussion and agreement, published with the agreement of the Authority. There is thus a shift in the voice, from being a Report of the Authority Board to a Report to the Authority Board, although that shift is not normally stressed (and may not be that apparent to external readers).
9. Monitoring Briefs are produced in response to specific 'issues of concern'. They have provided a means to draw attention to, and take a relatively quick look at, such an issue. To date, the Authority has published twelve such Briefs (or Monitoring and Assessment Team Notes). The Briefs have helped to raise public awareness of the role and views of the Authority and emphasised its independent perspective. Within the Team, Briefs have presented opportunities to extend knowledge of statistical issues and exploit and develop the skills of the staff. They also allow us to offer a richer variety of work than Assessment Reports would on their own.
10. Draft Monitoring Briefs will typically be prepared by one or two members of the Monitoring and Assessment team with only a small, internal project board but with close involvement of the senior managers. However, some topics might lend themselves to development via 'round table' discussions on appropriate topics. Relevant experts, including both users and producers would be invited to a boardroom style discussion on a topic on the basis of a background paper (possibly a draft Monitoring Brief). The outputs would include both a note of the meeting and a revised paper or Brief. A Non-Executive Director would be invited to chair these discussions and others to attend if they wished.
11. At present, work is in hand on the following Monitoring Briefs:
 - **Coherence of Statistics about the Housing Market** (a draft of which has been considered by the Committee for Official Statistics, but which is on hold pending completion of a related report by the National Statistician's Office);
 - **Communicating Inflation** (an advanced draft of which is included in the agenda of this meeting [SA(10)84]);
 - **Statistics about climate change** (a first draft of which is included in the agenda of this meeting [SA(10)81]); and
 - **Deaths and serious injuries in road accidents** (a report to the Transport Select Committee which we also plan to publish as a Monitoring Brief subject to the agreement of the Committee, a draft of which was considered by the last meeting of the Authority Board [SA(10)66]).

12. Experience with the current set of Monitoring Briefs has pointed to the following considerations:

- We need to make clear in these Briefs that they are independent Reports prepared for the Authority Board and not the product of a 'royal commission'. We cannot bring every source of expertise and opinion to bear. We stand by them as valuable pieces of work but accept that there are other views and other sources of advice. For example, the draft Brief on communicating inflation has to be seen as one Report, alongside Reports from the Consumer Prices Advisory Committee (CPAC) and the related Assessment Report. Each has a role in terms of advice to the Authority Board. Similarly, the draft Brief on statistics relating to the Housing Market will need to sit alongside the (soon to be) published Report from the National Statistician.
- Bearing in mind the point above, if the Authority Board wishes to respond formally to a report from ONS, the National Statistician, CPAC or Monitoring and Assessment, it would probably be best to do this by way of a Statement issued alongside or after one or more of the Reports. We do not now make formal 'recommendations' in Monitoring Briefs, leaving scope for the Authority Board to do that in response. Instead, we make suggestions or proposals for the way forward on the issue.
- Monitoring Briefs are challenging to write and quality assure (we adopt a two-stage quality assurance process, involving producer bodies, and selected users and stakeholders). There are often competing pressures from producers of statistics and from external commentators and finding a secure position and the right tone often requires a lot of senior management input. Some Briefs are also turning out to be much longer than originally intended, in order to cover points raised with us, or reflecting the nature of the subject matter. With these things in mind, we are planning to design and adopt a more standardised approach to such reports, so that they all follow a flexible but clear structure. For example, each could start with a statement of the issue, why it is a concern, why it is appropriate for the Authority to consider the matter, and so on.

13. We have developed a suggested list of topics for a forward programme of Monitoring Briefs and this was considered at the September meeting of the Authority Board. We are currently adding further suggestions to that list and will consult the Board periodically on it. We have reviewed that 'long list' within the team, in terms of: significance and topicality; and likelihood that the work would identify generic messages. They will be subject to delay to accommodate Statistical Expenditure Reports as necessary.

14. The 'short list' contains ten candidates for Monitoring Briefs. The current top three candidates to be started first are set out below.

i. Use and value of statistics by sectors of industry and society

A recent Assessment Report has indicated that there may be value in a series of Monitoring Briefs documenting and commenting on the use of UK official statistics by particular sectors of industry or society, such as the pharmaceutical industry, insurance services, international bodies, voluntary sector and others about which knowledge is currently limited.

ii. The availability of statistics for Parliamentary Constituencies

Statistics for Parliamentary Constituencies are of considerable interest to the media, political parties, MPs, constituents and a wide range of social and political commentators. This Brief would provide an opportunity to review the statistics that are currently available

and whether there are any significant gaps. It would also provide an opportunity to review how well these statistics are presented and how well they meet user needs.

iii. The viability of a UK wide deprivation index

The recent Assessment Reports of deprivation indices for Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland has indicated that there may be demand for an additional index of deprivation, relating to the UK as a whole. A Monitoring Brief on this would explore the extent and nature of user interest, the practicality of producing a UK index of sufficient quality, and the presentational implications of a 'parallel' index.

15. In addition to these three priority candidates for Monitoring Briefs, seven other areas have been identified. The Board may wish to identify whether one or more areas from this list, or more generally, should be prioritised.

iv. The role of government statisticians in meeting user needs

It is widely accepted that the Government Statistical Service (GSS) has a number of roles, only one of which – activity that leads up to publishing statistical reports – is fully addressed by the Code, and hence assessment. This Brief would explore, and provide examples of, other roles – such as that of statistical advisor to policy makers. It would provide the opportunity to explore whether, and how, such activity might be given greater public recognition and valued accordingly.

v. The adequacy of statistics on child protection

The Assessment of statistics on child protection for Scotland found that the statistics did not meet the methodological standards expected by the Code. The Assessment team has approached the producers of corresponding statistics in England, Wales and Northern Ireland to explore the possibility of bringing forward these Assessments. The Assessment team considers that the findings from these Assessment Reports may provide suitable material for a Monitoring Brief and propose to revisit this option after these Reports have been produced.

vi. The availability of information on who benefits from public expenditure

This would explore the availability and coherence of statistical information about the extent to which different parts of the country, and different socio-demographic groups, benefit from public expenditure. Some such information is available – for example, about recipients of welfare payments – but there may be user interest in more complete analysis. This Brief would also explore the extent of user interest, and the likely issues that would arise in undertaking such analysis.

vii. Sources of statistics - on, for example, education, health and other topics

This would highlight the range of producer bodies, and the difficulty this can cause for users and potential users. A definitive Brief would be difficult to produce whilst the Government reviews the structure of the organisations responsible for public service delivery, but this context would make such Briefs all the more topical in highlighting the need for a co-ordinated approach to dissemination.

viii. What do we mean by 'promoting comparability within the UK'?

This Brief would provide an opportunity to explore the desirability of comparable UK statistics. What should be the Authority's considerations in making judgements about four nation comparability? Some of these issues were recently explored at COS [SA(COS)(10)17].

ix. Access to official statistics via websites.

Different producers' websites offer different levels of functionality and links. This Brief would identify some criteria for accessibility to sets of statistics, and review the evidence about the extent to which the criteria are met. It would also look at the accessibility of sets of statistics produced by all National Statistical Institutes.

x. Next "Findings From Assessment" Brief

This will be an update, based on Reports 1 to 80 (though likely to be substantially shorter than the two published Findings notes).

Monitoring and Assessment, UK Statistics Authority, November 2010

List of Annexes

- Annex A Monitoring Reports Since April 2008**
- Annex B Monitoring Briefs (Previously Notes) Since April 2008**

Annex A Monitoring Reports Since April 2008

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

To see these documents go to:

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

Annex B Monitoring Briefs (Previously Notes) Since April 2008

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

To see these documents go to:

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

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(10)81

***SA(10)81 Progress with Monitoring Brief: Official Statistics about
Climate Change***

This Monitoring Brief will be published in due course on the UK Statistics Authority website.

To see the document go to:

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

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(10)82

Process for the Approval of Assessment Reports

Purpose

1. To streamline the process of approving draft Assessment Reports, in order to make the most effective use of Authority Board members' time.

Recommendation

2. Members of the Board are invited to consider and comment on the proposals below.

Discussion

3. There are 14 draft Assessment Reports on the agenda for this meeting. This represents the largest number of Assessment Reports tabled at a single Board meeting to date. The Assessment process is now well established and efficient, so we expect this rate of production to continue.
4. In light of the increased volume of Assessment Reports, the high level of consistency between them, and that many Reports do not raise issues that are considered contentious by either the producer or the Assessment team, the following process is proposed.
 - i. The Assessment Committee will continue to consider all Assessment Reports.
 - ii. The Head of Assessment will recommend to the Assessment Committee which Reports are likely to benefit from further discussion at the Authority Board.
 - iii. The Assessment Committee will decide which Reports should be further discussed at the Authority Board.
 - iv. Reports to be considered by the Authority Board will be presented in full at the Authority meeting and will be accompanied by an extract of the statistical release under Assessment.
 - v. All other Reports will be circulated electronically to Board members prior to the Board meeting. A list of these Reports, the Requirements made in each, and any other summary comments, will be presented as a single paper for consideration at the Authority Board.
 - vi. All Published Reports will continue to be disseminated to Board members electronically.
5. To illustrate the proposals above, the Assessment Committee at its meeting of 12 November agreed that the following Reports merited the further full consideration of the Authority Board:
 - i. Consumer Price Statistics [SA(10)85];
 - ii. Statistics on Child Protection in Scotland [SA(10)86];
 - iii. Statistics on Adoptions [SA(10)87]; and
 - iv. Retail Sales Statistics (for the December meeting of the Authority).

Secretariat, UK Statistics Authority, November 2010

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(10)83

Retail and Consumer Price Indices: Overview and Update

Purpose

1. This paper provides an update on developments since the last meeting with regard to the Retail and Consumer Price Indices (RPI and CPI).

Recommendations

2. Members of the Authority are invited to:
 - i. note that the National Statistician wrote to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on 2 November 2010 regarding the inclusion of owner occupier housing (OOH) costs in an expanded CPI;
 - ii. note that the report of the Consumer Prices Advisory Committee (CPAC) was published on the ONS website on 3 November 2010;
 - iii. note that ONS has published its response to the public consultation on the redesigned CPI statistical bulletin;
 - iv. approve for publication Monitoring Brief: Communicating Inflation [SA(10)84] and Assessment Report 66: Consumer Price Indices [SA(10)85]; and
 - v. agree that the Chair should write again to the President of the Royal Statistical Society (RSS) regarding these developments, and consider issuing a statement to accompany publication of the two reports.

Discussion

3. At the meeting on 24 September the Authority considered a Report from CPAC on its work over the previous year. The Authority agreed that CPAC should make arrangements for the publication of their Report and that the National Statistician should write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer regarding the inclusion of OOH costs in an expanded RPI. The National Statistician wrote to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on 2 November and the CPAC Report was published on the Office for National Statistics (ONS) website on 3 November.
4. Earlier this month ONS published its response to its public consultation on the redesign of the CPI statistical bulletin. ONS have agreed to include the latest RPI 12-month rate on the front page of future bulletins and this and other changes were implemented in the publication of the October 2010 release on 16 November.
5. It was agreed at the last meeting that the Assessment Report on Consumer Price Indices should be considered further at this meeting alongside the Monitoring Brief: Communicating Inflation.
6. At the meeting on 24 September the Authority considered a letter dated 25 August from the President of the RSS, Professor David Hand to the Chair setting out some issues that the RSS wanted the Authority to consider with regard to price indices. The Chair replied to Professor Hand on 6 October and made a commitment to write again soon to update the RSS on further developments. In addition to writing to Professor Hand, the Authority could also issue a short statement summarising the main points.
7. If the Board are content the two Reports can be published together in early December, in advance of the next regular monthly CPI / RPI release on 14 December.

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UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(10)84

Draft Monitoring Brief: Communicating Inflation

This document has been published on the UK Statistics Authority website.

To see the document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/monitoring/monitoring-briefs/monitoring-brief-7-2010---communicating-inflation.pdf>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(10)85

Assessment Report: Consumer Price Indices

This document has been published on the UK Statistics Authority website as Assessment Report 79.

To see the document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-79---consumer-price-indices.pdf>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(10)86

Assessment Report – Statistics on Child Protection in Scotland

This document has been published on the UK Statistics Authority website.

To see this document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-67---child-protection-in-scotland.pdf>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(10)87

Assessment Report – Statistics on Adoptions

This document has been published on the UK Statistics Authority website.

To see this document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-68---adoptions-in-england-and-wales.pdf>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(10)88

Assessment Report – Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure

This document has been published on the UK Statistics Authority website.

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<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-69---northern-ireland-multiple-deprivation-measure.pdf>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(10)89

Assessment Report – Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure

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<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-70---scottish-index-of-multiple-deprivation.pdf>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(10)90

Assessment Report – Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation

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<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-71---welsh-index-of-multiple-deprivation.pdf>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(10)91

***Assessment Report – Agricultural Accounts, Agricultural Price
and Farm Business Statistics***

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<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-72---agricultural-accounts--agricultural-prices-and-farm-business-statistics.pdf>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(10)92

***Assessment Report – Annual Employment Statistics from the
Business Register and Employment Survey***

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<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-73---annual-employment-statistics-from-the-business-register-and-employment-survey.pdf>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(10)93

***Assessment Report – Statistics on Higher Education in Northern
Ireland***

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<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-74---higher-education-in-northern-ireland.pdf>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(10)94

Assessment Report – Statistics on Life-Long Learning in Scotland

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<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-75---lifelong-learning-in-scotland.pdf>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(10)95

Assessment Report – Statistics on Post-16 Education in Wales

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To see this document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-76---post-16-education-in-wales.pdf>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(10)96

Assessment Report – Statistics on Higher Education in England and the UK

This document has been published on the UK Statistics Authority website.

To see this document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-77---higher-education-in-england-and-the-uk.pdf>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(10)97

Assessment Report – Statistics on Further Education and Skills

This document has been published on the UK Statistics Authority website.

To see this document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-78---further-education-and-skills.pdf>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(10)98

***Assessment Report – Statistics on Benefits, Employment
Programmes, Sanctions and Vacancies***

This document has been published on the UK Statistics Authority website.

To see this document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-79---consumer-price-indices.pdf>