

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Minutes
Thursday 24 February 2022
Newport Boardroom

Present

UK Statistics Authority

Sir David Norgrove (Chair)
Sian Jones (Deputy Chair)
Professor Sir John Aston
Sam Beckett
Helen Boaden
Professor Sir Ian Diamond
Richard Dobbs
Professor Jonathan Haskel
Ed Humpherson
Nora Nanayakkara
Professor Sir David Spiegelhalter
Professor Anne Trefethen

Also in attendance

Penny Babb (for item 11)
Nick Bateson
Robert Bumpstead
Mike Keogh (for item 10)
Liz McKeown (for item 10)
Emma Rourke (for item 5)

Apologies

Owen Brace
Alison Pritchard

1. Apologies

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Owen Brace and Alison Pritchard.

2. Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 There were no new declarations of interest

3. Minutes and matters arising from previous meeting

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting on 27 January 2022 were agreed.

4. Report from the Authority Chair

- 4.1 Non-Executives had met prior to the Board meeting. They had discussed the appointment process for the Authority Chair.
- 4.2 The Chair reported on his recent activities since the Board last met. Sir David had written to Alistair Carmichael MP on 3 February regarding crime statistics produced by the Home Office. On 10 February Sir David had written a further letter to Stephen Timms MP about the publication of statistics by the Home Office on people being granted Leave to Remain with No Recourse to Public Funds.
- 4.3 Board members discussed the Authority's role in making public interventions on the use of statistics as set out in the Interventions Policy, and noted the impact of letters from the Chair of the Authority and the Director General for Regulation.

5. Report from the Chief Executive [SA(22)09]

- 5.1 Sir Ian provided the Board with an overview of activity and issues since the last meeting.
- 5.2 Emma Rourke joined the meeting to update the Board alongside Sir Ian on the longer term plans for the COVID-19 Infection Survey with discussions ongoing with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and HM Treasury. Sir Ian and the Board commended Emma Rourke and her team for their work on the CIS throughout the pandemic and in planning for the CIS going forward.
- 5.3 The Board heard about the Over 50s Lifestyle Survey, which had been launched at pace with the first results scheduled for publication on 1 March. The work on the dissemination of Census outputs was progressing well, including engagement with Local Authorities ahead of publication of first results in June 2022.
- 5.4 Sir Ian informed the Board that Roger Halliday, Chief Statistician at Scottish Government would be moving full time as Chief Executive of Research Data Scotland. The Chief Statistician role for Scotland would be advertised in the coming weeks.

6. Report from the Director General for Regulation [SA(22)10]

- 6.1 Ed Humpherson provided an update on regulation activity highlighting the consultation by OSR on publication times, (scheduled for discussion later in the meeting).
- 6.2 The Board heard about key areas of casework for OSR since the last meeting including the Home Office on crime with statements made by government officials, which were not consistent with the statistics. OSR had also engaged with No 10 regarding references by the Prime Minister on labour market statistics. Further detail was provided on OSR's positive 2021 People Survey results.

7. Report from the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

- 7.1 Nora Nanayakkara reported on the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee which had met on 20 January 2022.
- 7.2 The Committee had considered:

- i. the financial position of the organisation;
- ii. the implementation of the strategic risk profile and the development of associated metrics and assurance mapping;
- iii. delivery of the Internal Audit work programme; and
- iv. the risk profile and mitigations of the Integrated Data Service Programme;

8. Report from the Regulation Committee

8.1 Professor Anne Trefethen reported on the Regulation Committee, which had met on 19 February.

8.2 The Committee had considered:

- i. a presentation on Economic Statistics by Maira Spowage, of the Fraser and Allender Institute;
- ii. the draft report of OSR's review of Migration Statistics scheduled for publication in March;
- iii. progress of the draft OSR Business Plan and regulatory programme of work;
- iv. timing for publication of the Systemic Review on Children and Young People;
- v. the proposal for the Review of Release Times in the Code of Practice for Statistics, with agreement on the recommended approach by OSR, subject to approval by this Board.

8.3 The Committee had heard about the OSR conference on 3 February with over 200 attendees on 'Why Analytical Leadership Matters', with guest speakers including Sir Ian.

9. People Update [SA(22)11]

9.1 Sam Beckett introduced a paper which provided a people update with a focus on the work taking place to mitigate the Authority's strategic people risk and support delivery of the strategy, Statistics for the Public Good.

9.2 The Board heard that the People Plan launched in 2020, had underpinned improvements across the organisation in a number of areas notably inclusion and diversity, strategic resourcing and skills (with a focus on leading and managing through change).

9.3 Board members welcomed the update. With regard to colleagues returning to the office as social restrictions eased the Board heard about the hybrid working principles in place to underpin a safe return for all colleagues.

9.4 The Board noted thanks for an excellent presentation.

10. Inclusive Data Taskforce [SA(22)12]

10.1 Liz McKeown introduced a paper which provided an update on the implementation of the Inclusive Data Taskforce (IDTF) recommendations published on 28 September 2021. The National Statistician's response set out a collaborative work programme across government, the devolved administrations and more widely. Activity in the ONS would be co-ordinated through its Centre for Equalities and Inclusion.

10.2 The Board heard about ONS' role to implementing the recommendations: providing cross system leadership; harnessing opportunities in existing programmes such as the Integrated Data Service; embedding inclusivity into new strategies and programmes from the outset; and developing independent and inclusive mechanisms and governance to monitor progress.

10.3 The Board welcomed the update and would remain engaged as the work progressed.

11. Review of Release Times – Code of Practice for Statistics [SA(22)13]

- 11.1 Ed Humpherson and Penny Babb introduced a paper which provided an update on the review following a public consultation between September and December 2021 and made recommendations for changes to the Code of Practice for Statistics.
- 11.2 It was noted that the consultation findings supported the proposal for flexibility in release times to be granted by the Director General for Regulation, while keeping a standard release time.
- 11.3 The Board endorsed the approach to amend the Code of Practice for Statistics. Producers would need to demonstrate a public good case for the relevant release time.

12. Any other business

- 12.1 The next meeting would take place on Thursday 31 March 2022.

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Agenda

24 February 2022, 11.00-14.20

Newport Boardroom

Chair: Sir David Norgrove

Apologies: Alison Pritchard, Owen Brace

Attendees: Penny Babb (for item 8), Liz McKeown (for item 7), Emma Rourke (for item 9)

NED Session: 10.30-11.00

1 11.00-11.05 5 mins	Minutes and matters arising from previous meetings Declarations of interest	Meeting of 27 January 2021
2 11.05-11.15 10 mins	Report from the Authority Chair	Oral report Sir David Norgrove
3 11.15-11.40 25 mins	Report from the Chief Executive	SA(22)09 Prof. Sir Ian Diamond
4 11.40-11.50 10 mins	Report from the Director-General for Regulation	SA(22)10 Ed Humpherson
5 11.50-12.05 15 mins	Report from Committee Chairs <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Audit and Risk Assurance Committee• Regulation Committee	Oral report Nora Nanayakkara Prof. Anne Trefethen
6 12.05-12.30 25 mins	People Update	SA(22)11 Sam Beckett
12.30-13.00 30 mins	Lunch and tour of the hybrid working area	
7 13.00-13.25 25 mins	Inclusive Data Taskforce	SA(22)12 Liz McKeown
8 13.25-13.50 25 mins	Review of Release Times – Code of Practice for Statistics	SA(22)13 Ed Humpherson Penny Babb
9 13.50-14.10 20 mins	COVID-19 Infection Survey and Surveillance Studies (considered under item 3)	SA(22)14 Emma Rourke
10 14.10-14.20 10 mins	Any Other Business	

Next meeting: Thursday 31 March 2022, London Boardroom

Chief Executive's Report, February 2022

Purpose

1. This provides the Authority Board with an overview of activity and issues for February 2022.

Summary

2. February has seen a continuation of the busy start to the year, launching a new survey (**Over 50s Lifestyle Survey**) at record pace in response to a request from the Cabinet Secretary. ONS data and analysis featured prominently in the **Levelling Up White Paper** published at the start of the month, alongside our own interactive subnational data explorer, and we have engaged with emerging discussions around **cost of living**, including with campaigner Jack Monroe in a conversation on inflation.
3. The **Inclusive Data Taskforce Implementation Plan** has been published which has set out the response to the Taskforce recommendations. I also gave a keynote lecture at the **University of Southampton** to a global audience on the ONS response to COVID-19 and the role of a National Statistical Institute after the pandemic. Finally, we have appointed Martin Weale as Chair of the **National Statistician's Committee for Advice on Standards for Economic Statistics** to begin later this year.

Review of recent activities

4. After an increased focus on understanding the social and economic impacts of the pandemic, we have been commissioned by the Cabinet Office to survey those who are over 50 and out of work. The **Over 50s Lifestyle Survey** was stood up in just 11 days after cross-ONS collaboration to explore the reasons people have left work and the motivations and barriers to returning to work. We have worked across government to design, test and launch the survey of 20,000 workless 50-70 year olds. Results will be available by mid-February and a publication will follow shortly afterwards.
5. The Government's **Levelling Up White Paper** was published on 2 February, setting out plans to spread opportunity more equally across the UK. The ONS worked closely with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, contributing to systems analysis, metrics, data strategy and quality assurance, as well as assisting with visualisations. We also successfully launched the subnational data explorer, which received strong positive feedback from commentators, policymakers and public.
6. Following sustained coverage on the **cost of living** during February, we have been engaging in these discussions. We published a blog and an ad-hoc analysis of Consumer Prices Index-consistent inflation rate estimates for UK household groups, including a breakdown by income decile. We are working across the ONS, including with Data Science Campus, to make best use of our innovative data sources such as web-scraped groceries data. We also engaged with campaigner Jack Monroe in a conversation about measuring inflation and the impact of rising food costs on low-income households.
7. At the start of the month I delivered a **keynote lecture** to the University of Southampton on 'The role of a National Institute in a pandemic – With some observations on the future of National Statistical Institutes'. There was a global audience of over 500 people including from Canada, the USA, Italy, Portugal, Belgium, Mexico, Brazil, Netherlands, Greece, Switzerland, Latvia Norway, Saudi Arabia and Singapore. I received significant positive feedback for the lecture, which was a great conversation.
8. We continue to engage with the **Department for Education on their Unit for Future Skills**. We have identified workstreams on employer skills demands through vacancy

analysis, Longitudinal Educational Outcomes analysis of pathways through learning into work, longer-term research on skills stocks, matching and human capital, and the use of the Integrated Data Service (IDS) as the platform solution to analyse and disseminate this data.

9. There has also been progress on the **Crime Survey for England and Wales** as the Home Secretary has asked the ONS to look at expanding the current sample of the survey so it can be used to measure performance against the metrics set out in the Crime and Justice Mission of the Levelling Up White Paper.
10. February has seen the publication of the **Inclusive Data Taskforce Implementation Plan**, setting out in more detail our response to the 46 recommendations made by the Taskforce in September 2021. The Plan brings together around 200 activities across 20 organisations involved in improving data and evidence on equalities and inclusion. This covers the whole UK statistical system including UK government departments, the Devolved Administrations and various external bodies including academia.
11. In late January we published a blog, setting out the ambitious road map for Census, Population and Migration statistics in 2022 where many estimates of the population come together.
12. The **COVID-19 Infection Survey (CIS)** has continued to deliver the evidence to inform government decision-making during the Omicron variant. CIS has been monitoring the spread of the Omicron sub-variant BA.2 via both gene pattern matching and genomic sequencing. CIS will also begin reporting symptoms and a screening model for the BA.2 variant. The transition to CIS Digital also continues to move at pace whilst we continue to await confirmation of the funding situation for 2022/2023.
13. On the **IDS**, the programme has moved from Amber/Red to Amber following the Programme Board's endorsement of the baselining of the replan activities. Delivery is now progressing to the next major release which is New Private Beta on 30 April 2022. The next steps for IDS branding are also now underway.
14. The **Mobilizing Big Data and Data Science for the Sustainable Development Goals** event, organised by the United Nations (UN) Committee of Experts on Big Data and Data Science, was held at EXPO2020 in Dubai. More than 200 delegates from National Statistical Organisations attended a series of sessions led by ONS and UN teams, including training, knowledge sharing, and round table discussions. During the event, a Memorandum of Understanding between ONS and the National Statistics Office of the United Arab Emirates was signed.
15. We have also progressed the new governance arrangements for economic statistics now we are outside the European Statistical System. I am pleased that we have appointed Martin Weale (formerly of the National Institute for Economic and Social Research and the Bank of England) as the Chair of the new **National Statistician's Committee for Advice on Standards for Economic Statistics (NSCASE)** and have started recruitment of the rest of the committee.
16. The 2022-23 **strategic planning activity** continues, with a further iteration of our prioritisation matrix and work to ensure that the resources are available to deliver our highest priority programmes and to address the strategic risks that are currently scoring outside of appetite. We are ensuring that the delivery models for our wider activities are secure and well understood and to identify discretionary activities that can be brought together and scoped in alignment with Statistics for the Public Good. The plan will be developed to present to the Authority Board at the end of March.
17. We are also refreshing our **People Plan** and continue to refine the specific areas of organisational focus. We will use a streamlined People Plan to focus the efforts of everyone in the UK Statistics Authority on the three priority areas required to support

delivery of the Strategy: Strategic Resourcing, Inclusion and Diversity, and Skills (with a particular focus on leading and managing through change). The Board will have opportunity to discuss these in detail when the plan is more final.

18. On the **reopening of offices**, limits on office attendance across all sites have been lifted. Teams have been working hard to ensure workstations are ready so that the return to work goes smoothly. Meeting rooms will be at full capacity; however, some health and safety measures are still in place for the protection of colleagues onsite. We have seen a positive uptick in the numbers of people returning for the benefits of face-to-face collaboration.
19. Finally, this month has seen several high-profile opportunities to talk about the work of the ONS. I have given interviews on the Today Programme, 6pm and 10pm news, and a highly positive profile in the **New Statesman**, in addition to an article reviewing the ONS's recent achievements in **the Economist**.

Professor Sir Ian Diamond, National Statistician, February 2022

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(22)10

Update from the Director General for Regulation

Purpose

1. This paper provides the UK Statistics Authority Board with an overview of Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) activities.

Discussion

2. Our main areas of focus since the last Board meeting have been:
 - i. **Casework:** We have had two significant pieces of casework in the last month:
 - Sir David [concluded](#) that statements by the Prime Minister and Home Secretary about crime were not consistent with the statistics; and
 - I [wrote](#) to the head of data science at Number 10 about the Prime Minister's references to employment increasing (when it is in fact payroll jobs that have increased, a subset of total employment).
 - ii. **The Regulation Committee:** met on February 10. We discussed economic statistics, population statistics, the OSR business plan, the 9:30 consultation, and a paper on risks of misinformation in the use of COVID-19 data.
 - iii. **Population:** the OSR and ONS teams have had good discussions and there is good progress on creating a clearer and more accessible summary of the ONS's approach to transforming population statistics.
 - iv. **9:30 consultation:** we have concluded our consultation. Our proposal to amend the Code to support flexibility is a separate paper for this Board.
 - v. **Business planning:** OSR is finalising our business planning. Our draft plan proposes three priority areas: focusing on the most significant statistics; data linkage; and widening OSR's reach, all supported by development of OSR's capability.
 - vi. **Wider reach:** This is one of our proposed areas of focus for our 2022/23 business plan. In terms of progress, I updated the last Board meeting about the use of the Code's principles to support Government social research. In addition, we have recently had an excellent meeting with Alison Pritchard on the way the Trustworthiness, Quality and Value principles can support the Integrated Data Service. And I spoke to a cross-Government group on 7 February on "Why I love evaluation and why you should too", arguing that evaluation at its best is a tool for reforming how Government as a whole operates.
 - vii. **Transparency:** we published [guidance](#) to Departments alongside a new statement on 2 February on the importance of transparent use of data by government.
 - viii. **OSR conference:** We held a conference on analytical leadership in government on Thursday 3 February, with contributions from Sir David, Sir Ian Diamond, Tamara Finkelstein (Permanent Secretary of Defra) and a range of OSR and external contributors. We had over 200 attendees. The conference showed once again how far we are already widening OSR's reach beyond the Government Statistical Service; and
 - ix. **OSR outputs:** as the dashboards at **Annex A** show, we continue to deliver outputs across a wide range of issues. For example we recently published a very good [blog](#) on our research programme looking at the public good provided by statistics. We also published our [review](#) of statistics on the accessibility of transport. And we published a suite of compliance checks on trade and business statistics, covering the [robustness of UK Trade statistics](#) to Economic Shocks, the [inclusion of VAT data](#) into ONS's Short-term Economic Output statistics and ONS's [Retail Sales Statistics](#).

- x. **People Survey:** finally, I mentioned the OSR People Survey results at the last Board meeting. The results highlight some areas for improvement, but also show a positive picture of engagement in OSR.

Conclusion

3. On my mind at the moment are:

- i. **transparency issues:** Although our campaign has gone well, it is clear that there are barriers to transparency across government. We have heard recent concerns about release of analysis in several different departments, including the governments in Scotland and Wales as well as the Department for Work and Pensions and the Home Office;
- ii. **casework:** in recent weeks I detect a change in the nature of casework, away from a focus on what data tell us about the pandemic, and more about what statistics do or do not say about the track record of government. This type of casework requires careful political judgement on our part – to stand up for the statistics without politicising our work; and
- iii. **planning:** developing the priorities for next year's business plan.

Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation, OSR, 16 February 2022

Regulatory Activities – February 2022 Authority Board

Health and Social Care	Economy	Population and Society	Crime and Security	Children, Education and Skills
<p>Casework: Published letters on various items of casework, including measures to support transparency in DHSC and vaccination status of COVID-19 patients in Wales.</p> <p>Assessment: Started assessments on Family Practitioner Services statistics in Northern Ireland and NHS Education Scotland Workforce statistics.</p> <p>Systemic Reviews: Adult Social Care (GB) – Preparing for a further round of user engagement.</p> <p>Rapid Review: Published letter on review of Public Health Scotland weekly covid and winter surveillance report.</p>	<p>Assessments: ONS Productivity Statistics – Continuing discussions with ONS on progress against our requirements.</p> <p>ONS Country and Regional Public Sector Finances & ONS Regional GDP – At analysis phase of Country and Regional Public Sector Finances. Assessment of ONS Regional GDP paused while ONS completes further development work</p> <p>Welsh Revenue Authority Statistics (WRA) – Assessment report published on 16 February.</p> <p>Systemic Review: Post-Brexit ONS Economic Classifications – OSR due to meet with ONS to discuss outcome of HMT’s review of IMF proposal on 18 February.</p>	<p>Measuring the population: ONS has published a blog/information to provide users with plans on the data and research to be published later in the year. Mary Gregory meets regularly with Pete Benton to discuss progress.</p> <p>Assessments: Census We continue to discuss how ONS and NISRA are working to meet the assessment requirements. NRS has reported to us on how Census developments/plans meet the Code standards. NRS will publish the report on its website following the outcome of ongoing legal challenge. NRS launched its media campaign for Scotland Census on 14 February.</p> <p>Compliance check: Migration – First phase of a review of ONS plans for future migration estimates and outputs. Report discussed at February Regulation Committee, due to be published late Feb/early March</p> <p>Casework: Ongoing engagement on Migrant Crossings statistics. Published letters on No Recourse to Public Funds. Investigating concerns raised about Home Office False Documents statistics and NI Religion statistics.</p>	<p>Kicked off assessment of Home Office’s Police Officer Uplift statistics.</p> <p>Compliance checks: Spoke to handful of users of hate crime statistics and arranged findings meetings with Home Office, COPFS, and PSNI.</p> <p>Casework: Sir David Norgrove letter about use of crime statistics, and Home Office police funding infographic.</p>	<p>Systemic Review: Children and Young People – Report due for publication early March with extensive follow up engagement with producers and stakeholders.</p> <p>Assessment: Key Stage 4 statistics in England – In the user engagement phase of this assessment.</p> <p>Compliance Check: Initial meeting for compliance check of Modern Apprenticeships statistics produced by Skills Development Scotland set up for late February.</p> <p>Casework: Health and Wellbeing Census in Scotland – concerns raised around the confidentiality and ethics of the census of school age children.</p>
Labour Market and Welfare	Housing, Planning and Local Services	Agriculture, Energy and Environment	Business, Trade and International Development	Travel, Transport and Tourism
<p>Assessments: DWP Benefit Cap statistics: started assessment.</p> <p>ONS Employment and Jobs – working towards confirming requirements have been met by April Regulation Committee meeting</p> <p>Casework on number of jobs. Letter to No.10 has received wide media coverage.</p>	<p>Assessment: Statutory Homelessness in England statistics: Action plan for addressing assessment requirements published end of Jan. Held February meeting to provide further guidance on QAAD and data quality requirements.</p> <p>Compliance checks: Follow up meeting arranged for compliance check of Housing statistics produced by Homes England. Follow up meeting held with DLUHC re. Planning applications in England statistics.</p>	<p>Assessment: People and Nature Survey assessment meeting held with new lead statistician at Natural England to discuss timing, still awaiting formal letter and kick-off. Plan to shortly start desk research.</p>	<p>Compliance Checks: Published (i) Robustness of UK Trade statistics to Economic Shocks, (ii) inclusion of VAT data into ONS’s Short-term Economic Output statistics and (iii) ONS’s Retail Sales Statistics. Expect to publish our CC on consistency of exports estimates at industry level between UK Trade and National Accounts sources in March.</p>	<p>Systemic Review: Accessibility of Transport Networks – Report published 10 February.</p> <p>Compliance checks: DfT’s new Transport Disability and Accessibility Statistics publication, and Transport Scotland’s new Disability and Transport publication published.</p> <p>Travel and Tourism - Engaging with ONS on plans for future of the International Passenger Survey</p>

Data and Methods	Insight
<p>RAP – ONS looking at how to take forward actions to progress the application of RAP principles across ONS. ONS team has undergone a restructure, so we are revising how we work with them going forward. Met with NHS Digital who have done some great work, meeting again in 6 months to talk about guest blog. Putting together case studies for the Code on website.</p> <p>QCovid – Completed desk research and evaluated the 42 lessons from the Exams Review against the use of the QCovid algorithm for risk prediction. Met with DHSC in January, no further meetings currently scheduled. The team will now focus on writing up findings into an internal report and blog.</p> <p>Model Guidance – Published alpha version of the guidance for comment and blog post. Revised version planned for publication in Q1 2022, it was agreed that the exam review framework and modelling guidance should be merged.</p> <p>Methods - Main focus of work is supporting regulatory projects, including migration. Also providing input into NS designation quality workstream.</p> <p>Data Science Projects – Newly added classification tool to dashboard which classifies release calendar work into OSR domains. Working closely with CES team on a NLP tool for KS4 assessment work, this work is currently in discovery but intended for wider use when refined.</p> <p>Other – Recruitment of SEO Lead about to be released, Hrdya has started and already running project on CES. Function planning will be finalised after Helen Miller-Bakewell joins us end February.</p>	<p>Insight and Evaluation Committee – Held second meeting in February where we shared plans for 2022/23 for feedback, analysed our key stakeholders and received steer on current projects.</p> <p>Communicating Uncertainty in Statistics – In progress, due for completion end of March 2022.</p> <p>The Role of Official Statistics in Policy Evaluation – Internal engagement complete with external engagement ongoing, due for completion end of March 2022. We plan to run a second phase of this project in 2022/23.</p> <p>Transparency – New guidance published in Feb 2022.</p> <p>Regulatory Insight – Trialling use of Power BI to draw out key themes from regulatory work.</p> <p>Other – We will publish a blog introducing the insight programme in Feb 2022, inviting feedback from producers.</p>
Policy & Standards	Research
<p>9:30 release times review - Submitting recommendation to the Authority Board for changing the Code (February meeting).</p> <p>NS designation review - Beginning planning of implementation project, including the Assessment, the Code Maturity Model and the Quality Grade developments.</p> <p>Voluntary application and wider reach - Continuing engagement with ONS (IDS and Data Science Campus) and Cabinet Office Evaluation Taskforce; and working with TfL and GLA on further embedding the Code.</p>	<p>Public Confidence in Official Statistics Survey — The data is due to be sent to OSR in late February and we will begin our internal analysis following this. The final PCOS report should be ready for publication by the end of April.</p> <p>Public Perceptions of the Public Good, Collaboration with ADR UK — ADR are organising the procurement process as lead partner and we are waiting on approval from the UKRI Procurement team in terms of which procurement route we can use (quotation process or open tender).</p> <p>Internal Exploration of OSR's Perceptions of the Public Good — Analysis is underway and is expected to be completed by mid-March. The findings will then be written up and presented to the team.</p>
Cross Cutting Issues	
<p>Business planning for 2022/23 is developing well. We shared a draft business plan with Regulation Committee in February, that reflects some of our work around Theory of Change, and we are scheduled to share our plans with the Authority Board in March, following a period of engagement and resource planning.</p> <p>Analytical leadership public event held on 3 February (almost 200 people joined us) and we are considering follow up outputs to statistical leadership systemic review.</p> <p>Helen Miller-Bakewell will join us at the end of February as our Grade 6 Head of Strategic Development and Impact.</p>	

People Update

Purpose

1. This paper provides a People update to the Authority Board with a focus on the work taking place to mitigate our Strategic People Risk and support delivery of the UK Statistics Authority strategy - Statistics for the Public Good.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Authority Board are invited to note and comment on the success of the People Plan activities since its launch in 2020 and the continued work to mitigate the Strategic People Risk and support delivery of the Authority strategy, with specific reference to evolving work on Strategic Resourcing.

Background

3. Since the last People update to the Board significant progress has taken place with regards to delivering the People Plan priorities and mitigating our Strategic People Risk:

‘Our People’: The UK Statistics Authority is unable to attract, engage, retain, and deploy individuals with the best analytical and professional skills; we are unable to build a diverse and inclusive pool of talent; we are unable to build a workforce that is agile and adaptable to change; and/or we are unable to enhance the sustainability and wellbeing of our workforce.

4. The People Plan, launched in 2020, has been very successful in driving considerable advancements across all areas of work, notably: Inclusion and Diversity, including the introduction of new diversity dashboards and targets which are already yielding results and enhanced development programmes for colleagues; adjustments across our workplace and IT to make us more inclusive; growth of our recruitment service incorporating talent acquisition; boosting early talent entry routes to the Authority and developing partnerships to increase resources; a new approach to Senior Civil Service (SCS) performance management to bolster our leadership; and developing a Flexible Working Framework underpinned by hybrid working principles and associated workspaces that make us more flexible. The Board will have an opportunity to see examples of our new workspaces whilst in Newport.
5. The success of this agenda has been recognised externally through a number of awards received including: two Glassdoor awards - Professor Sir Ian Diamond voted as one of the top UK Chief Executive Officers and ONS ranked as the top employer in the UK for work-life balance in 2021; achieving Gold MIND status, recognising our long-term and in-depth commitment to colleagues’ mental health; being in the top 30 employers in the Working Families Index; having our Disability Confidence leader status renewed, and Winner of the Best Resourcing and Talent Management Initiative from the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development Wales. We have also been shortlisted for a number of wider awards.
6. Further to the external awards, the effectiveness and impact of the work being undertaken around Inclusion and Diversity has been recognised by Internal Audit who provided the top rating of substantial in their April 2021 Audit report, stating:

“Our review has not identified any significant gaps in either the design of the Inclusion and Diversity (I&D) Strategy or the key processes and mechanisms that are being used to embed the ONS Strategy. Whilst there are some improvements required which will enhance the embedding of the I&D Strategy within directorates, this is expected given that the I&D Strategy was only rolled out in 2020. As such, we have concluded that a

‘Substantial’ opinion can be given on processes in this area on the basis that the framework of governance, risk management and control is adequate and effective.”

7. This progress coupled with significant changes brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic means we are refreshing our People Plan. People and Business Services will continue a full programme of work, however we will use a streamlined People Plan to focus the efforts of everyone in the Authority on the three priority areas required to support delivery of the Authority Strategy:
 - i. Strategic Resourcing (focus on critical workforce groups);
 - ii. Inclusion and Diversity; and
 - iii. Skills (with a particular focus on leading and managing through change).

Strategic Resourcing

8. As our statistics show the UK labour market is tight, notably digital and analytical capability.
9. Despite this broader context we successfully fill 85 per cent of the vacancies we advertise. Areas of opportunity in Digital, Data and Technology are being addressed by a focused plan. However, even with these positive recruitment outcomes, our programmes are highlighting resources as issues. This implies the resources we are able to attract through traditional recruitment methods cannot continue to meet the needs of these programmes.
10. By widening our focus beyond short-term recruitment to a more holistic strategic resourcing approach we have an opportunity to respond more effectively to the requirements of our programme of work as well as build a sustainable workforce for the future. We are refocusing around three areas of activity:
 - i. Attract - widen our thinking beyond traditional recruitment to the many levers we can use to bring in and retain people in the organisation e.g. entry talent routes such as apprenticeships, agency workers, loans and secondments, outsourcing and talent acquisition within our recruitment team;
 - ii. Develop - building a skills approach to identify and mitigate our immediate, medium and long-term requirements to build our current and future capability and for increased retention through learning through the flow of work as well as more formal interventions; and
 - iii. Deploy - building a deployment model to move resource internally through simple processes to reduce our internal churn and create opportunities equally improving retention.
11. All of the above is dependent on robust prioritisation through the emerging Demand Management framework; as well as clearer accountabilities for resourcing for programme leadership to enable robust conversations about appropriate resourcing routes.
12. Full details on our Strategic Resourcing Framework will be shared at the Board. The Framework has been endorsed by People Committee and CORE group and discussed with all Directors.

Inclusion and Diversity

13. Inclusion is a strategic driver for the organisation and one of the four Authority Strategy pillars. In addition, it has consistently been one of the three Corporate People Survey focus areas and continues to see a year-on-year increase in positive engagement (see paragraph 15). Assurance on the effectiveness of this work is provided through the substantial outcome of the Inclusion and Diversity audit, at paragraph 6.
14. In 2021, a series of organisation-wide inclusion targets (for 2025) were agreed to address perceived barriers regarding representation, improve our demographic data for accurate and meaningful reporting, and deliver more inclusive recruitment. The Board is

asked to note positive progress in that ONS has either met or exceeded the following targets:

- i. maintain or exceed representation of Lesbian, Gay, Bi, and Trans (LGBT) colleagues at Civil Service average;
 - ii. maintain or exceed representation of disabled colleagues/colleagues with long-term illness at Civil Service average; and
 - iii. increase the diversity declaration rates to 85 per cent.
15. In addition, all of the Culture measures have been met or surpassed including the People Survey data which shows that our Inclusion and Fair Treatment score has increased 1 percentage point to 86 per cent, which is four percentage points above the 2021 Civil Service benchmark score of 82 per cent.
16. The current areas of focus are:
- i. increasing gender parity across senior grades – Grade 6 (G6) and Senior Civil Servants (SCS); and
 - ii. increasing overall representation of those from an Ethnic Minority background.
17. A clear action plan has been developed and agreed with People Committee to address the areas of focus. Reassuringly, there is a real sense of passion and determination from across the organisation in meeting ONS' ambition to continue to be an inclusive employer for all.

Skills

18. As an organisation we are going through a period of transformation. Having successfully delivered the 2021 Census, the Census and Data Collection Transformation Programme (CDCTP) is now steadily winding down; ultimately to be replaced with the 2023 recommendation for the future of Census. Alongside this we have the delivery of the Integrated Data Service, the embedding of health surveillance, large-scale changes to economic statistics (ARIES), and survey transformation. We are also embedding the outcomes of the BASE Review to give us brilliant, aligned and sustainable enabling functions.
19. We have demonstrated our ability to flex our capabilities across the organisation with proven success of redeploying colleagues across priority areas. As of January, 91 per cent of individuals in redeployment due to CDCTP had been redeployed. Additionally, a multi-disciplinary Analytical Priorities Hub was set up as part of the BASE Review and is successfully providing a centralised source of flexible analytical skills.
20. We will benefit from continued investment in our critical skillsets of digital and analytical alongside continued development in wider Professional anchors to safeguard our existing delivery capabilities alongside our strategic resourcing model. We have solid foundations to build from given the work of the Data Science Campus and the cross-government Analysis Function to date.
21. We are also mindful of the continued need to invest in our ways of working, particularly our leadership amidst times of significant change and transformation. Using a variety of programmes, coaching, mentoring and learning in the flow of work, we will continue strong investment in leadership development.

Conclusion

22. In the continued context of rapid response, new work and change due to COVID-19, EU Transition and wider societal impacts such as the challenging labour market, we have made significant progress against our People Plan priorities to support delivery of the Strategy, Statistics for the Public Good. We continue our strong focus on Strategic Resourcing, Inclusion and Diversity, and Skills which requires a whole organisation effort for us to be successful.

Philippa Bonay, Director for People and Business Services, 14 February 2022

Implementing the Inclusive Data Taskforce Recommendations

Purpose

1. This paper provides an update on implementation of the Inclusive Data Taskforce (IDTF) Recommendations published on 28 September 2021.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Authority Board are invited to:
 - i. note ONS's role and contribution to implementing the IDTF recommendations and the progress already made since their publication;
 - ii. support the developing plans for the monitoring and evaluation of the Implementation Plan and its associated governance which are designed to drive delivery; and
 - iii. note the identification of the core risks associated with implementation and our current thinking on how these can be mitigated.

Background

3. The Authority Board last discussed the Inclusive Data Taskforce, which the National Statistician commissioned in October 2020, at its July meeting, ahead of the launch of its report and recommendations on 28 September. The report made 46 recommendations grouped into eight 'Inclusive Data Principles' which taken together outline how we can make a real step change in the inclusivity of UK data and evidence. They highlight the need for systemic change and greater collaboration among those producing and using data in the UK, as well as with research participants.
4. The National Statistician's Response announced a collaborative work programme across the UK Government, the devolved administrations and more widely. Both the IDTF report and the response were launched at a successful online event, which achieved the highest attendance ONS has experienced for such events. The response gave a commitment that a more detailed plan would follow in January 2022 after further consultation with diverse stakeholders and organisations across and outside government, including academics, civil society organisations and others.
5. Activity in the ONS is led and coordinated through its Centre for Equalities and Inclusion. It developed the [IDTF Implementation Plan](#) with contributions from across the UK statistical system and published it alongside an accompanying [blog](#) on 28 January. The Plan includes around 200 activities from 20 organisations across the UK statistical system covering UK government departments and Arm's Length Bodies, the Devolved Administrations, and other organisations including academia. This paper sets out the key contributions that ONS will make delivering the Implementation Plan, our plans for driving progress and monitoring and evaluating impact, and our identification of and approach to mitigating associated risks.

Implementing the IDTF recommendations

6. The role and contribution of ONS to implementing the recommendations continues to be multifaceted. This includes:
 - i. Providing cross system leadership, alongside the Cabinet Office's Equality Hub and the Devolved Administrations of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. This includes a convening role in bringing people together across the UK to build collaborations, develop partnerships and join up plans.
 - ii. Harnessing opportunities in existing programmes. This includes the use of the Integrated Data Service to link data and allow for intersectional analysis and

improved dissemination; informing the analytical outputs from the 2021 Census for England and Wales and, underpinning the research and analysis being undertaken to develop the National Statistician's recommendation on the future of the census and population statistics.

- iii. Embedding inclusivity fully into new strategies and programmes as they develop within the ONS. This includes the new ONS Survey Strategy which will ensure that the recommendations of the IDTF are embedded in all ONS surveys; the recently published Government Statistical Service (GSS) subnational strategy, which will help enable robust and reliable disaggregation and intersectional analysis to be undertaken at differing levels of geography; and the forthcoming GSS Harmonisation plan which will address a number of important recommendations from the Taskforce.
- iv. Building on existing initiatives and piloting new approaches. This includes the development of a new 'social contract' with survey and research participants; to consider how best to incorporate populations not resident in private households in our data; and, evidence and the delivery of qualitative research on underrepresented groups; and
- v. Developing independent and inclusive mechanisms and governance that can help monitor progress, evaluate impact and ensure momentum on delivery is maintained. This is discussed in more detail below.

Driving delivery and evaluating impact

7. Across all eight of the Inclusive Data Taskforce principles, progress has been made by both ONS and other organisations against the recommendations since their launch in September.
8. Nonetheless as we enter the next phase of implementation it is important that we have the right governance and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place to both ensure that we are driving delivery and also that we can demonstrate and measure impact. There are a number of strands to this work:
 - i. We are establishing an independent advisory committee on inclusive data to the National Statistician. We hope to appoint the Chair and launch the committee in March. This will provide ongoing external expertise and challenge to us, building on the success of the IDTF itself.
 - ii. Alongside this we are developing a virtual 'Assembly' to reach a wide public audience and different population groups in terms of feedback and consultation. This Assembly will build upon successful Census 2021 networks and the significant and far-reaching engagement undertaken by the IDTF; and
 - iii. We are establishing an IDTF Implementation Group comprising ONS, Cabinet Office, the devolved administrations and other key stakeholders, which will be responsible for monitoring and evaluation and will report progress publicly. As part of that they will oversee progress against the operational plan that sits behind the published implementation plan.
9. Our approach to evaluation is being developed in conjunction with the ONS programme evaluation team, recognising the challenges posed by the system wide nature of the Implementation Plan, with a multiplicity of contributors and stakeholders. Evaluation will be discussed at the May National Statistics Executive Group meeting. An important element of the work is an initial series of workshops with stakeholders to create the 'Theory of Change' that will underpin the monitoring and evaluation framework. This will in turn help us identify key measures of success for the Implementation Plan which are likely to include a range of input, output and outcome measures that capture, for example:
 - i. inclusivity being increasingly embedded in work plans and strategies, across the UK statistical system;

- ii. increased engagement from participants in currently under-represented population groups and increased representativeness of key data sources;
- iii. improved clarity on the concepts being measured, and commitment to review them more regularly to keep up with changes in UK society;
- iv. the use of innovative methods to deliver new insights across populations of interest;
- v. improved coherence across the four nations on statistical outputs on equalities;
- vi. more collaborative strategic data projects across the GSS and a culture where this is the 'norm';
- vii. improved data linkage, the ability to conduct intersectional analysis and improved dissemination as the Integrated Data Service develops; and
- viii. increased trust in the statistical system.

Risks and mitigation

10. A number of risks to the successful delivery of the IDTF Implementation Plan have been identified and addressed. These include:

- i. The challenge of driving system wide change. The IDTF made clear that a system wide approach would be necessary to drive substantive change. To address this we have taken a consultative and collaborative approach from the outset, engaging extensively with colleagues across the UK Government and Devolved Administrations and inviting contributions from academics and civil society. Alongside this we are working to ensure the governance we develop (paragraph 9) effectively supports and helps drive delivery.
- ii. Ensuring sustainable funding to achieve outcomes. Utilisation of funding released through prioritisation and efficiencies. Partnerships, both practical and financial, will be crucial to success, alongside effective prioritisation.
- iii. Effective handling of sensitivities around harmonisation. The new GSS Harmonisation Plan planned for publication on 25 February will set out our approach to reviewing and updating standards and guidance across these areas in a robust way which incorporates substantial stakeholder engagement. New governance is being developed to ensure robust and transparent decision making.

Conclusion

11. Progress has already been made across all areas of the IDTF recommendations. To go further will now require a sustained system wide effort and recognising that the IDTF Implementation Plan, published on the 28 January, draws on contributions from right across ONS, UK Government departments, the Devolved Administrations and external organisations. As we move to the next phase of implementation there is an increased focus on ensuring we have the right governance and mechanisms in place to drive progress, monitor delivery and evaluate impact – this paper has also set out our next steps in that area as well as addressing how we are tackling emerging risks.

Liz McKeown, Director, Public Policy Analysis and Debra Prestwood, Deputy Director, Centre for Equalities and Inclusion, Statistical Coherence and Inclusion Division, ONS, 14 February 2022

Update on the review of release times in the Code of Practice for Statistics

Purpose

1. This paper provides an update to the Authority Board on the review following a public consultation between September and December 2021 and makes recommendations for changes to the Code of Practice for Statistics.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Authority Board are invited to:
 - i. approve the amendment to the Code Practices T3.1 and T3.6.

Background

3. During the pandemic, the Director General for Regulation granted exemptions for release at times other than 9:30am, to key economic statistics at 7:00am, as well as to some COVID-19 related statistics as soon as prepared and quality assured, later in the day at agreed times. The Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) initiated this review of the 9:30am release practice to consider whether greater flexibility in release arrangements should be formalised within the Code of Practice for Statistics.
4. We undertook an initial review of producer and stakeholder views about the suitability of the standard release time between May and July 2021 and discussed the benefits and limitations of releasing at the alternative times. As a result, OSR held a [public consultation](#) proposing that two practices in Principle 3 Orderly Release be amended to provide greater flexibility in the release of official statistics. The consultation ran from 28 September to 21 December 2021. We received 35 written responses from organisations and individuals in the business sector and other users and stakeholders, as well as from statistics producer bodies.

Discussion

5. The consultation findings show a majority support the proposal for greater flexibility in practice T3.6, by allowing exceptional release times to be granted by the Director General for Regulation. At the same time, the views endorsed a standard release time for most official statistics of 9:30am on a weekday. There was further support to amend practice T3.1 to require that the release time, as well as the date, be pre-announced.
6. Despite this support for increased flexibility while keeping a standard release time, we received 13 responses objecting specifically to the early release of key economic statistics at 7:00am. The responses were from a mix of backgrounds, mainly users in commercial organisations, research consultancies, think tanks, as well as from public bodies and some working in producer bodies. We investigated the matter further in discussion with the BBC head of statistics, to probe the nature of the media circumstances that may enable the statistician voice to be heard.
7. We also discussed the pros and cons of early release in devolved administrations and other producers of key economic statistics, with the respective chief statisticians and heads of profession. This is because these producers release statistics alongside the main ONS release (e.g. on the labour market, covering performance in the relevant nation), and when ONS issue the main release at 7.00am, these producers issue their statistics at the same time. There was a sense among most of these senior statistics leaders that the case for 7:00am release going forward had not been made.
8. We are confident that enabling greater flexibility, by providing the means for an exceptional release time, enhances the Code of Practice for Statistics and better

supports statistics serving the public good. We do not think it is for OSR to decide the time of release. We regard it as incumbent on the producer to establish the public good case.

9. Producers need to understand the basis on which an exceptional release can be requested that is in line with [serving the public good](#) and also the circumstances in which such a request might be refused.

Recommendation

10. We recommend implementing the following changes to Practice T3.1 and Practice T3.6 of the Code of Practice for Statistics, to allow greater clarity and some flexibility about release times:
 - i. Practice T3.1: “The release of both regular and ad hoc official statistics should be pre-announced through a 12-month release calendar, giving the specific release date and time at least four weeks in advance where practicable.”; and
 - ii. Practice T3.6: “Statistics should be available to all users at the same time. The standard release time is 9:30am on a weekday. In circumstances when it better serves the public good for statistics to be released at an alternative, pre-announced time, the Director General for Regulation may grant an exception. The time of release, whether it is the standard release time, or another time agreed with the Director General for Regulation, should be announced in advance and adhered to consistently.”
11. We expect producers in future to set out a public good case, before they can be granted an exception to the 9:30am release time.
12. Regarding the ONS early release of economic statistics, we can see the public good case for publishing at 7.00am. On the other hand, we do not think the case has been well articulated in the public domain in a way that enables users and producers to see the considerations and benefits underlying the use of a 7:00am release time. We do not wish to stop ONS from publishing at 7:00am but believe it would be helpful for ONS to set out the benefits in public good terms. ONS should also discuss with producers of related statistics which key economic statistics would be beneficial to release early and identify how it can support the other bodies in their simultaneous release of the related statistics.

Conclusion

13. We recommend incorporating the changes to the Code of Practice for Statistics, to give greater clarity of release times and enable enhanced flexibility through exceptional release times. We ask the Board to approve the release of the Consultation findings paper.

Penny Babb, Head of Policy and Standards, Office for Statistics Regulation, 11 February 2022

COVID-19 Infection Survey and associated surveillance studies**Purpose**

1. This paper provides an update on the COVID-19 Infection Survey (CIS) programme.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Authority Board are invited to note:
 - i. the continued successful delivery and high impact of the CIS;
 - ii. recent successful milestones, and the work to support urgent policy decisions;
 - iii. ongoing CIS Digital development in the context of ongoing uncertainty; and
 - iii. that the CIS programme remains at Amber, with considerable progress made in addressing key risks on the programme.

Discussion**Omicron Variant**

3. Following the robust and rapid evidence provided by the CIS on Omicron variant, the CIS is already tracking the new variant of Omicron (known as BA.2). The definitions of monitoring the original Omicron variant (BA.1) have been modified. In the two weeks to 31 January there has been an increase of the newer variant in the CIS, with the most notable increase in Northern Ireland. The data is currently being sequenced to confirm the findings, but we remain confident the proxy definition has allowed a rapid and robust identification of the spread of BA.1.
4. Positivity estimates for the four nations and regionally within England are being produced to support and inform policy and decision makers.
5. CIS has additionally generated a range of novel insights including:
 - i. Predictors of positivity: On 19 January, we published early results from the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection Survey showing the characteristics of people more likely to be infected with the Omicron variant compared with the Delta variant. We updated the analysis to reflect the changing situation over Omicron's rapid growth, publishing again on 23 December 2021.
 - ii. Risk factors of reinfection. The rate for all reinfections and reinfections with a high viral load has increased; the risk of reinfection in the Omicron-dominant period is 16 times higher compared with the Delta-dominant period. We have seen more reinfections with COVID-19 since Omicron became the dominant variant than in the previous 18 months.
 - iii. Estimates of self-isolation by work sector continue to support the impact of Omicron; and
 - iv. Estimates of the total number of people previously infected with COVID-19 are undergoing quality assurance, with a challenge session with academic partners scheduled for 21st February. Following this the estimates will be disseminated as management information.
6. In addition to the CIS analysis, we have updated the mortality by vaccination status and are planning an update to the excess deaths analysis now non-Covid excess deaths are apparent in the data again. The planned analysis includes:
 - i. We have recently published analysis of [COVID-19 deaths by vaccination](#) status, and we will be publishing further analysis of deaths following vaccination in young people in collaboration with the Office of Health Improvement and Disparities. This will be pre-announced on the ONS website release calendar when a publication date is confirmed.

- ii. An article on trends in excess deaths, similar to previous articles linked to above, presenting excess deaths for specific groups by age, sex and cause. The provisional release date for this analysis is 4 March 2022.
- iii. Additional information on excess deaths will be included as a standard output in our weekly death registrations bulletins, beginning in March.
- iv. An article reporting international comparisons of mortality, including excess mortality, will be published on 7 April 2022; and
- v. The Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the ONS collaborate to produce analysis for SAGE, [estimating the direct and indirect impacts of COVID-19 on mortality and morbidity](#). These estimates will be updated to present impacts based on most recent data and published on gov.uk by April. The ONS will announce this release in a media statement on our website.

Child immunity and schools infection study (SIS)

7. First results from the first wave of the Schools Infection Survey 2 were published on 1 February, focusing on pupil and parent attitude to vaccination, and preventative measures within the schools. This was accompanied by analysis from the linked education and health data asset was published on 1 February. This analysis focused on vaccination take-up among 12–18-year-olds in state education, disaggregated by gender, ethnicity and free school meals.
8. Further results, covering mental health and long covid are due to be published on 28 February, alongside the publication of the wave 1 pupil antibody results. The antibody results are generalisable to England and the nine regions for primary and secondary schools and will include analysis by the N (natural) and S (vaccination) protein.
9. Funding for the SIS currently ends on 31 March. The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) are looking to put forward a business case to extend the funding to June 2022 to facilitate the analysis and publication of the wave 3 results.
10. In addition, the team are exploring whether there is scientific rationale to continue the study into the final term of the 21/22 academic year, with a view to developing a proposal for UKHSA consideration.

CIS Digital

11. The commissioning of the CIS beyond March 2022 remains under discussion with UKHSA. UKHSA are awaiting HM Treasury approval as part of their overall Spending Review settlement and have declined to provide any confirmation until the settlement discussions are concluded.
12. UKHSA have issued ONS a Memorandum of Understanding adjustment to underwrite ONS whilst approvals are being sought, allowing operating model design to continue. We are unable to undertake any commercial activity or commence build of the data collection tool. Due to the continued delay, we are proceeding at high risk for all the major aspects of this transition and have been evaluating and embedding contingency plans where we can, balancing the momentum and pace this transition requires alongside the risk we are carrying.
13. The Outline Business Case is progressing with the Cabinet Office, with the aim of getting spending approval from the minister with conditions this month.
14. The end-to-end process has been split into 12 work packages with leads responsible for locking down the component parts of the process requirements. This will help inform the technical build and our move to the new operational mode of data collection with on-line data collection and postal testing kits.

Next Steps

15. The funding for the CIS is a priority to secure in the coming weeks, to enable planning and continuity across the programme and wider portfolio. The team will continue to prepare robustly for a rapid launch of and stepped wedge transition to the revised model.

Emma Rourke, Director, Health Analysis and Pandemic Insights, 14 February 2022