

**UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY
REGULATION COMMITTEE**

Agenda

Thursday 10 December 2020

**Virtual Meeting
13:00 to 15:00**

**Chair: Professor Anne Trefethen
Apologies: Professor Jonathan Haskel**

1	Apologies, minutes and matters arising	Meeting of 15.10.20
2	Update from the Director General for Regulation	Mr Ed Humpherson
3	OSR Strategic Business Plan – Maturity Model	Mr Ed Humpherson
4	OSR Guidance – Collection of data on sex and gender	Ms Gail Rankin Mr Lewis Jack Ms Marie McGhee Ms Helen Miller-Bakewell Mr David Ross
5	Exams Review – Recommendations	Ms Gail Rankin
6	Spending Review – OSR Budget	Ms Mary Gregory Mr Rhys Thomas
7	OSR Work Programme Review <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 21/22 Business Plan• 21/22 Work Programme	Ms Mary Gregory
8	Any Other Business	

Next meeting: Thursday 11 February, Virtual Meeting, 13:00

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

REGULATION COMMITTEE

Minutes

Thursday 10 December 2020

**Virtual Meeting
13:00 – 15:00**

Members Present

Professor Anne Trefethen (Chair)
Helen Boaden
Richard Dobbs
Professor David Hand
Professor Jonathan Haskel
Ed Humpherson
Sir David Norgrove

Other Attendees

Michelle Alderson (Item 5)
Nisha Bunting (Item 5)
Emily Carless (Item 5)
Mary Gregory
Lewis Jack (Item 4)
Marie McGhee (Item 4)
Helen Miller-Bakewell (Item 4)
Gail Rankin
David Ross (Item 4)
Emily Tew (Item 5)
Rhys Thomas (Item 6)

Secretariat

Sarah Cobden
Sally-Ann Jones
Lauren Higgins

Apologies

None

Declarations of Interest

None

1. Apologies, minutes and matters arising

- 1.1 Members were welcomed to the meeting. The minutes of the meeting on 15 October 2020 were agreed, and actions were reviewed.

2. Overview from the Director General for Regulation

- 2.1 Ed Humpherson introduced his update, which focused on the main agenda items, COVID-19, and the National Statistics Designation review.
- 2.2 OSR continued to receive a high volume of casework related to the pandemic. Recent investigations of note included availability of information on the Liverpool mass testing trial, and how full NHS hospitals were. Prompted by an item of casework, OSR was also undertaking a review of ONS population projections.
- 2.3 OSR was engaging with Chief Statisticians on preparedness for the vaccination programme, and learning lessons from Test and Trace to ensure good data collection strategies were in place.

3. Strategic Business Plan – Maturity Model

- 3.1 Ed Humpherson introduced a paper on the maturity model that OSR had developed to monitor progress against their five-year strategic business plan. The model had four levels of achievement (Basic, Enhanced, Sustainable and Optimal) to track outcomes over time. OSR would self-assess progress and review with Internal Audit as required. The most recent results suggested OSR was performing well in its core outputs (assessments, reviews and complaints) but could do more in the strategic influencing space.
- 3.2 The Committee discussed the objective on understanding of economic matters, recommending a recent report by the Economic Statistics Centre of Excellence (ESCoE). Further clarity was given on the Authority's role in improving statistical literacy, which was more focused on ensuring optimal presentation of statistics to aid understanding, than education.
- 3.3 The Committee's comments would be incorporated into the next draft. It was agreed that this would be presented quarterly below-the-line, with any substantive issues raised for discussion.

4. Guidance – Collection of Data on Sex and Gender

- 4.1 Gail Rankin, joined by the project team, introduced guidance on the collection of sex data which had been reviewed previously by the Committee. Comments received to date had been incorporated in the draft for discussion.
- 4.2 The meeting discussed the changes made since October, which included a restructured introduction to make the purpose clearer and to reinforce the role of OSR. The guidance was also more focused on the Code of Practice. Actions from October had been addressed, including stakeholder engagement.
- 4.3 The Committee agreed OSR's plans for publication of the guidance, subject to comments on the example.

5. Exams Review – Recommendations

- 5.1 Gail Rankin presented the report for OSR's review of 2020 exam results, and the lessons learned for using statistical models. OSR had taken on board comments from the Committee's previous reviews of the report in October and the extraordinary meeting in November. Most of the changes centred around structure and drafting, including a refreshed executive summary and splitting out the lessons learned into four main groups for clarity. The Committee was invited to review the report's recommendations.

- 5.2 The meeting noted the improvements and discussed the importance of the report delivering impact through a coordinated communications plan, and engagement with stakeholders including the National Statistician, Royal Statistical Society and Cabinet Office. Members discussed the commissioning process, governance and accountability, and strengthening the recommendations to be more proportionate with the rest of the report.
- 5.3 The report was noted as much improved, and the Committee was content for OSR to proceed in sharing with the four qualifications regulators, including Ofqual, for comment in draft.

6. Spending Review – OSR Budget

- 6.1 Mary Gregory was joined by Rhys Thomas (Finance, Planning and Performance) to present OSR's budget for 2021/22.
- 6.2 Following the Chancellor's Spending Review announcement, OSR had reviewed their original budget proposal that had been approved by the Committee. Instead, OSR were seeking a modest uplift to their baseline to cover recruitment of three posts. Rhys Thomas confirmed this was not an issue from an accounting perspective, and in line with the small uplift of ONS' budget.
- 6.3 The Committee approved the proposal.

7. Work Programme Review

- 7.1 Mary Gregory presented an initial look at OSR's work programme for 2021/22. The paper outlined OSR's priorities for the coming year, key statistics and broad topics for review. Some areas of note included statistical quality versus timeliness, and statistical literacy.
- 7.2 The Committee discussed the role of statistics in impact and policy evaluations; OSR would be discussing this internally soon and include more information in the next iteration of this paper. The Committee also recommended further clarity on OSR's role in data, including data access and linkage.
- 7.3 The Committee would receive more detail at the February meeting.

8. Any Other Business

- 8.1 Two papers had been issued by correspondence: Regulatory Services Update; and the Systemic Review of Statistical Leadership report. Members had submitted written comments in advance of the meeting.
- 8.2 The Regulatory Services Update sought the Committee's permission to designate Northern Ireland Planning Statistics as National Statistics. The Committee agreed to designate. Comments had been provided on the Systemic Review report in correspondence. The Committee was content for this to be published.
- 8.3 The Committee would meet next on Thursday 11 February at 13:00.