

Statistics for the public good

Delivering inclusive data,
cross-cutting analysis and
high-quality statistics



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Foreword by
Professor Sir Ian Diamond

Foreword

The UK Statistics Authority Strategy sets out the need for high quality data to inform the UK, improve lives and build for the future. As set out in the strategy the data revolution continues at pace and there is a big prize for the statistical system, the Civil Service and the UK – if statisticians and analysts have access to the best evidence and can communicate effectively, helping to inform the country while reducing the potential for misrepresentation.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has a lead role to play in this revolution. It benefits from the statutory independence of the UK Statistics Authority, supported by the Code of Practice for Statistics, key ethical principles and its ability to convene experts and analytical resources. The ONS also produces key reference statistics that shows how the country is changing. We are responsible for key aspects of the Digital Economy Act, which provides access to data in support of its remit from across the UK. The ONS also has a key role in ensuring that the country's evidence base is inclusive and reflective of the full characteristics of the UK.

The period of our previous business plan ended in March 2020, just as the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic emerged. To meet the needs for data at a time of international emergency, the organisation has adopted radically different ways of working and the statistical system, led by the ONS, has been deeply involved in providing key social and economic data to inform the response to the crisis. This response demonstrates the systems latent strengths such as the importance of an independent authoritative voice and the value of speed, flexibility and access to multiple sources of data when addressing key questions and providing early insight. The aim of this business plan is to preserve these innovations. There can be no return to business as usual.

The COVID-19 response has also demonstrated where the system needs to step up – in particular, the lack of a fully inclusive and integrated evidence base that makes data available to users across government, the academic community and professional users to rapidly identify issues that need to be addressed and analyse the effectiveness of policy interventions. Analysis in support of the COVID-19 response would be much quicker to deliver and more comprehensive if government data was better organised and easier to access.

COVID-19 is likely to drive the government’s analytical and statistical work for a significant period of time and will require ongoing flexibility in approach. However, the UK also faces economic and social challenges outside of the pandemic, such as net-zero, levelling up economic chances across the country, social mobility, ageing population, future of work, healthy living, human capital and the UK’s place in a changing world, which remain as significant now as they were before the crisis.

This Strategic Business Plan sets out how the ONS will lead the response to these challenges by increasing capacity, across the statistical and analytical community, to deliver analysis and share integrated data. This, combined with the value of the ONS’s economic and social statistics – building on the 2021 Census – a more inclusive approach and sustainable delivery model for the organisation will help to build the evidence the UK needs to address its major challenges.

To deliver this by 2025, within the context of the UK Statistics Authority strategy, we will be:

Radical in our approach to cross-cutting analysis and integrated data.

Ambitious in our focus on the inclusivity, quality, coherence, accessibility and timeliness of our core statistics.

Inclusive by building inclusivity into everything we do from how we collect data, to what we publish, how we work, and the partnerships we build to deliver statistics and analysis.

Sustainable in the financial and resource efficiency of the organisation.



Professor Sir Ian Diamond

National Statistician
UK Statistics Authority

The ONS Strategic Business Plan

Executive Summary

The UKSA strategy covers the principal elements of the UK official statistics system, sets the overarching mission for the next five years and describes the core principles that underpin the mission.

This Strategic Business Plan sets out how the ONS will contribute towards the delivery of the UKSA strategy, including the immediate challenges of COVID-19. It sets out how the ONS will work in partnership with the Government Statistical Service (GSS), data providers and the analytical and research community to deliver against the core principles in the UKSA strategy, and the resources that will be required to do so.

The UKSA's mission:

High quality data and analysis to
inform the UK, **improve lives** and
build for the future

The core principles that will deliver this mission in the UKSA Strategy are:

Radical

in taking opportunities to innovate and collaborate, using data for the public good.

For the ONS this means being radical in our approach to cross-cutting analysis and integrated data.

Ambitious

in setting out to answer the critical research questions the public needs the Government to answer, and informing the decisions that citizens, businesses and civil society take.

For the ONS this means being ambitious for the inclusivity, quality, coherence, accessibility and timeliness of our core statistics.

Inclusive

in our approach to workforce, talent management, and the design of data, statistics and analysis.

For the ONS this means building inclusivity into everything we do from how we collect data, to what we publish, how we work, and the partnerships we build to deliver statistics and analysis.

Sustainable

in delivering a unique service in a way which delivers value for money with lasting benefits and minimises impact on the environment, all through partnership and collaboration.

For the ONS this means developing a sustainable and efficient business model.

Through the activities described in this plan, the ONS will work with the statistical and analytical community to provide the evidence the UK needs to understand its evolving economic and social context and analyse key policy areas; and enhance the UK's reputation for high quality, independent official statistics, which is critical for the credibility of the country.

To deliver this the ONS will:

- **Respond flexibly** to the uncertainties and challenges of COVID-19 and realise long term value from the COVID-19 Infection Survey and other interventions such as the Business Impact of COVID-19 Survey.
- **Provide an inclusive, trusted and engaging narrative on the UK's economic and social fabric and trends**, addressing cross-cutting issues and providing analysis to inform and engage government, policy makers and the wider public.
- **Build flexible and integrated analytical capabilities and data management tools** to address COVID-19 and other priorities to enable the organisation to manage data and deliver analysis that cuts across organisational boundaries.
- **Deliver high quality, inclusive and efficient economic and social statistics** that are internationally recognised, by streamlining our processes and blending administrative data with transformed survey capabilities with the capacity to answer key questions quickly.
- **Deliver a successful Census** in March 2021, deliver high-quality outputs from the Census in 2022 and make a robust recommendation on the future of the Census in 2023.
- **Deliver a revised and comprehensive system of population and migration statistics** based on administrative data and a consolidated social survey platform, having successfully delivered the full benefits of Census 2021.

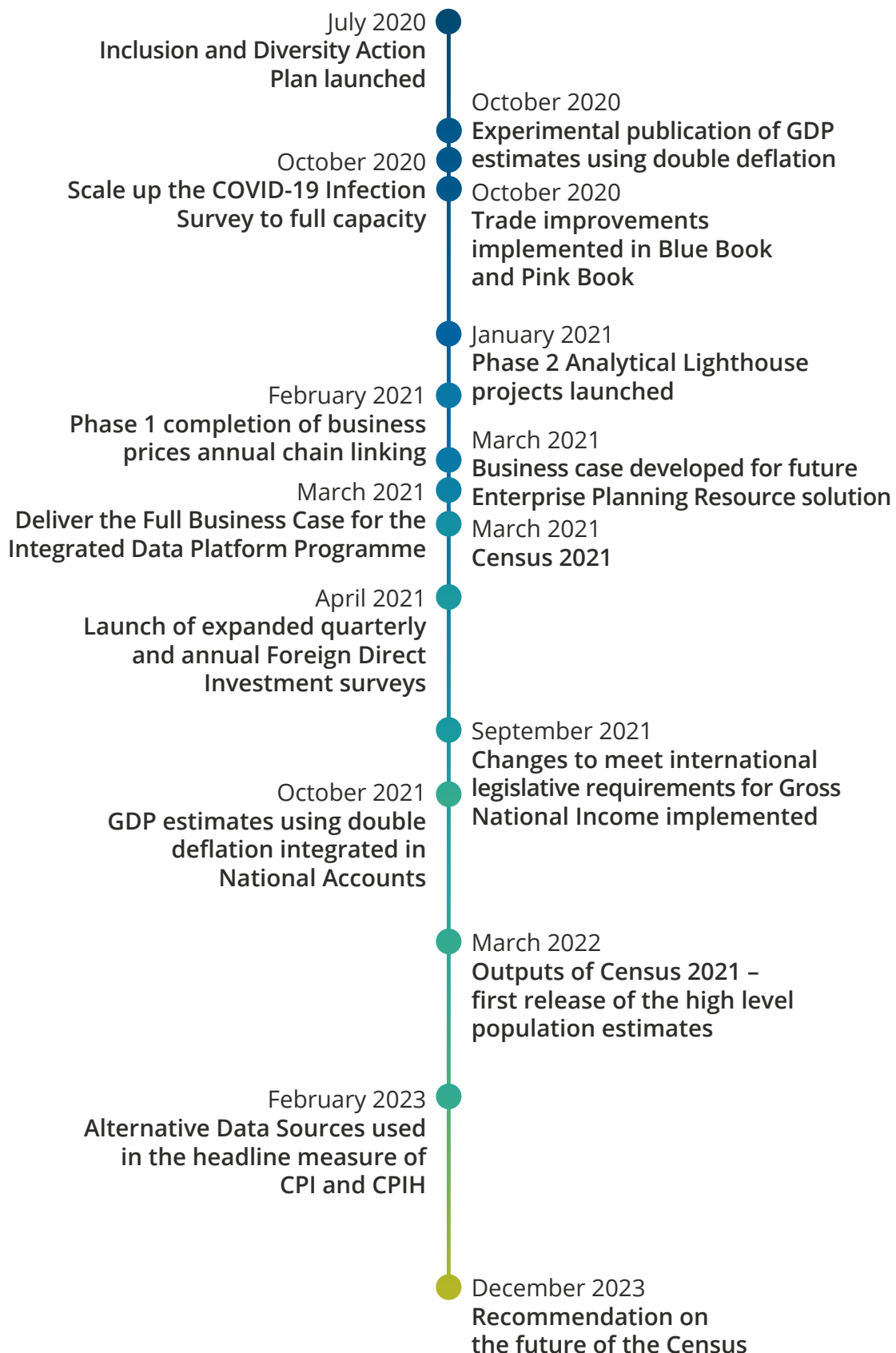
In delivering this we will:

- **Build an inclusive, high performing, innovative and collaborative organisation** that works naturally in partnership, actively seeking out people with different backgrounds and life experiences and valuing their distinctive perspectives and contribution.
- **Be financially efficient and environmentally sustainable**, with automated data collection and management processes; an approach which allows colleagues to work flexibly and throughout the UK; and an efficient effective corporate centre generating value from our corporate data.

To facilitate the delivery of the plan, the ONS will deliver six main change programmes alongside its ongoing activities:

- The **Integrated Data Platform Programme** (subject to business case approval) will deliver a platform that supports the integration of Government data, provides the capability to deliver analysis that cuts across organisational and societal boundaries and an enhanced approach to the dissemination data and analysis.
- The **COVID-19 Response** including the COVID-19 Infection Survey (subject to business case approval), which will provide estimates of prevalence of COVID-19. Through this response we will demonstrate our ability to work with partners to accelerate our transformation of social and business surveys, including the capacity to rapidly deliver surveys where other data is unavailable.
- The **Census and Data Collection Transformation Programme** will deliver the Census 2021, Census outputs in 2022, a revised system of population and migration statistics, and transformation of the ONS's data collection activities.
- The **Economic Statistics Transformation Programme** will deliver enhancements to economic statistics to ensure that they are focused on priority measures.
- Our **Workforce and Workplace priorities** will build a brilliant place to work, creating an inclusive and collaborative working environment based on flexibility and trust.
- The **Corporate Systems Improvement Programme** will streamline back office processes, drive efficiencies, and enable staff to deliver quality work effectively.

High-level timeline: Key deliverables for this strategic business plan



Who we are

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is the executive office of the UK Statistics Authority (UKSA). Led by the National Statistician, it is the UK's national statistical institute and largest producer of official statistics. The ONS produces data, statistics and analysis on a range of key economic, social and demographic topics. Key services include measuring changes in the value and composition of the UK economy, estimating the size, geographical distribution and characteristics of the population (including information from the Census), and providing indicators of other social and economic topics of national interest.

Also led by the National Statistician, the Government Statistical Service (GSS) is a cross-government network, spread across a whole range of public bodies, including components of the devolved administrations and UK government departments. The GSS is also part of the cross-government Analysis Function and is developing its own plan under the umbrella of the UKSA Strategy. The ONS sits at the heart of the GSS and Analysis Function and works with the network to provide the statistical evidence base, professional advice and analysis required by decision-makers.

The ONS's outputs, in line with the rest of the GSS, are regulated by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). The OSR sets the code of practice; ensures that statistics are produced and disseminated in the public good; and enhances public confidence in the trustworthiness, quality and value of statistics. Those that meet the highest standards are given National Statistics status by the OSR – this applies to a range of the ONS's key outputs.

The ONS has a current workforce of 4,224¹, including our national field force of approximately 740, distributed across 19 different professions. The majority of staff are able to operate remotely, demonstrated successfully during the COVID-19 pandemic. The ONS has three office locations in Newport, Titchfield and London.

¹ Correct at 31/05/2020

Our structure

Figure 1 sets out our organisation structure; the United Kingdom Statistics Authority (UKSA) head up the organisation, chaired by Sir David Norgrove and Professor Sir Ian Diamond as Permanent Secretary, Chief Executive and National Statistician.

Reporting to Professor Sir Ian Diamond are; Head of Internal Audit, Chief Security Officer, Chief Finance Officer, Data Protection Officer along with the Government Statistical Service (GSS).

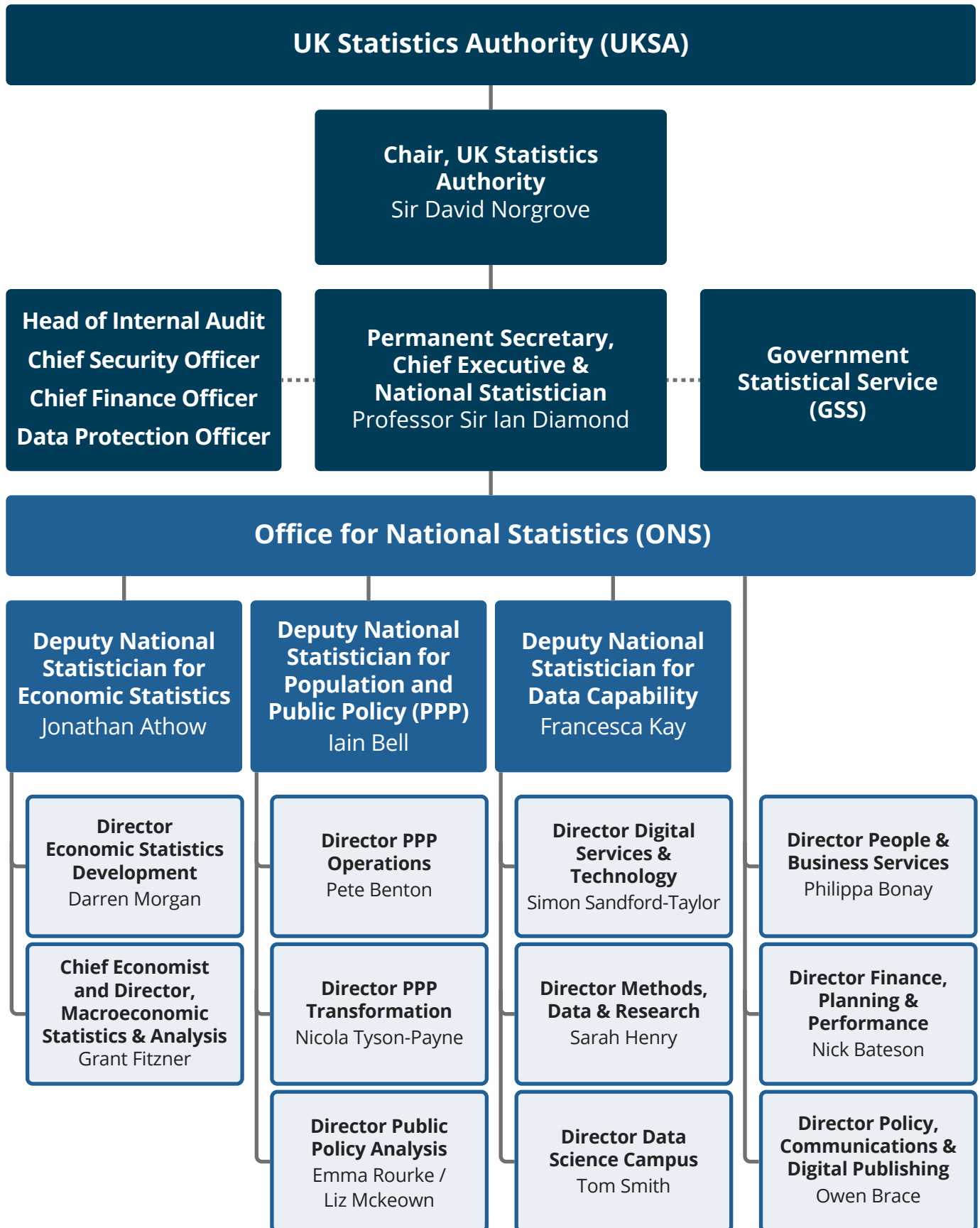
Office for National Statistics (ONS) sits under the UKSA with three Deputy National Statisticians:

- Jonathan Athrow, Deputy National Statistician for Economic Statistics
- Iain Bell, Deputy National Statistician for Population and Public Policy (PPP)
- Francesca Kay, Deputy National Statistician for Data Capability

There are 11 Directors:

- Darren Morgan, Director of Economic Statistics Development
- Grant Fitzner, Chief Economist and Director of Macroeconomic Statistics and Analysis
- Pete Benton, Director of PPP Operations
- Nicola Tyson-Payne, Director of PPP Transformation
- Emma Rourke and Liz McKeown Directors of Public Policy Analysis
- Simon Sandford-Taylor, Director of Digital Services and Technology
- Sarah Henry, Director of Methods, Data and Research
- Tom Smith, Director of Data Science Campus
- Philippa Bonay, Director of People and Business Services
- Nick Bateson, Director of Finance, Planning and Performance
- Owen Brace, Director of Policy, Communications and Digital Publishing

Figure 1: ONS senior management structure



Strategy and delivery

The ONS's strategic drivers

To deliver against the UKSA strategy by 2025, the ONS will be guided by the following strategic drivers. The drivers are described in more detail on pages 22 to 34. These drivers were established in consultation with our staff and stakeholders, but the COVID-19 crisis has emphasised their importance, particularly the value of independent analysis that cuts across organisational boundaries, better management of government's data and the inherent need for authoritative high-quality statistics in key areas.

Radical – Cross-cutting analysis and integrated data

We will deliver a radically increased level of analysis that cuts across government and societal boundaries – referred to as cross-cutting analysis in this plan – and integrated data to serve the needs of the UK, facilitating the identification of key issues that will prompt assessment by government, policy makers and the wider public. We will focus on addressing the challenges of COVID-19 as well as national and cross-government problems, where we are uniquely placed to deliver insights or have a key facilitation role – working with the GSS, devolved administrations, Analysis Function and academic research community.

We will work with stakeholders to identify appropriate resourcing models that allow us to harness expertise, data and partnerships and develop the capacity to analyse cross-cutting issues with the best available expertise.

We need to retain the ability to adjust our plans as new priorities emerge and experiment with data to generate new insights on areas of economic and social impact, with an inclusive lens. Annex B sets out the initial priority themes for cross-cutting analysis - net zero, levelling-up, social mobility, ageing population, future of work, healthy living, human capital, UK's place in a changing world and public sector reform. These priorities will change alongside the country's context as the period of this plan develops.

The shift will be supported by delivery over the next five year period of the Integrated Data Platform Programme.

As we have demonstrated through our COVID-19 response, we will also require an ongoing capacity for flexibility, innovation and rapid response in our social and business survey capabilities, analytical areas including the Data Science Campus and Digital Services and Technology (DST).

Ambitious – Inclusivity, quality, coherence, accessibility and timeliness of our core statistics

We will be ambitious for the inclusivity, quality, coherence, accessibility and timeliness of our core statistics shown in the thematic presentation at Annex B (Gross Domestic Product [GDP], Prices, Labour Market, Public Sector Finances, Trade, Population and Migration, Health, Household Income and Crime) and reference data (Reference Data Management Framework including address and business registers) as the underpinning statistical basis for the UK.

Improvements will be delivered at pace, mainly through the successful delivery of Census 2021 and a revised system of population and migration statistics, via the Census and Data Collection Transformation Programme (CDCTP), and the Economic Statistics Transformation Programme (ESTP) in the short term, and with methods, data, technology and clarity of communication that will support our processes and demonstrate their value and impact into the future.

This will include a consolidated social survey model and the capacity to rapidly develop and deliver new social and business surveys.

Inclusive – Building inclusivity into everything we do

We will embed inclusivity in all our policies, practices and work to ensure our statistics and analysis reflect the diversity of the economy and society in which we live. We will become an organisation that is key to understanding the dynamics of the country and attracts people and organisations that want to work to solve difficult research problems for government, policy makers and the wider UK.

We will form partnerships with stakeholders across and outside Government to deliver inclusive, high quality statistics and analysis which are timely, comprehensive and disaggregated. This will provide policymakers and civil society with the information they need to develop, monitor and evaluate policies and services that reflect the needs of all our citizens. This includes exploring how we can be more inclusive in how we collect data, develop statistics and analysis and publish and disseminate our findings.

To do this, we will develop the connections, outlook, skills and capabilities we need to deliver our ambitions. We will build a culture where difference of thought and outlook are expected, respected and valued; and where diversity is a key enabler to innovation, which will be evident in how we work. Our approach will be based on flexibility and trust. Our people will build inclusivity into the design of our data and analysis.

Sustainable – Sustainability and efficiency

We will re-focus and streamline core activities to facilitate the strategic priorities and develop an efficient business model by:

- Focussing on the clarity of our message by simplifying, reducing and/or eliminating outputs and statistical processes to focus on those where we are uniquely placed to deliver. We will stop those that are outdated, serve marginal interests or are better produced by others.
- Generating efficiencies from our established social and business survey operations.
- Putting in place robust foundations and policies for people, process, systems and data.
- Simplifying, modernising and automating back-office and support processes to generate efficiencies.
- Considering the overall environmental impact and materials efficiency of the organisation.
- Establishing a framework for managing our knowledge assets in line with plans set out in the March 2020 Budget.
- Learning from our COVID-19 response and considering the future operating model for the organisation.

By delivering against these drivers we will provide the evidence the UK needs to understand its evolving economic and social context and analyse key policy areas; and enhance the UK's reputation for high quality, inclusive and independent official statistics, which is critical for the credibility of the country.



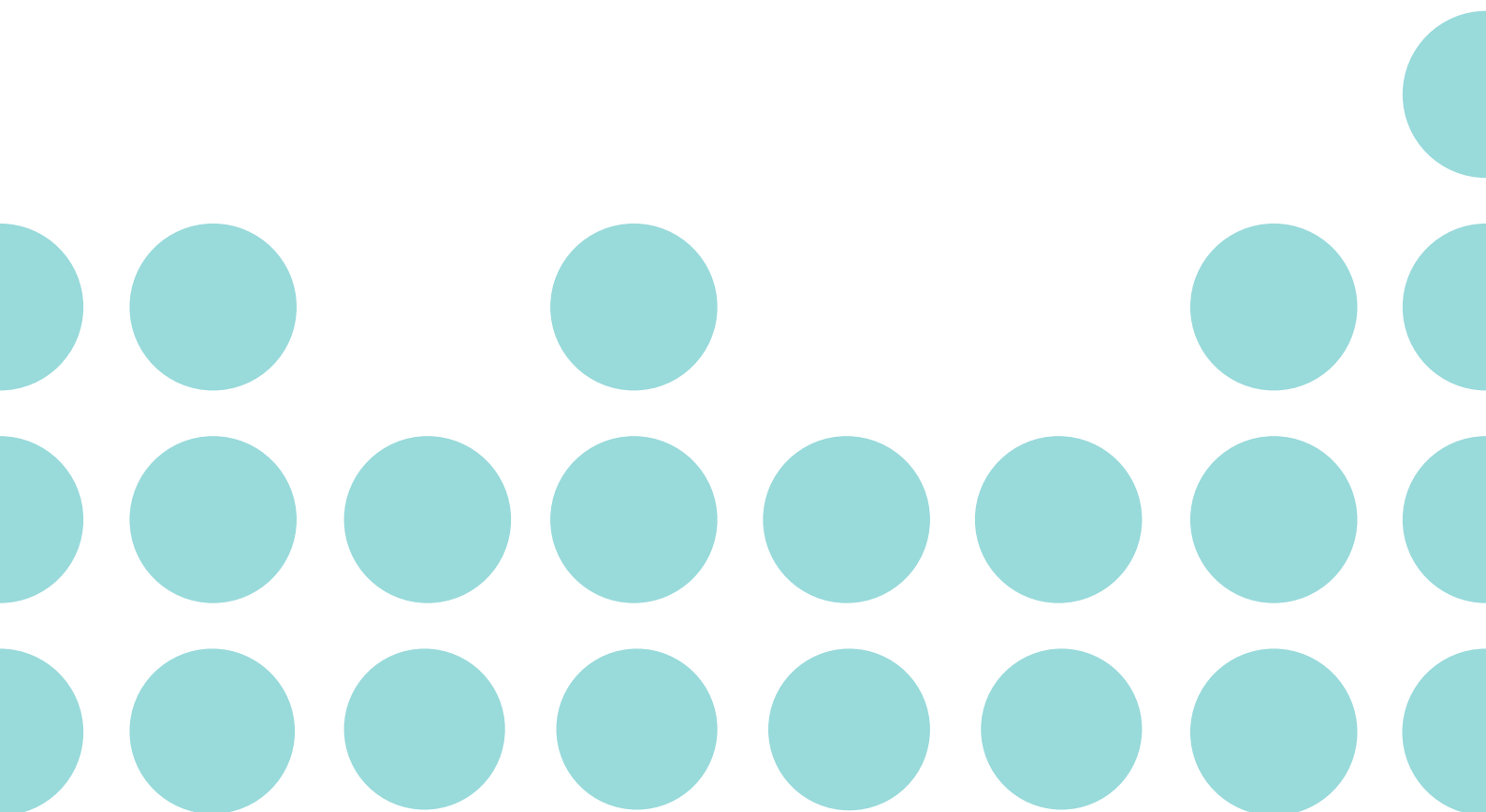
Enablers

To meet the strategic objectives, the ONS will deliver six main change programmes, or enablers:

- The **Integrated Data Platform Programme** (subject to business case approval) will deliver a platform that supports the integration of Government data, enables inclusive analysis on national issues and facilitates enhanced dissemination of data and analysis. The platform will deliver a strategic, secure and user-friendly environment and with integrated and categorised micro-data made available for research, analysis and presentation to users and the public via controlled access routes. Through the programme, we will also build partnerships with a range of organisations to deliver high quality analysis that reflects the diversity of economic and social experience in our country.
- The **COVID-19 Response** – including the COVID-19 Infection Survey, which will deliver estimates of COVID-19 infection rates in the community via swab testing and blood testing. Through the delivery of our response to COVID-19 we will accelerate our social and business survey transformation and capacity to work with partners to rapidly develop and deploy social and business surveys.
- The **Census and Data Collection Transformation Programme** will deliver the Census 2021, a revised system of population and migration statistics, and a transformation of the ONS's data collection activities. The programme will ensure that the 2021 Census is the last of its kind, with a decision, and proposal on how to deliver the benefits of the Census via alternative means at the end of 2023. From 2023/24 we will start the follow on programme to deliver the benefits of a transformed population and migration statistics system following the 2023 decision.
- The **Economic Statistics Transformation Programme** will deliver enhancements to economic statistics to ensure that they are focused on priority measures, and that they are high quality, timely and sufficiently granular to provide insight and evidence appropriate to user needs, Government priorities and public debate. This will include new initiatives on regional GDP, human capital and economic well-being.

- Our **Workforce and Workplace** (internally funded) priorities detailed in the ONS Strategic People Plan will build a brilliant place to work, creating an inclusive and collaborative working environment and addressing the workforce requirements to deliver against the UKSA strategy.
- The **Corporate Systems Improvement Programme** (internally funded) will streamline back office processes, drive efficiencies, and enable staff to deliver quality work effectively.

In addition, we will maintain our capacity to innovate and respond rapidly to change; focus on the effective dissemination of our outputs; and enhance and update the skills of our people and those in the GSS and Analysis Function. This will be delivered through a range of capability building programmes delivered by the Learning Academy, Data Science Campus and Methods, Data and Research.



Benefits

Delivering our strategic drivers will realise far-reaching benefits for the ONS, the GSS, wider Government and society. Specific benefits will be realised at all levels, including through delivery of Accountability Framework Objectives and enabling programmes. These benefits aggregate up to the six strategic benefits below that align to the strategic drivers, strategic objectives and enabling activities and will be monitored annually:

Radical

- An inclusive, trusted and engaging narrative on the UK's economic and social fabric and trends, which identifies key issues for government, policy makers and the wider public; and the capacity to design, test and evaluate policy interventions.

Ambitious

- Improved quality and inclusivity of statistics and analysis, and wider access to outputs and data, which will enable effective decision-making in government, by policy makers and across other sectors resulting in wider economic benefits, including enhancing the reputation of the UK's statistical system.

Inclusive

- An inclusive user-focused approach will result in increased trust in statistics, in particular amongst communities who currently feel excluded, undocumented or hidden from decision-making, and better decision-making through data that reflect experiences of all in the UK.
- A motivated, flexible and diverse workforce with clarity of purpose will make the ONS a great place to work and enhance productivity resulting in greater impact.

Sustainable

- A more sustainable and collaborative working model will drive up quality and enhance our reputation, combined with the continued responsiveness demonstrated during the recent COVID-19 crisis.
- Improved systems, technology and processes that enhance our efficiency will lead to financial savings and opportunities for re-investment.

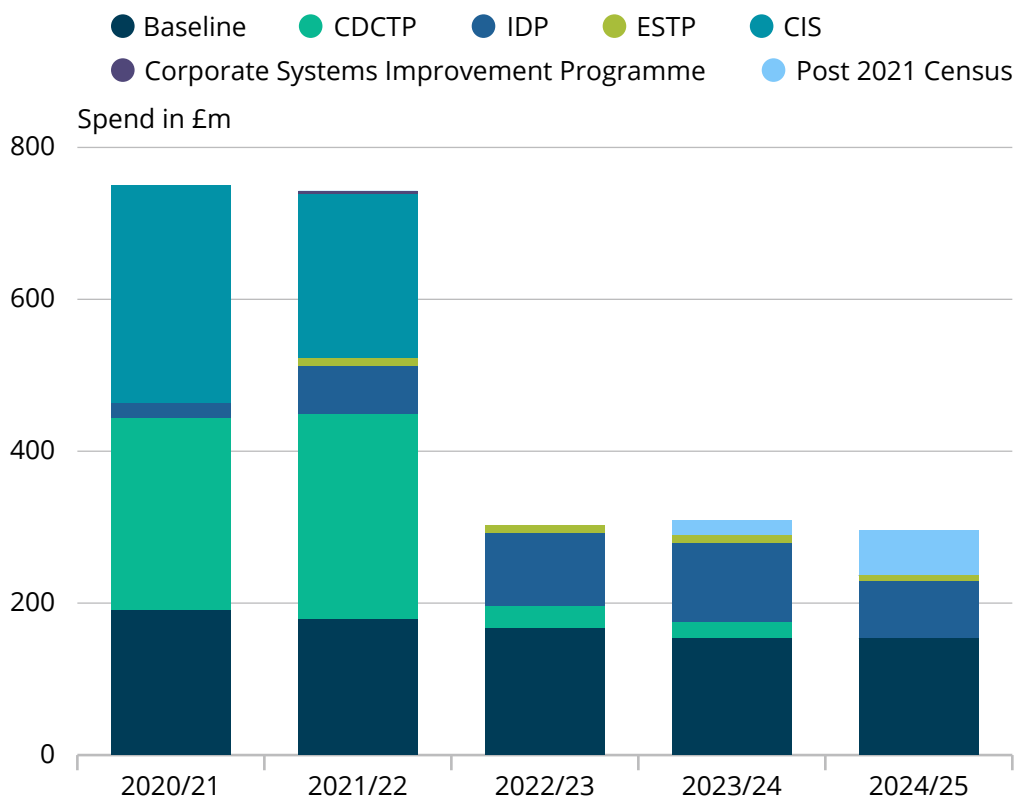
Funding

Figure 2 provides the current understanding of resource requirements across the next five years, split between our baseline funding for business as usual activities and the funding for the six main change programmes.

At present we have certainty through the Spending Round 2019 for our budget for 2020/21. All further financial plans are indicative and subject to iterative review and approval through central HM Treasury fiscal events in the coming months. The resource plans have been disaggregated by strategic drivers on pages 22 to 34 (Figures 4 to 6).

Figure 2 sets out the estimated resource requirements under the baseline and key programme funding streams to financial year 2024/25. In the earlier years (20/21 and 21/22) this could amount to circa £750m. In later years the estimates reduce to circa £300m.

Figure 2: Summarised Indicative Resource Plan – baseline funding of statistics and analysis and externally funded change programmes to 2024/25 (Resource Departmental Expenditure Limit [RDEL] net of income)



Note: Integrated Data Platform programme (IDP) and COVID-19 Infection Survey (CIS) are subject to final business case approval by HM Treasury. As part of the simplification of funding streams at Spending Round 2019 we have included Economic Statistics Transformation Programme funding within baseline. Initial funding of the Corporate Systems Improvement Programme and Workforce and Workplace priorities will be internal.

Strategic Objectives

A set of 12 strategic objectives have been developed that map to the strategic drivers and will deliver the benefits outlined on page 16. They have been designed in a cross-cutting manner to reflect the ONS's widest ambitions and the collaborative approach. Table 1 demonstrates the alignment and contribution of each strategic objective towards the four strategic drivers and Figure 3 summarises the link between enabling programmes, strategic objectives, and strategic drivers.

Each Strategic Objective is underpinned by a set of Accountability Framework Objectives (AFOs), delivery-level milestones and enablers that will be delivered by the business. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will be used to monitor delivery and are detailed on page 39.

The 12 ONS Strategic Objectives (SO) and their contribution to the strategic drivers

SO 01 To deliver an inclusive, engaging and timely analytical narrative on key economic and social policy priority subjects, including COVID-19, working in partnership with the GSS, the Analysis Function, civil society, academics and other parties.

Owner: Iain Bell

Aligned to: ● Radical ● Ambitious ● Inclusive ● Sustainable

SO 02 To deliver in collaboration with the GSS and Analysis Function a ground breaking, safe, secure and trusted Integrated Data Platform Programme that drives the integration of Government data; and enables the ONS to lead the provision of priority cross-cutting analysis for the public good and facilitates the evaluation of policy effectiveness.

Owner: Frankie Kay

Aligned to: ● Radical, ● Ambitious, ● Inclusive, ● Sustainable

SO 03 To develop the ONS's statistical, analytical and data management tools, technology and capability that meets changing requirements of the GSS and Analysis Function, at pace and with innovation to the fore, including agile survey capabilities to answer urgent questions.

Owner: Frankie Kay

Aligned to: ● Radical, ● Ambitious, ● Inclusive, ● Sustainable

- SO 04** To create an inclusive approach to the development and communication of our statistics and analysis that focusses on the issues, needs and concerns of those that are disadvantaged in society.
Owner: Iain Bell
Aligned to: ● Radical ● Ambitious ● Inclusive ● Sustainable
- SO 05** To continually improve our statistics, and outputs – focused on priority areas – so that they are of higher quality, are more timely and are sufficiently granular to provide the insight and evidence that Government, citizens and businesses need.
Owner: Jonathan Athrow
Aligned to: ● Ambitious ● Sustainable
- SO 06** To lead and set best practice for the development of UK and international frameworks, representing UK interests in the areas of data governance, and economic, social and environmental statistics.
Owner: Jonathan Athrow
Aligned to: ● Ambitious ● Inclusive
- SO 07** To deliver a successful Census in March 2021, disseminate Census outputs from 2022, make a robust recommendation on the future of the Census in 2023 and develop a revised system of population and migration statistics.
Owner: Iain Bell
Aligned to: ● Radical ● Ambitious ● Sustainable
- SO 08** To utilise resources (people, funding & infrastructure) effectively, efficiently and innovatively to help the ONS deliver optimum contribution against UKSA strategy, including developing the ONS's corporate services systems and capability to support the organisation into the future.
Owner: Nick Bateson
Aligned to: ● Radical ● Ambitious ● Inclusive ● Sustainable
- SO 09** To deliver an efficient, targeted, accessible, inclusive and flexible publication and engagement model that provides information that our key stakeholders and the wider UK need and feedback on our outputs.
Owner: Owen Brace
Aligned to: ● Radical ● Ambitious ● Inclusive ● Sustainable

- SO 10** To create an inclusive, collaborative, happy and healthy working environment where employees of different backgrounds, grades, characteristics and ways of thinking are consistently empowered and inspired to innovate and deliver their best work.
- Owner:** Philippa Bonay
- Aligned to:** ● Radical ● Ambitious ● Inclusive ● Sustainable
- SO 11** To build innovative and collaborative partnerships and approaches across Government, businesses and academia that supports the development of capacity and capability across the ONS, GSS and Analysis Function and a cohesive approach to statistics, analysis and data science.
- Owner:** Jonathan Athrow
- Aligned to:** ● Radical ● Ambitious ● Inclusive
- SO 12** To implement lessons learned and continue to build on the tools, skills and organisational culture developed in response to COVID-19.
- Owner:** Frankie Kay
- Aligned to:** ● Radical ● Inclusive ● Sustainable

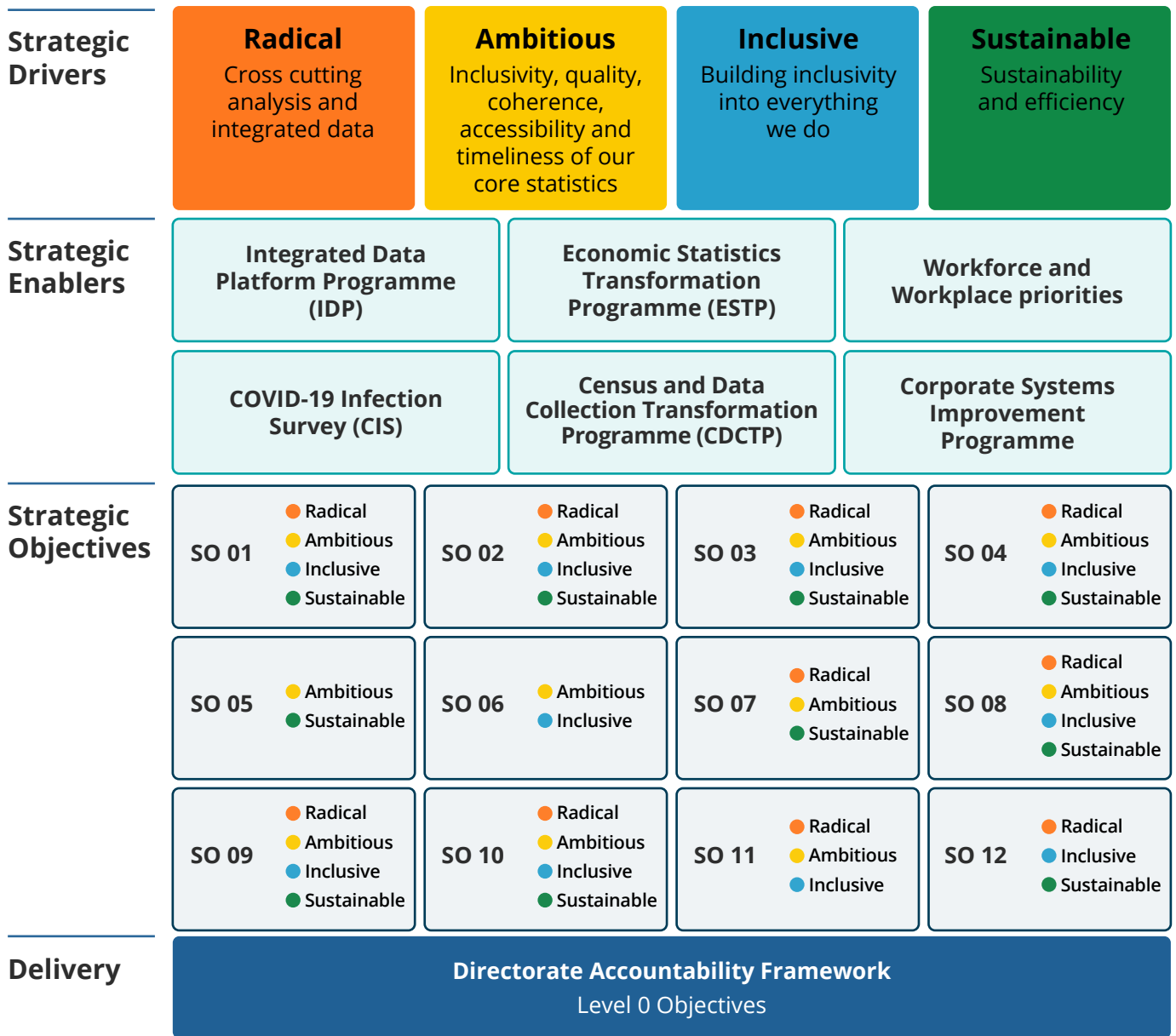
How the Strategy and the Strategic Business Plan fit together

Figure 3 shows the key components of the Strategy and the Strategic Business Plan and how they fit together. The key link between the two documents are the four strategic drivers:

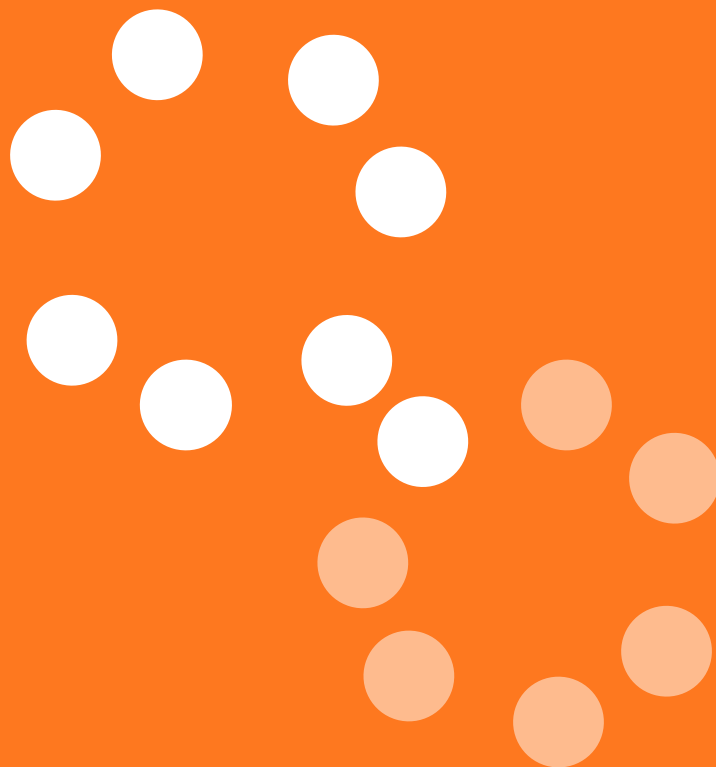
1. Radical – Cross-cutting analysis and integrated data,
2. Ambitious – Inclusive, quality, coherence, accessibility and timeliness of our core statistics,
3. Inclusive – Building inclusivity into everything we do
4. Sustainable – Sustainability and efficiency.

In the Strategic Business Plan we plan to deliver the Strategy and these drivers by achieving the 12 Strategic Objectives and the circa 90 Accountability Framework Objectives through the six strategic enablers (main change programmes).

Figure 3: ONS strategic drivers and strategic objectives



Radical – Cross-cutting analysis and integrated data





Cross-cutting analysis and integrated data

There has never been a more urgent need for cross-cutting analysis and integrated data to support decision making

COVID-19 and the new government's cross cutting policy initiatives such as net zero, levelling-up, social mobility, ageing population, future of work, healthy living, human capital, UK's place in a changing world and public sector reform – requires better access to integrated data, the ability to understand multiple sources of information, and a collaborative approach to analysis that cuts across government and societal boundaries. This is currently difficult to achieve due to the accountabilities and culture of data sharing across the public sector and a lack of cross-government analytical capability.

Delivering a strategic solution will facilitate better use and management of data, while increasing analytical capacity and its contribution to the policy debate. It will also help to overcome the siloes that are a characteristic of the government's evidence base, which impacts on policy formation and assessment of the impact of decisions and ensure that all aspects of society are reflected in our analysis. Broadening the evidence base will also facilitate higher quality policy evaluation, which is a key priority for the Government, and will also contribute to improvements in the quality of statistics.

From the perspective of the ONS, cross cutting analysis provides the opportunity to align our data, processes and analytical capabilities in a way that demonstrates the full value of the organisation, in line with the Statistics and Registration Services Act. To do this we need to improve the inclusivity of our analysis and its accessibility through our external presence and communication.

To address these external needs, we will harness our internal capabilities via the Integrated Data Platform Programme and by learning the lessons from our COVID-19 response.

We also need to build our capabilities, which have been demonstrated in response to COVID-19, to answer urgent research questions through social and business surveys where data are unavailable or incomplete. This will also accelerate our social and business survey transformation and increase its capacity.

Analysis needs to be built on secure, ethical access to data

The UKSA, in its leadership role for the statistical system, has key attributes that will support the ONS in moving towards more analysis. These are:

- a. The political and commercial independence of the UKSA and statistical system enshrined in Statistics and Registration Services Act (SRSA), which provides a credible base from which independent insightful analysis can be produced.
- b. The legislative remit within the SRSA – to produce official statistics and analysis, inform the public and support the development and evaluation of policy.
- c. Access to data under the Digital Economy Act, which uniquely allows the UKSA to build an inclusive, linked, cross-cutting data set of strategic significance.
- d. Values enshrined in the Code of Practice for Statistics overseen by the statutorily independent Office for Statistics Regulation (trustworthiness, quality and value).
- e. Practical application of data ethics, through the National Statistician’s Data Ethics Committee.

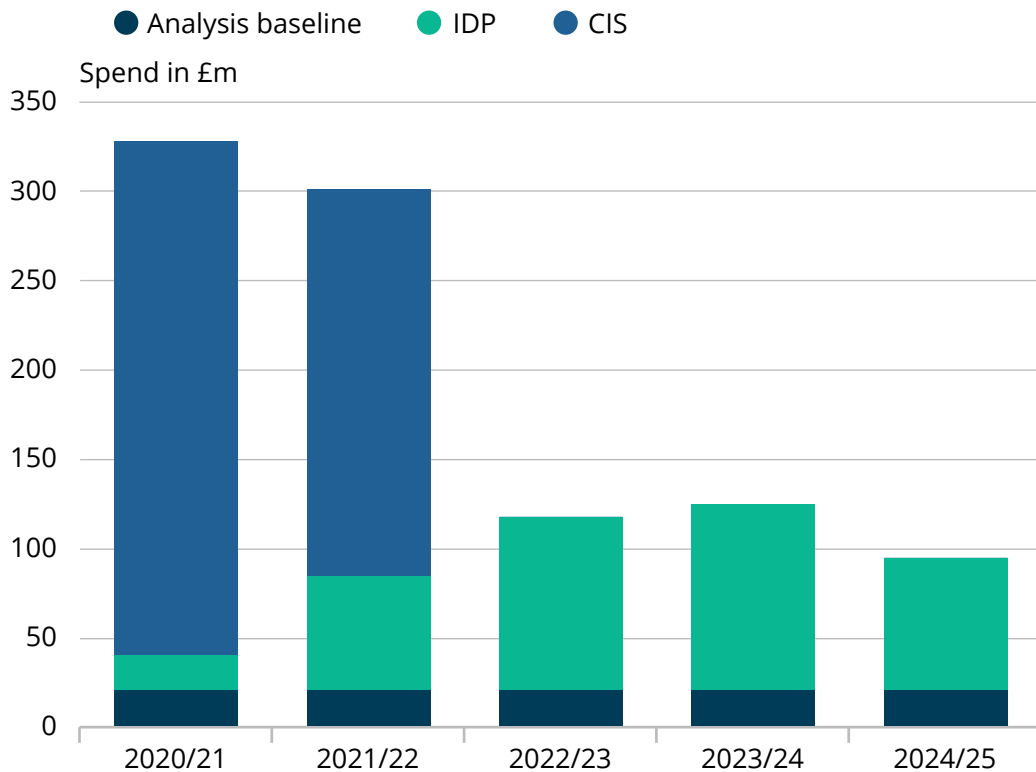
The ONS has already developed assets that support a further move towards analysis. These are:

- a. An established culture of operational independence – from the political process and commercial incentives – overseen by the UKSA and regulated by the Office for Statistics Regulation.
- b. Subject matter expertise across the core spines of data and processes that support cross-cutting analysis (National Accounts (GDP), Prices, Labour Market, Public Sector Finances, Trade, Population and Migration, Health, Household Income and Crime, plus main reference spines to support linkage – address and business registers) – which provides a strategic advantage.
- c. Work underway to improve key reference spines – population and migration statistics (via CDCTP), address register (via CDCTP), and business register (via CDCTP, but also in support of ESTP) that will support granular and regional analysis.
- d. Application of the Digital Economy Act which is supporting administrative data collection and use; and the flow of data from multiple sources to the ONS.
- e. The Data Access Platform, which supports data ingest and processing and has assured security features.
- f. The Secure Research Service, which facilitates analysis of key data sets through accredited processes.

- g. Links across the GSS to facilitate cross-government collaboration around data and analytical challenges.
- h. Analytical credibility through the COVID-19 response and in support of the Government's agenda.
- i. Ability to convene cross-government analytical capability and research interests to address key issues (GSS influence, Analysis Function, relationships with key academic experts through Economic Statistics Centre of Excellence (ESCoE) and Centres of Expertise).
- j. Capacity to innovate, develop new techniques and respond rapidly to new demand through the Data Science Campus.
- k. The ability to answer research questions quickly through our business and social surveys, which has been a key feature of our response to COVID-19.

Figure 4 provides the current understanding of resource requirements aligned to 'Radical - Cross cutting analysis' activity across the next five years, subject to iterative review and approval through central HM Treasury fiscal events in the coming months. In early years this figure reflects significant funding requirements related to the COVID-19 Infection Survey. In later years the funding requirement plateaus at around £100m with the Integrated Data Platform forming the majority of the figure.

Figure 4: Radical - Cross-cutting analysis and integrated data - indicative resource plan



Note: IDP and CIS are subject to final business case approval by HM Treasury.

Ambitious – Inclusivity, quality, coherence, accessibility and timeliness of our core statistics



Inclusivity, quality, coherence, accessibility and timeliness of our core statistics

Our statistics inform critical decisions made by Government and wider society

The ONS delivers a unique range of UK wide statistics, that are necessary to understand the economic and social development of the country. These statistics are supported by technical methods and access to data that have been built up over time and need to be produced independently to maintain public confidence. The key outputs that fit within this remit are National Accounts (GDP), Prices, Labour Market, Public Sector Finances, Trade, Population and Migration, Health, Household Income and Crime. These outputs form the statistical base for the UK and their impact is the basis of the ONS's reputation. These statistics also underpin the ONS's analysis as they provide the supporting data spines that will enable cross-cutting, sectoral or regional analysis.

However, quality and coherence issues exist across a range of our core statistics and key sampling frames. Some of these are known gaps or inconsistencies, which mean that our statistics are not fully inclusive or reflective of communities who currently feel excluded, undocumented or hidden from decision-making. Comprehensively understanding these issues and then addressing them quickly is at the heart of our ongoing development.

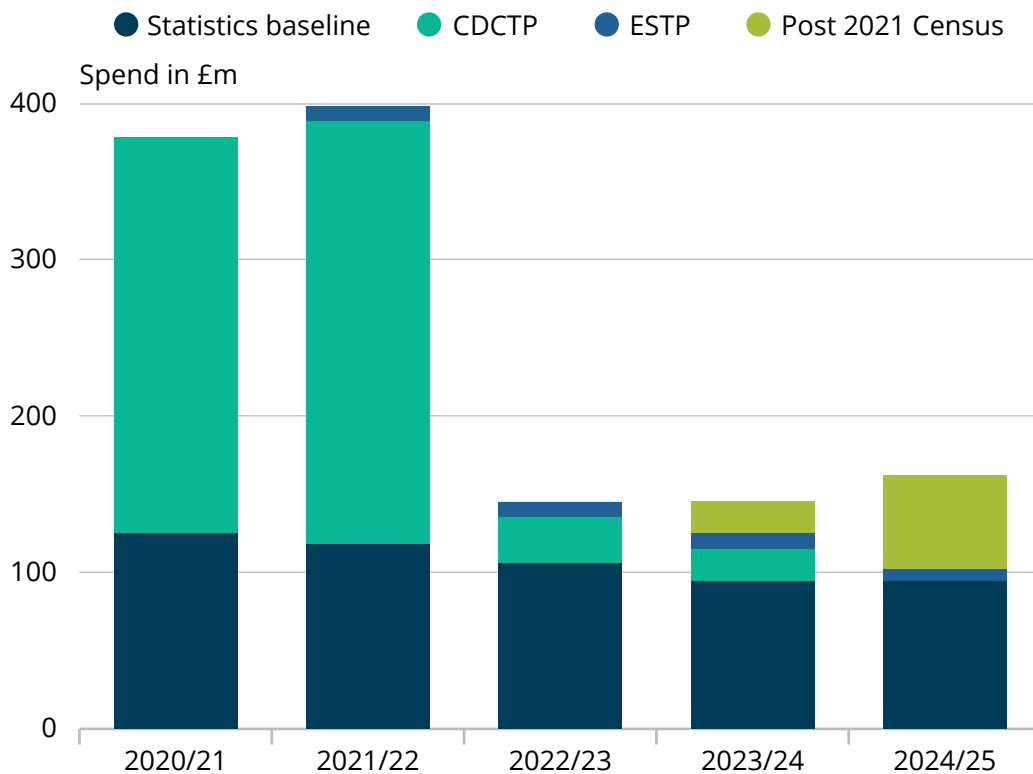
We also need to continue to demonstrate the impact of utilising a wide range of different data sources, including administrative data, on the inclusivity, quality, timeliness and coherence of statistics. The Digital Economy Act provides a unique legislative remit that enables us to broaden and deepen our statistics through a variety of data sources. We need to continue developing our understanding of how to address biases and inconsistencies in new data sources and develop new methodologies to continually improve.

In addition, we need to deliver the full benefits of Census 2021, through CDCTP, and the remaining key aspects of ESTP to assist HM Treasury, the Bank of England and other users of economic data in the academic community and financial markets. The quality and inclusivity of the Census will be key to ensuring that our overall statistical framework is fully inclusive of society and its characteristics and that we can move to a fully representative administrative data-based system of population and migration statistics, supported by an integrated social survey platform.

To show the value of statistics, our outputs and communication style need to be more thematic and engaging – providing clear narrative that is underpinned by technical content. This will be addressed by increasing the communication skills of our statistician’s and analysis and continuing to improve our main communication channels – particularly the website, so that it delivers for our professional user base and as a public information source.

Figure 5 sets out the estimated resource requirements for the Ambitious core principle. Funding requirements here are estimated at between £375m and £400m for 20/21 and 21/22 driven largely by the delivery of the Census Data Collection Transformation Programme. This reduces to circa £150m as an ongoing requirement. Post Census 2021 financial requirements are identified in future estimates but at present the estimates remain uncertain.

Figure 5: Ambitious – Inclusivity, quality, coherence, accessibility and timeliness of our core statistics – indicative resource plan



Note: Figure 5 provides the current understanding of resource requirements aligned to “Ambitious – Inclusivity, quality, coherence, accessibility and timeliness of our core statistics” activity across the next five years, subject to iterative review and approval through central HM Treasury fiscal events in the coming months.



Building inclusivity into everything we do


ONS will be inclusive and collaborative in data collection, publishing, how we work and the partnerships we build

As the UK's National Statistical Institute, the ONS has a unique role to play in inclusion. We have a responsibility to ensure that our approach to data collection, statistics and analysis is as inclusive as possible. This is essential to ensure that we are accurately representing the country, but also to ensure that those at the margins of society are considered in the evidence base for the formation and evaluation of policy.

We also have the opportunity to lead the way in the country's understanding of the value of an inclusive approach. We can help the country to understand how it can design and deliver services that are effective across the characteristics of the population; and understand how economic and social aspects of society are impacting on different groups. To do this effectively, we need to develop the inclusivity of our analysis and statistics, as set out in the sections above.

We also need to consider inclusivity throughout our operating model and develop an organisation that allows people with different backgrounds, characteristics, and ways of thinking to work effectively together to deliver their best work, through an approach that is based on flexibility and trust. To do this we will develop an inclusive approach to:

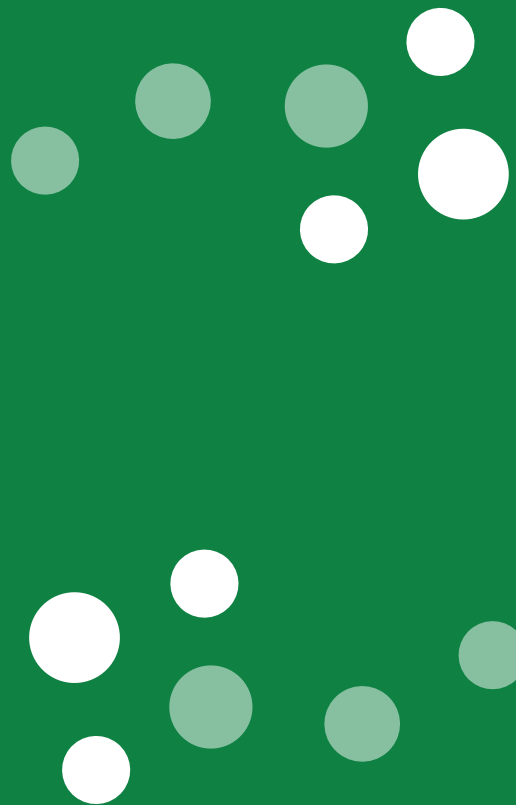
- Attracting, retaining and growing the diverse talent we need to develop, move into new areas and work in partnership with others in line with the People Plan which is summarised on page 37.
- Partnerships across and outside government (including GSS, devolved administrations, the research community and key strategic partners) to provide a focus on the needs of the whole of the UK and deploy the best collective skills to deliver inclusive, high quality statistics and analysis which are timely, comprehensive and disaggregated.



As an organisation, we recognise that diversity unlocks innovative solutions and allows us to provide insights into the needs and interests of our diverse communities across the UK. Actively seeking out difference by valuing and nurturing the distinctive perspectives, contribution and skill set this brings, both within our organisation and in our partnerships will add value to what we do and ensure that we consider all angles of the population of the UK in the delivery of our work.

We will deliver change in our internal processes through the Workforce and Workplace priorities outlined in our Strategic People Plan.

Sustainable – Sustainability and efficiency



Sustainability and efficiency

ONS will develop sustainable business model for the future

As for any organisation that spends public money the ONS has a responsibility to deliver value for money from its funding and its use of resources. The ONS uses the most significant proportion of the UKSA's resources so needs to ensure that it is operating efficiently.

Over the past strategic period the range of activities that the ONS delivers has grown to encompass a wider range of data and approaches – which has increased the range of outputs we have delivered and the people and technology that are used to deliver them. Moving into this business plan period, we need to review the business model and ensure that the value we are deriving from our outputs, support services and resource usage is efficient, focussed on the right areas and appropriately scaled to our ambitions.

Our analysis suggests that:

- Some of our outputs are too complex, or focussed on too narrow a user base, which affects our ability to focus on clear communication of the main themes.
- We need to simplify and prioritise our data collection activities, with a focus on the value of surveys to answer new and emerging questions.
- The cost base of our data collection and acquisition processes is too high and we need to focus our capabilities on the most significant priorities and increase the efficiency of our current processes – this will involve automation, online collection, multi-mode surveys and the capacity to design and deliver social and business surveys quickly.
- Our legacy technology is costly and inefficient to manage.
- Our support functions are too process and people intensive, we need to streamline them to deliver efficiencies for investment in front line activities.
- The organisation needs to demonstrate its commitment to efficient usage of raw materials, energy and reducing emissions.
- We need to build on what we have learned from the response to COVID-19 and assess the future working practices of the organisation beyond the pandemic.

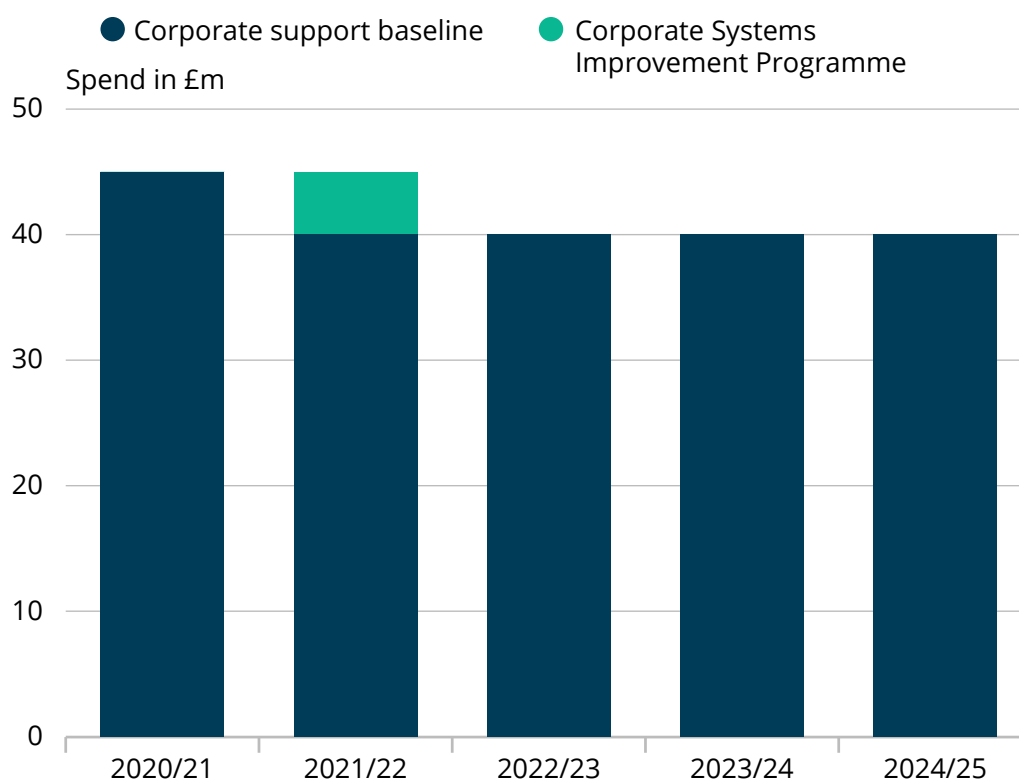
Through the use of internal value frameworks and the assessment of value for money we will be able to focus our resources on our priorities.

We will also focus on the quality and sustainability of our corporate systems via the Corporate Systems Improvement Programme.

Figure 6 sets out the estimated resources required to address our Sustainable core principle. In effect the funding required for corporate support (under current assumptions) will reduce from circa £45m to circa £40m by 2022/23 to reflect cost savings plans.

Figure 6: Sustainable – Sustainability and efficiency – indicative resource plan

Note: Figure 6 provides the current understanding of resource requirements aligned



to 'Sustainable – Sustainability and efficiency' activity across the next five years, subject to iterative review and approval through central HM Treasury fiscal events in the coming months.

Finance and People

Our money

Table 2 sets out our anticipated budget for 2020/21, based on the Spending Round 2019 settlement and changes since the agreement of this settlement.

Table 2: Budget for Financial Year 2020/21

	Resource Departmental Expenditure Limit (RDEL)	Capital Departmental Expenditure Limit (CDEL)	Income	Subject to further approvals	Overall total
	2020/21 £million	2020/21 £million	2020/21 £million	2020/21 £million	2020/21 £million
Baseline funding	191.2	10	26.7	1.7	229.6
Integrated Data Platform	5	0	0	15	20
Census and Data Collection Transformation Programme	250	0	2.5	0	252.5
COVID-19 Infection Survey	0	0	0	287	287
Total	446.2	10	29.2	303.7	789.1

Note: Table 2 sets out the entire budget whereas Figure 2 excludes income and capital.

This single year budget – based on our allocation for financial year 2019/20 – was agreed through the Spending Round 2019 and includes our income projection for 2020/21 and brings the Economic Statistics Transformation Programme funding into the baseline allocation. In addition to the base position we secured a continuation of funding streams from the Department for International Trade; for our work in support of EU Exit; approval for a reserve call; and secured a ‘contingency swap’ in relation to CDCTP effectively exchanging £8m of budget from 2019/20 to 2020/21.

There was a further recognition of funding requirements to commence Integrated Data Platform and Data Bid activity agreed at the Budget 2020. The overall CDCTP financial profile is subject to a separate business case governance route with the latest Full Business Case being approved in Summer 2019 securing funding approval for financial year 2020/21 again as set out in table 2.

Table 2 also sets out anticipated further additional funding for 2020/21 which we aim to secure during the year and finalise at the Supplementary Estimate. Whilst the funding associated with Official Development Assistance (ODA) activity is relatively certain; any additional funding in relation to the Integrated Data Platform will be subject to HM Treasury approval of our Outline Business Case. This is due to be approved by HM Treasury at the end of July (subject to confirmation).

We have included an expenditure profile representing our work in support of the COVID-19 Infection Survey. This funding stream and activity is likely to last approximately 18 months and will see a significant uplift in organisational income and corresponding expenditure (at this stage estimated at £350m but with a possible range of £350 to £500m) (at this stage estimated at £500m but with the potential to increase depending on scope) – largely through third party contracts – during this period. We have submitted this resource requirement to HM Treasury as part of a wider funding bid through Department of Health & Social Care and are awaiting final approval.

Our current view of our future financial requirements can be broadly split into six key areas:

- Baseline or funding for core activity which we will seek to drive down by streamlining processes; automating; rationalising; and moving away from more expensive systems. This may require modest investment 'upfront' e.g. in relation to the Corporate Systems Improvement Programme.
- CDCTP funding which will reduce over the next three years in line with the current Full Business Case profile which reflects the build-up then tailing-off of activity relating to Census 2021.
- The development, implementation and then ongoing live running of the IDP which underpins a significant proportion of our strategic direction.
- An ongoing need to dedicate funding to incrementally enhance economic statistics.
- A need to consider the financial impacts of what comes beyond Census 2021.
- The financial impact of our work on COVID-19.

Our plan as an organisation is to continue to iterate our future funding requirements linked to our strategic drivers and submit these plans for financial approval when we have the opportunity to do so through the upcoming Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR).

Efficiencies

As part of the initial preparatory phases of the planned Comprehensive Spending Review 2020 (CSR20) all government departments were asked to submit plans for a targeted 5% efficiency saving against their 2020/21 budgets for delivery by the end of financial year 2021/22. UKSA has submitted its plans in accordance with this directive with the impacts of those plans having been factored into the longer-term indicative resource requirements in Figure 6 above. Future efficiency targets will be subject to further direction from HM Treasury through the Spending Review and will be informed by the lessons from our COVID-19 response.

Our people

Annex A provides a breakdown of the ONS's resources by profession, grade and location.

The ONS Strategic People Plan forms part of this Strategic Business Plan and defines the workforce and workplace priorities and actions that will support delivery of the UKSA strategy.

Our five workforce priorities describe the organisational culture and environment we will develop to enable our people to flourish. The priorities are:

- **Inclusion** – embracing all; benefitting from our differences.
- **Collaboration** – investing in relationships; working with mutual respect.
- **Adaptive leadership** – tailoring our response; leading with confidence.
- **Working flexibly** – focusing on delivering outcomes and trusting our people; thinking flexibly for our future.
- **Continuously learning** – growing as professionals; developing collectively.

These sit alongside five workplace priorities, which capture key action areas from our workforce plan, to ensure we have the capability and capacity to deliver. These are:

- **Employer brand** – raising the ONS employment profile and communicating a compelling employment offer and brand to become an employer of choice in relevant labour markets.
- **Strengthening critical workforce groups** – recruiting, developing and retaining critical workforce groups.

- **Leadership and management of change** – the leadership and professional capability to achieve confident, timely and effective change management and increased efficiency.
- **Organisational flexibility** – designing in work and workforce flexibility to respond to continuing changes in the business and its environment, with trust at the heart of our approach.
- **Organisational capacity** – ensuring that we have an appropriate workforce to deliver Census 2021 and the ambitions of the business plan.

Assumptions and dependencies

Assumptions and dependencies associated with each of our strategic objectives and Accountability Framework Objectives will be identified and managed in accordance with the ONS management processes. Key assumptions and dependencies identified to date include:

- Key stakeholders across Government support the new ONS strategy and business plan and adopt a collaborative working model.
- The ONS maintains and expands on current access to data from across government, business and the wider population.
- Dependencies exist between some of our strategic objectives and the early development and establishment of new business processes.
- Existing programmes – CDCTP and ESTP – deliver as planned.
- We receive further funding to develop the Integrated Data Platform Programme.
- Our role in informing Government’s response to COVID-19 and the subsequent implications lasts for up to two years.

Performance indicators

The following Key Performance Indicators (KPI) will be used to measure progress against this plan. Where possible, existing measures will be used to support reporting against existing and new KPIs, but in some cases new measures will be required.

Governance: UK Statistics Authority Board

Radical – Cross-cutting analysis and integrated data

- Key stakeholder views on the effectiveness our analysis – new measure
- Impact of our analysis and outputs
- Successful delivery of IDP
- Successful delivery of COVID-19 response

Ambitious – Inclusivity, quality, coherence, accessibility and timeliness of our core statistics

- Increasing public confidence in Official Statistics – increase on 2019 baseline
- National Statistics Designation – maintaining designations and progressing with key statistics that do not meet National Statistics standard
- Successful delivery of Census 2021
- Successful delivery of Economic Statistics improvements

Inclusive - Building inclusivity into everything we do

- Case studies of improvements in the inclusivity of statistics and analysis
- Key partner views on our engagement – new measure
- Increasing People Plan Workplace scores

Sustainable - Sustainability and efficiency

- Meeting our Spending Review commitments
- Meeting our Greening Government Commitments for sustainability

Governance: National Statistics Executive Group

Radical – Cross-cutting analysis and integrated data

- Public engagement with our analytical releases – proxy measures of website satisfaction and public perception
- Administrative data acquisition priorities for cross cutting analysis
- Research engagement through the SRS and Data Science Campus

Ambitious – Inclusivity, quality, coherence, accessibility and timeliness of our core statistics

- Public engagement with our statistical releases – proxy measures of website satisfaction and public perception
- Survey response rates
- Administrative data acquisition priorities for core statistics
- Internal statistical quality review programme

Inclusive - Building inclusivity into everything we do

- People metrics (monitored by Strategic People Committee) – five workplace strands, including diversity of workforce

Sustainable - Sustainability and efficiency

- Sustainability measures as per Annual Report and Accounts – carbon usage, waste, waste going to landfill
- Full year budget variance within 2% underspend and zero overspend

Governance: Portfolio and Investment Committee

Radical – Cross-cutting analysis and integrated data

Enablers

- IDP status
- COVID-19 response status
- SRS & DSC research project status

Ambitious – Inclusivity, quality, coherence, accessibility and timeliness of our core statistics

Enablers

- CDCTP status
- ESTP status
- Statistical Production status

Inclusive - Building inclusivity into everything we do

Enablers

- Workforce and Workplace priorities status
- Inclusivity of our outputs

Sustainable - Sustainability and efficiency

Enablers

- Corporate Systems Improvement Programme status

Across all four drivers

Business delivery

- 70% Accountability Framework Objectives rated green
- People metrics (monitored by Strategic People Committee) – five workplace strands, including fill-rate of critical professions
- Percentage of risk mitigation factors complete on time – 80%
- Data breaches reportable to the ICO – zero

Planning hierarchy and terminology

ONS planning explained

Table 3 explains the key components of ONS planning. There are strategic and delivery layers covering business (as usual) and portfolio activity. The different components will be managed at the appropriate level of ONS governance.

The strategic layer is made up of the UKSA Strategy, 4 Strategic Drivers and 12 Strategic Objectives. The strategic layer will be reported to UK Statistics Authority Board and National Statistics Executive Group.

The delivery layer is broken up in to planning levels. At the highest level, Level 0 are the Accountability Framework Objectives and Portfolio Level Milestones (These may also include level 1 milestones where the Project/Programme is in Tier 1) and will be managed through the Portfolio and Investment Committee. At Level 1 are directorate and programme plans which will be managed by their respective management or programme boards. At Level 2 are divisional and project plans and will be reported to project boards.

Table 3: Strategic and Delivery layers of planning and monitoring

	Planning Level	Business Planning	Portfolio Planning	Reported to
Strategic Layer	Strategic	UKSA Strategy		Authority Board
		4 Strategic Drivers		Authority Board
		12 ONS Strategic Objectives		National Statistics Executive Group
Delivery Layer	Level 0	Accountability Framework Objectives (10 per Directorate)	Portfolio Level Milestones*	Portfolio and Investment Committee
	Level 1	Business as Usual Directorate or	Programme Plan	Management or Programme Board
	Level 2	Divisional Plans	Project Plan	Project Board

*These may also include level 1 milestones where the project or programme is in Tier 1

Glossary

Accountability Framework – captures the Level Zero milestones for each ONS directorate, owners, and associated benefits, risks, assumptions and dependencies.

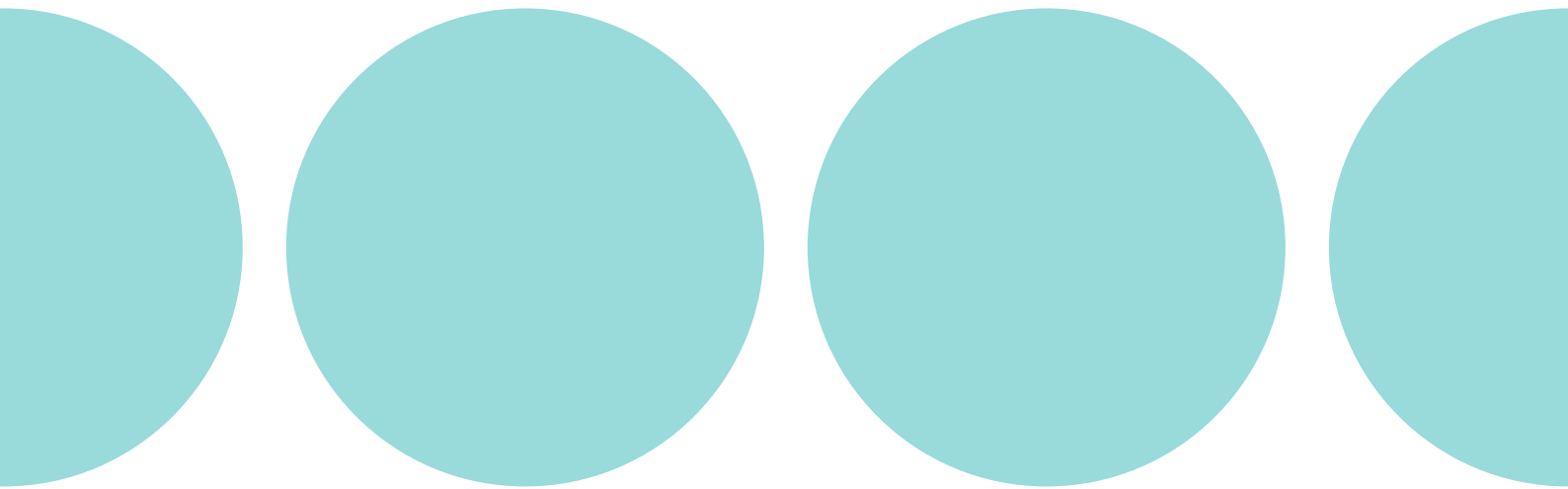
Accountability Framework Objective – a Level Zero milestone that directly maps to one or more ONS strategic objectives, and is owned by a particular ONS business area.

Milestones – A significant deliverable resulting from an enabling activity. A Level Zero milestone directly maps to a strategic objectives, and may be supported by Level 1 or Level 2 milestones.

Principles – High level guides for how UKSA will operate going forward.

Strategic Drivers – An ambitious set of visionary statements that set out where the ONS want to be in the future (2025).

Strategic Objectives – A set of end states that should be achievable within the strategic timeframe, and which contribute directly to the strategic drivers.



Annexes

Annex A: Resource Breakdown

The tables below provide an overview of our current workforce; all figures are Full-Time Equivalent:

Workforce by profession

Profession	Full-Time Equivalent
Digital, Data and Technology	499
Government Commercial Service	31
Government Communication Service	71
Government Economic Service	130
Government Finance	50
Government Legal Service	1
Government Operational Research Service	19
Government Project Delivery Service	157
Government Property Profession	16
Government Social Research Profession	425
Government Statistical Service Profession	392
Human Resources Profession	129
Internal Audit Profession	2
Knowledge and Information Management Profession	13
Operational Delivery Profession	1554
Planning Profession	2
Policy Profession	40
Security Profession	25
Other/No defined profession	668
Total	4224

Workforce by grade

Grade	Full-Time Equivalent
Interviewer	649
AA or AO	445
EO	632
HEO	706
HEO Specialist	241
SEO	529
SEO Specialist	221
G6 or G7	734
SCS	67
Total	4224

Workforce by base location

Base location	Full-Time Equivalent
Field	738
London	145
National	10
Newport	2292
Titchfield	1039
Total	4224

Annex B: Thematic Presentation of Statistical Outputs

Statistics theme	Statistics theme descriptor	Key ONS statistical inputs	Key GSS contributors	Initial analysis theme
Economic growth	How the economy is changing	National Accounts, Business Register		Levelling up: Regional or local economic growth
Inflation	How prices change and the cost of living	Consumer Prices (CPI, CPI-H and residual RPI)		
Labour market	Our working lives	Labour Market	HMRC, BEIS, DWP	Future of work
Global trade and investments	Our place in the world	Trade	Department for International Trade, HMRC, BEIS	Global Britain
Tax and spend	How public money is used	Public Sector Finances	HM Treasury	Public service reform
Population and migration	How our population is changing	Census, Future of Population and Migration Statistics, Address Register, Population Lists	Home Office	Social mobility and young people
Household finances	The money in our pocket	Household Income	MHCLG, DWP	
Security, crime and justice	How safe we are	Crime	Home Office, Ministry of Justice	
Health and social care	How healthy are we	Death statistics Life events COVID-19 Infection Survey	Department of Health and Social Care	COVID-19 risk factors and impacts COVID-19 surveillance studies
Housing and homelessness	Our accommodation and shelter		MHCLG	
Environment and climate change	Our changing environment		DEFRA	Net zero: Climate change and environment
Education and skills	How we build our capability		Department for Education, BEIS	
Productivity, innovation and infrastructure	Connecting and developing the nation		BEIS, HM Treasury, Department for Transport	Productivity puzzle
Agriculture	Food, fish and forests		DEFRA	
Arts and recreation	How we spend our leisure time		DCMS	

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