

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Minutes

**Meeting of Thursday, 3 October 2013
The Lord Clerk Register's Meeting Room
National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh**

Present

UK Statistics Authority

Sir Andrew Dilnot (Chair)
Professor David Rhind
Mr Richard Alldritt
Ms Carolyn Fairbairn
Dame Moira Gibb
Dr David Levy
Ms Jil Matheson
Mr Glen Watson

Secretariat

Mr Robert Bumpstead
Mr Mervyn Stevens

Other attendees (for item 1)

Mr Tim Ellis, Registrar General and Keeper of the Records of Scotland
Mr Roger Halliday, Chief Statistician, Scottish Government

Apologies

Dr Colette Bowe
Mr Partha Dasgupta
Professor David Hand
Professor Sir Adrian Smith

1. Official Statistics in Scotland [SA(13)42]

- 1.1 Mr Roger Halliday gave a presentation on the work of statisticians in the Scottish Government. He reported that work was continuing in particular on delivering user-led improvements in commentary, developing innovative methods of data communication, and on data sharing and linkage. The statistical capability of arm's length bodies in Scotland was also being developed.
- 1.2 Mr Tim Ellis gave a presentation on the work of the National Archives of Scotland (NAS), which focussed in particular on the diverse nature of the work of NAS, its work on the 2011 Scottish Census and in providing demographic statistics for Scotland.
- 1.3 Following questions, the Chair thanked Mr Halliday and Mr Ellis for attending the meeting and for their informative presentations.

2. Apologies

- 2. Apologies had been received from Dr Bowe, Mr Dasgupta, Professor Hand and Professor Sir Adrian Smith.

3. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Minutes, matters arising from the previous meeting

- 4.1 The minutes of the previous meeting held on 30 July were accepted as a true and fair account. The meeting reviewed progress with actions.
- 4.2 Mr Watson reported that the problems for ONS in obtaining data from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) about jobseekers that were part of the Universal Credit pilot programme were still on-going. An update on the latest position would be provided to the Authority Board within the next few days. It was agreed that ONS might prepare users for its impact on labour market statistics in coming months.

5. Authority Chair's Report

- 5.1 The Chair reported that, during the meeting of the Non-Executive members of the Board held earlier that morning, it had been agreed unanimously that Mr Ed Humpherson, currently Assistant Auditor General at the National Audit Office (NAO), should be appointed as the Authority's Head of Assessment in succession to Mr Alldritt.
- 5.2 The meeting noted that the three-month public consultation on the census and the future provision of population statistics in England and Wales had been launched by ONS on 23 September. The meeting agreed that, as this was a key part of the Authority's strategy, a working group of the Board should be responsible for the oversight of the programme's next stages. It was also agreed that ONS would provide an update for the Authority Board as soon as possible on the process and the timeline for the next stages.
- 5.3 The draft report of the Authority's review of public affairs would be submitted to the next meeting.
- 5.4 The Chair reported that since the last meeting, among other activities, he had: met with Kate Barker regarding the National Statistics Quality Review of the National Accounts; met with Jane Hutt AM, Welsh Government Minister for Finance; and had made a visit to the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

6. Reports from Authority Committee Chairs

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

- 6.1 In the absence of a member of the Committee, Mr Stevens as the Committee Secretary reported on the meeting held on 11 September. The meeting had reviewed the Accounting Officer's Governance Statement for 2012/13 and had made suggestions for improvements to the process of drafting for 2013/14. It had also been recommended that the Governance Statement for 2013/14 should be shorter and take a more high-level strategic approach, subject to the Authority's Board decisions on the content of the Annual Report.
- 6.2 The meeting had received two Internal Audit reports and had endorsed proposals for a collaboration agreement for the provision of shared services internal audit services with other government departments. The meeting had received and considered the NAO management letter for 2012/13 which had raised only a few minor issues.
- 6.3 The Committee had not been convinced, because of its wider assurance remit, it was appropriate that it should take responsibility for oversight of developing and maintaining good financial management, and had asked the Authority Board to consider reallocating this work.

Office for National Statistics Board (ONS)

- 6.4 In the absence of Professor Sir Adrian Smith, Dr Levy reported on the meeting of the ONS Board held on 17 September. The ONS Board had approved the ONS business plan and the key performance indicators for ONS, and had considered a draft of the ONS strategic road map and strategic risks. The meeting had also received a report on National Accounts Classification issues. Human Resource matters and workforce planning had also been considered by the meeting. The ONS Board had considered and agreed its role in delivering the Authority's strategy.
- 6.5 Mr Watson informed the meeting that ONS would shortly be publishing an article on National Accounts Classifications. Mr Watson also reported that Mr Paul Woobey would be leaving the post of ONS Director of Strategy and Standards at the end of the year to take up a new job. The meeting thanked Mr Woobey for his contribution to the work of ONS.

Committee for Official Statistics

- 6.6 Professor Rhind reported on the meeting of the Committee for Official Statistics held on 18 September. The meeting had received a report from Professor Stephen Shute, Chair of the Crime Statistics Advisory Committee (CSAC) about the work of CSAC. The Committee had received a report on the future of the National Statistics Publication Hub and this would be considered by the Authority Board later in the meeting.
- 6.7 The Committee had also considered papers from the National Statistician on the global statistical system, and on the governance and capability of the Government Statistical Service. The meeting had considered and agreed its role in delivering the Authority's strategy.

Assessment Committee

- 6.8 Professor Rhind reported on the meeting of the Assessment Committee held on 18 September. The meeting had considered four draft Assessment Reports and a draft Monitoring Review report on the geography of economic statistics. The Committee had

considered and agreed its role in the delivery of the Authority's strategy, and had considered a forward work plan for Assessment.

7. Update on Implementing the Authority's Strategic Priorities [SA(13)43]

- 7.1 Mr Bumpstead introduced a paper which provided the Board with an update on progress with implementing the objectives in the Authority's strategy and the agreed roles of the Authority's boards and committees in overseeing the delivery of the strategy. The meeting agreed that responsibility for oversight of developing and maintaining good financial management should be reallocated to the ONS Board. It was also agreed that the Chair of the Audit Committee would suggest other ways in which the Audit Committee might play a useful role in this respect.
- 7.2 It was agreed that a Survey of Public Confidence in Official Statistics (PCOS) and a survey of opinion formers should be taken forward as priorities. The meeting also endorsed outline proposals for the structure of the Authority's annual report for 2013/14 based on its strategy.

8. Reducing Pre-Release Access to Official Statistics [SA(13)44]

- 8.1 Ms Matheson and Mr Watson reported that an exercise to reduce pre-release access to ONS outputs had determined that this could be reduced significantly. The National Statistician would be writing to statistical Heads of Profession in other government departments requiring them to carry out similar exercises for the reduction of pre-release access to their department's statistics.
- 8.2 The meeting noted the National Statistician's proposed reduction in pre-release access to ONS statistics, subject to further consideration of the issues raised in discussion.

9. The Authority and the Administrative Data Research Network [SA(13)45]

- 9.1 Ms Matheson introduced a paper which sought the Authority's agreement to its governance role in relation to the Administrative Data Research Network (ADRN or 'Network') and to establishing a Governing Board of the network. Since the last meeting the National Statistician had met with the Chief Executive of the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) to further explore the Authority's possible role and governance of the Network.
- 9.2 The Board agreed that the Authority should establish such a body by the spring of 2014 and that the Authority's Secretariat should continue to work with the ESRC to this end, and report back to future meetings on developments.
- 9.3 It was agreed that Professor David Hand would chair the governing body.

10. Draft Assessment Report: Statistics on Migration [SA(13)46]

- 10.1 Mr Alldritt introduced a draft assessment report about ONS migration statistics. This draft report had been considered at the Assessment Committee on 18 September.
- 10.2 The Board approved the draft assessment for publication in due course. It was also agreed that the Authority should first make a response to the report of the Public Administration Select Committee on migration statistics which should restate the Authority's position and its recommendations made on previous occasions for the improvement of migration statistics.

11. Monitoring Update [SA(13)47]

11.1 Mr Alldritt introduced a paper which provided an update on progress with Monitoring Reviews. A Monitoring Review on School-level Examination Statistics had been published on 5 August. A Monitoring Review on official statistics in the context of the Scottish Referendum had been launched at an Authority event at the Royal Society of Edinburgh the previous day, and a similar event would be held in London on 10 October. Six Monitoring Reviews were in progress.

11.2 The Board noted progress with the Monitoring programme.

12. National Statistics Publication Hub [SA(13)48]

12.1 Ms Matheson reported on proposals to develop the National Statistics Publication Hub on the new gov.uk website in collaboration with the Government Digital Service (GDS). The proposal had been endorsed by the Committee for Official Statistics at its last meeting subject to a range of conditions being satisfied, and consideration by the Authority Board.

12.2 The Board considered the proposals and agreed that this could go forward subject to written assurances and agreement on matters of independence and editorial control for the Government Statistical Service's input to the website, and clarification on comparative costs of alternative proposals.

13. Price Indices: ONS Work Programme [SA(13)49]

13.1 Mr Watson introduced a paper which updated the Authority Board on current priorities in the consumer price statistics work programme. ONS had been responding to the two Authority reviews relating to price indices, and was also responding to the requirements of Authority's Assessment Report on statistics on consumer price inflation. ONS would be publishing a further work programme on its website towards the end of October. Work was also continuing on methods of data collection.

13.2 The Board noted developments.

14. Update on Authority Review of Price indices

14.1 Mr Bumpstead provided the Board with an update on the Authority review of prices indices. A draft report of the review of the governance of price statistics would be submitted to the next meeting of the Authority Board. It was anticipated that the review of the range of prices statistics would be published in the summer of 2014.

14.2 The meeting noted developments.

15. Any other business

15.1 On the occasion of his last meeting of the Authority Board, the Chair acknowledged on behalf of the Board the significant contribution made by Mr Alldritt to the work of the Authority and UK official statistics more generally. He thanked Mr Alldritt for the support and advice he had given him personally as Authority Chair.

15.2 There was no other business.

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Agenda

Thursday, 3 October 2013

Lord Clerk Register's Meeting Room, Edinburgh, 09:30 - 13:00

Chair: Sir Andrew Dilnot

Apologies: Professor Sir Adrian Smith and Professor David Hand

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| 1 | Appointment of the Head of Assessment | Non-Executives only |
| 2 | Official statistics in Scotland | SA(13)42 Mr Roger Halliday Mr Tim Ellis |
| 3 | Minutes and matters arising from previous meetings Declarations of interest | Meeting of 300713 |
| 4 | Authority Chair's Report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment of the Head of Assessment • Beyond 2011 • Improving communication | Oral report Mr Andrew Dilnot |
| 5 | Reports from Authority Committee Chairs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit Committee • ONS Board • COS and Assessment Committee | Oral reports Mr Partha Dasgupta Dr David Levy Professor David Rhind |
| 6 | Update on implementing the Authority's strategic priorities | SA(13)43 Secretariat |
| 7 | Reducing Pre-Release Access to Official Statistics | SA(13)44 Ms Jil Matheson Mr Glen Watson |
| 8 | The Authority and the Administrative Data Research Network | SA(13)45 Secretariat |
| 9 | Monitoring and Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Assessment Report: Statistics on Migration • Monitoring update | SA(13)46 Mr Richard Alldritt SA(13)47 Mr Richard Alldritt |
| 10 | National Statistics Publication Hub | SA(13)48 Ms Jil Matheson |
| 11 | Price Indices: ONS Work Programme Update on Authority Reviews of Price Indices | SA(13)49 Mr Glen Watson Oral update Mr Rob Bumpstead |
| 12 | Any other business | |

SA(13)43 – Update on implementing the Authority's strategic priorities

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(13)43

Update on implementing the Authority's strategic priorities

The Authority's Statement of Strategy been published on the UK Statistics Authority website.

To see this document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/news/statistics-authority-statement-of-strategy.pdf>

SA(13)44 – Reducing Pre-Release Access to Official Statistics

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(13)44

Reducing Pre-Release Access to Official Statistics

An analysis of the extent of Pre-Release Access to official statistics will be published on the UK Statistics Authority website in due course.

The report will be available at:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/uk-statistical-system/legislation/pre-release-access/index.html>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(13)45

Governance of the Administrative Data Network

A letter from Sir Andrew Dilnot to Sir Alan Langlands has been published on the UK Statistics Authority website.

To see this letter go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/reports---correspondence/correspondence/letter-from-sir-andrew-dilnot-to-sir-alan-langlands-12112013.pdf>

SA(13)46 – Draft Assessment Report: Statistics on Migration

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(13)46

Draft Assessment Report: Statistics on Migration

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

To see the document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-267---migration-statistics.pdf>

SA(13)47 – Monitoring Update

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(13)47

Monitoring Update

Monitoring Reports and Briefs are published on the UK Statistics Authority website at:

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

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(13)48

Publication Hub

This document was included on the agenda of the Committee for Official Statistics meeting in September 2013 and has been published on the UK Statistics Authority website at:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/board-and-committees-documentation/minutes-and-papers/papers-from-the-committee-for-official-statistics-meeting-on-18-september-2013.pdf>

SA(13)48 – Price Indices: ONS Work Programme

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(13)49

Price Indices: ONS Work Programme

This document has been published on the Office for National Statistics website.

To view the document go to:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/cpi/work-programme-for-consumer-price-statistics/index.html>