

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Minutes Thursday 27 October 2022 Remote Teams Meeting

Present

UK Statistics Authority

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

Also in attendance

Daniel Akoubkhani (for item 9)
Owen Brace
Robert Bumpstead
Fiona Dawe (for item 9)
Scott Dennison (for item 8)
Grant Fitzner (for item 8)
Sally-Ann Jones (Secretariat)
Stefan Jones (for item 10)
Mike Keoghan
Vahe Nafilyan (for items 9 and 10)
Joy Preece (for item 9)
Alison Pritchard
Emma Rourke (for item 9)
Hugh Stickland (for item 10)
Ruth Studley (for item 9)
Rhys Thomas

Apologies

Professor Jonathan Haskel

1. Apologies

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Professor Jonathan Haskel.

2. Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 There were no new declarations of interest.

3. Minutes and matters arising from previous meetings

- 3.1 The minutes of the previous meeting held on 29 September 2022 were agreed.

4. Report from the Authority Chair

- 4.1 Non-Executives had met prior to the Board meeting. They had discussed topics including appointments and the Non-executive Director recruitment process, and delivery of the Integrated Data Service (IDS).
- 4.2 The Chair reported on his recent activities since the Board last met:
- i. on 5 October Sir Robert had met with members of the ONS Risk and Assurance Team, Natalie Tarr and Alex Dunn, to discuss the Authority's Strategic Risk profile ahead of a discussion at the November Authority Board meeting;
 - ii. Sir Robert alongside Professor Sir Ian Diamond had met statistical teams at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and the Department for International Trade;
 - iii. on 24 October Sir Robert and Sir Ian had met the First Minister of Wales; and
 - iv. Sir Robert had attended the ONS Conference on the Cost of Living conference remotely on 25 October.

5. Report from the Chief Executive [SA(22)53]

- 5.1 Sir Ian provided the Board with an overview of activity and issues since the last meeting, highlighting the following:
- i. the move into 2 Marsham Street (2MS) on 17 October had been successful. The co-location with other departments would provide the opportunity for greater collaboration;
 - ii. Sir Ian had opened the ONS Cost of Living Conference on 25 October, which included Huw Pill (Chief Economist, Bank of England), amongst others, as a speaker at the event;
 - iii. the continued support by ONS and the International Steering Group, with Sir Ian as a member, for colleagues at the National Records of Scotland on the Scotland Census 2022;
 - iv. the work by ONS on the Sub National Data Project with the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to continue to improve the availability, coherence and accessibility of subnational statistics;
 - v. progress of ONS Local, an analytical advisory service being set up to help users navigate subnational data; and
 - vi. ONS had won the Glassdoor Award for the best company for work-life balance for the second year in a row.
- 5.2 The Board heard that the next publication of international comparison of all cause excess mortality in European nations and regions was scheduled for 1 November. Board members commended ONS on the range of statistics they produced, which informed how the cost of living is affecting the UK economy and the impact for different households.

6. Report from the Director General for Regulation [SA(22)54]

- 6.1 Ed Humpherson provided an update on regulation activity since the last meeting. OSR had delivered two seminars for government analysts, the first in September on communicating uncertainty, and the second in October on data sharing and linkage.

6.2 The Board heard that OSR's business planning process 2022/23 would include the opportunity for stakeholder engagement. With regard to recruitment OSR were in the process of filling a number of vacancies, including the Deputy Director for Regulation post.

7. Report from the Chair of the Regulation Committee

7.1 Professor Anne Trefethen provided an update on the Regulation Committee held on 13 October.

7.2 The Committee had considered:

- i. progress against OSR's business plan 2022/23 and arrangements for the business planning process 2023/24;
- ii. OSR's risk profile, which had identified recruitment as a short term risk that could impact on delivery;
- iii. the Annual Review of Casework 2021/22, which had been published on 20 October;
- iv. OSR's follow up report on lessons learned for health and social care statistics during the pandemic, scheduled for publication towards the end of October;
- v. an update on the work by ONS on the transformation of population and migration statistics; and
- vi. progress on Scotland's Census 2022 and timing of OSR's phase two assessment report.

7.3 The Committee had also considered the ongoing project to refresh the National Statistics Designation. Members had highlighted a number of areas for further consideration including the use of badging for signalling of grading quality and whether designation should be time limited.

8. UK Trade Statistics [SA(22)55]

8.1 Grant Fitzner and Scott Dennison introduced a paper which provided an update on UK Trade Statistics.

8.2 The Board heard how UK trade statistics had been through a major transformation programme since 2016, which had improved the range and reliability of global trade and investment statistics produced. It was noted that users had welcomed the updates provided by ONS, with a number of articles published throughout the year, regarding the impact of the change in January 2022 to the way HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) collect data on trade in goods, as a result of the UK leaving the European Union.

8.3 The Board highlighted that the range of users of trade statistics included the Bank of England, Office for Budget Responsibility, HM Treasury (HMT) in addition to the Department of International Trade.

9. COVID-19 Infection Survey [SA(22)56]

9.1 Emma Rourke and Ruth Studley introduced a paper which provided an update on the COVID-19 Infection Survey (CIS).

9.2 The Board heard about the latest insight into the impact of CIS across the country. The CIS had successfully transitioned to a digital first data by 1 August 2022, which had realised a monthly cost saving of £13 million. It was noted the ONS colleagues were working with the UK Health Security Agency regarding potential health monitoring in 2023/24.

9.3 Fiona Dawe, Joy Preece, Danial Akoubkhani and Vahe Nafilyan joined the meeting to present on the Epidemiology and Surveillance National Core Study outlining all

aspects and benefits of the CIS. Ruth Studley went on to present on international comparisons of excess mortality statistics in 2021 and 2022.

9.4 The Board noted their thanks for an excellent presentation.

10. Economy, Energy, Health [SA(22)57]

10.1 Hugh Stickland, Steffan Jones (Cabinet Office) and Vahe Nafilyan presented an overview of the work across ONS in conjunction with Other Government Departments to provide data and insight on a series of risk areas including the Economy, Energy and Health.

10.2 The Board heard about the work by the ONS Analytical Hub working in partnership with the Joint Data and Analysis Centre in Cabinet Office. The range of work covered: health, energy supply, cost of living, supply chain disruption and labour market shortages, drawing on a range of data and expertise to provide relevant and timely insight on key priorities to inform policy decisions and the public.

10.3 The Board noted their thanks for an excellent presentation.

11. Integrated Data Service [SA(22)58]

11.1 Alison Pritchard introduced a paper which provided an update on key elements of the Integrated Data Programme (IDP) and the delivery of the IDS.

11.2 Progress on the delivery of the IDS since the last meeting included the consolidation of a group of users made up of government departments and Devolved Administrations; the establishment of an Analytical Steering Group with Osama Rahman (Director of Data Science Campus) as co-chair; ingestion of data with plans to include Census 2021 data towards the end of the year; and progress towards Digital Economy Act accreditation.

11.3 Board members noted the update and would remain engaged in the delivery of the IDS.

12. Any other business

12.1 The next meeting would take place on 21 November.

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Agenda

**27 October 2022, 11.00-14.00,
Hybrid Teams Meeting**

Chair: Sir Robert Chote

Apologies: Professor Jonathan Haskel

Attendees: Daniel Ayoubkhani (for item 7), Fiona Dawe (for item 7), Scott Dennison (for item 6), Grant Fitzner (for item 6), Steffan Jones (for item 8), Vahe Nafilyan (for items 7 and 8), Joy Preece (for item 7), Emma Rourke (for item 7), Hugh Stickland (for item 8), Ruth Studley (for item 7)

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 29 September 2022
2 11.05 -11.15 10 mins	Report from the Authority Chair	Oral report Sir Robert Chote
3 11.15 -11.40 25 mins	Report from the Chief Executive	SA(22)53 Prof. Sir Ian Diamond
4 11.40 -11.50 10 mins	Report from the Director-General for Regulation	SA(22)54 Ed Humpherson
5 11.50 -11.55 5 mins	Report from Committee Chairs <ul style="list-style-type: none">Regulation Committee	Oral report Prof. Anne Trefethen
6 11.55 -12.15 20 mins	UK Trade Statistics	SA(22)55 Grant Fitzner Scott Dennison
12.15 -12.25 10 mins	Break	
7 12.25 -13.05 40 mins	COVID-19 Infection Survey	SA(22)56 Emma Rourke Ruth Studley Fiona Dawe Joy Preece Daniel Ayoubkhani Vahe Nafilyan
8 13.05 -13.35 30 mins	Economy, Energy, Health	SA(22)57 Hugh Stickland Vahe Nafilyan Steffan Jones
9 13.35 -13.55 20 mins	Integrated Data Service	SA(22)58 Alison Pritchard
10 13.55 -14.00 5 mins	Any Other Business	

Next meeting: Monday 21 November 2022, London Boardroom

Chief Executive's Report, October 2022

Purpose

1. This provides the Authority Board with an overview of activity for October 2022.

Summary

2. October has been another busy period across the statistical and analytical system, with a continuing focus on Gross Domestic Product (GDP), cost of living, labour market, COVID-19 and housing markets. I have also been holding **workshops with grade 7s and 6s** across the organisation, focusing on strategic vision, leadership and creating a shared one ONS culture.
3. On Monday 17 October, we moved into **2 Marsham Street** as our new London home and vacated Drummond Gate. The new office is designed in line with Newport and Titchfield in the Evolving the Workplace programme, and co-location allows for much greater collaboration with other departments. We have also started to include **Manchester** as a location on job ads. Finally, I am delighted that the ONS has for the second-year running been named **best company for work-life balance**.

Review of recent activities

4. IDS is now working to establish a **group of early adopters** from across government and prioritising the ingestion of data, with a focus on Census data.
5. Early engagement is also underway in relation to the business case for the **Future for Population and Migration Statistics** to ensure funding is available to support ongoing development during 2023/24, and we continue to discuss options for the future of **COVID-19** health monitoring post March 2023 with the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and the Department for Health and Social Care.
6. We are now two quarters into our **new quarterly planning approach** which has enabled ONS to adapt the FY22/23 business plan to emerging requirements, and we are now planning ahead for the FY23/24 plan which will include a review of strategic objectives and priorities to ensure we continue to focus on the areas of most impact and importance. We will engage the Board in the coming months as we progress.
7. Internationally, at the end of last month the Authority hosted in London the **High-Level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building** meeting, playing a critical role in overseeing the planning for the World Data Forum and plans for the next Forum in China in April 2023 featuring prominently. The Authority presented on the Inclusive Data Charter and the Data Science Accelerator.
8. The **Authority signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics** which has enshrined the areas for future cooperation between our statistical offices.
9. We also hosted a **delegation from Statistics Korea** at the Newport office, for two days of discussions on how the ONS and the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) engages with the media and the public. This covered a range of topics, including ONS media training, the OSR Code of Practice for Statistics, and our successful Census 2021 campaign.
10. I joined the second of this year's **Conference of European Statistics Bureau** meetings joined by Canada, Ireland, New Zealand and more. The UK introduced international work on data ethics, legislation and the value of official statistics.

11. Across the Government Statistical Service (GSS), alongside Robert Chote, I have started a series of meetings with **statistical teams in other government departments**. This is to engage with the wider GSS, celebrate their good work, and consider future priorities and challenges. Events have been held at Welsh Government, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), and the Department for International Trade, with future visits planned this year for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Department for Education and the Department for Transport.
12. The **Inter Administration Committee** and UK Census Committee met on Thursday 6 October in a meeting hosted by Scottish Government in Edinburgh. Key resulting actions were: agreeing a formal statement for cooperation on future UK population and social statistics, approving plans for a new UK-wide Census output on population figures, and arranging a meeting to consider coherency of fuel poverty statistics.
13. The Departmental Directors of Analysis started a new sub-committee to consider join up on analysis to inform and evaluate policies for **economic growth**. This sub-group is supported by HMT and the Cabinet Office, reporting findings into No10.
14. On health, **flu testing will begin from mid-October**, following financial approval from UKHSA. A question is also being added to the COVID-19 Infection Survey (CIS) questionnaire asking whether respondent has been vaccinated against flu since September 2022. The key output would be UK level unweighted positives broken down by age, region and country if positivity is high enough for this to be possible.
15. Given the rising prevalence of COVID-19 detected by the CIS I spoke with the BBC and **appeared on the BBC News at 10**. I also spoke with BBC World at One on Radio 4. We continue to work closely with colleagues in the Cabinet Office and across government on providing the latest insights on COVID-19.
16. The final of the initial series of **cross-government Health and Economy Round Table meeting was held on Monday 10 October**, attended by colleagues from ONS, HMT, UKHSA, NHS, Cabinet Office, Department for Work and Pensions, and HMRC. Building on that success, we will continue collaborating and sharing work discussing the intersection of health and the economy. We are also contributing to a cross government Winter Pressures Frontiers meeting putting evidence at the heart of policy making.
17. We organised and hosted the **International Census Forum (ICF) in Brighton**. ICF brings together Census senior leaders from eight English-speaking National Statistical Institutes to discuss the successes and challenges of the Census. In recent years this has included the increasing use of administrative data and the implications for the future of the Census. The next ICF will be held in Canada in 2023.
18. The pilot study of 14 local authorities to support the development of our **Dynamic Population Model** is progressing well with ten out of the invited fourteen Local Authorities attending the first session on 7 October. We are awaiting feedback arranging a follow up session for 21 October to discuss their views in more detail. We will publish our first Census 2021 topic summary on demography and migration on 2nd November.
19. Progress continues with research towards the **2023 Recommendation** with admin-based property floor area statistics for England and Wales: methods, data and quality publication being published in October. A paper will come to the Board next month.
20. We continue to work with the **Joint Data and Analysis Centre (JDAC)** in Cabinet Office, ensuring that ONS statistics and analysis feature prominently in briefings to No10. Recent focus has been on the labour market, worker shortages, recent GDP releases and more broadly a range of data on the Cost of Living. We also held a successful awayday for members of ONS and JDAC to meet in person, in Newport, to discuss ways of working together and future priorities.

21. We have published findings from wave 2 of the **Over 50s Lifestyle Survey**, with results discussed in various cross-Government forums. With unemployment at 50-year lows, any advancement in employment (which will also boost growth) depends on bringing inactive groups back into the labour force. The survey shows health is a key barrier, and the need for flexible working practices a key enabler.
22. We have successfully launched a review and consultation of **Measuring National Wellbeing**, with speakers from What Works Wellbeing, Carnegie UK, Centre for Thriving Places, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and Devolved Administrations. This remains open for the next couple of months, together with focus groups in communities, with academics and charities. Our aim is to ensure we are measuring what really matters to people's quality of life and ensure we present data and statistics in the best way possible to policy makers at national and local level, and the wider public.
23. The inaugural **National Statistician's Inclusive Data Advisory Committee** took place on 17 October, chaired by Dame Julia Cleverdon. The Committee includes a diverse group of senior leaders with experience from academia, civil society, local government, and business. The agenda covered how to evaluate progress towards greater inclusiveness of UK data and evidence, and how to create and embed an environment of trust and trustworthiness allowing everyone to count in UK data.
24. October saw the launch of the [Violence Against Women and Girls Dashboard](#). The dashboard has been launched as a prototype to seek views from users and stakeholders on design and future content. The overall plan is for the dashboard to be the one place for all information pertaining to Violence Against Women and Girls to be used by citizens and policymakers. This is a major milestone in our work.
25. DLUHC have received approval of their full business case for the **Levelling Up Subnational Data project**. We are working to finalise a MOU and transfer funding to ONS to continue our work to improve the availability, coherence, and accessibility of subnational statistics.
26. **ONS Local** has been gathering feedback on its proposals for an analytical advisory service that will help users navigate the subnational data, statistics, and analysis system, use its products to maximum effect and influence future priorities and analysis. We've held roundtables with stakeholders in both the North East and North West, and reached out to the CEOs of local authorities from further across England.
27. We have completed the **recruitment of new ONS Fellows**, with eight new Fellows joining Diane Coyle and Robert Heath, who will continue. Expertise has broadened to include environment, labour, trade, sub-national, productivity, data science, and financial transactions. Fellows are now a more diverse group and gender balanced.
28. On 25 October, the ONS will be hosting a **conference to discuss cost of living** and how this is affecting the UK economy and what this means for different households. The conference will be informed by the range of statistics produced by the ONS as well as external guest speakers, including Huw Pill, Chief Economist for the Bank of England and insights from the Institute for Fiscal Studies and the Alan Turing Institute. I will be opening the event, being held at the BEIS Conference Centre.
29. We have published an article setting out new methodologies on **the Business Enterprise Research and Development Statistics**. This article also set out revised levels of Research and Development (R&D) for the periods 2018-2020. This has generated interest across Government Department's keen to understand the policy implications of the shift and in wider scientific and research circles. Work to improve R&D statistics will continue as we approach official publication in November 2022, and move into our second phase of improvements looking to improve the survey and sampling approaches.

30. On corporate issues, for the second year in a row we have won the **Glassdoor Award** for the best company for work-life balance. This is based on reviews by our colleagues and previous employees, so it is a result of what our people think about working for us. 87 per cent would recommend ONS to a friend and 96 per cent approved of the CEO. Our inclusion and diversity, and recruitment, practices were celebrated too.
31. Monday 17 October saw the move from Drummond Gate to our new London offices in **2 Marsham Street**. The estates team have worked exceptionally hard to create a modern and appealing work environment alongside colleagues in digital technology. We have also begun including Manchester as a location on certain job adverts.
32. On Friday 30 September, I along with 30 other Permanent Secretary colleagues made a visit to the **Darlington Economic Campus** with Simon Case, the Cabinet Secretary. This included a small group discussion with ONS colleagues about their experience of working in Darlington and what attracted them to the ONS, and area.
33. The **International Day of the Girl** took place on 11 October, celebrated by Plan International with a series of takeovers, giving girls the opportunity to step into senior leadership positions and challenge gender stereotypes. I traded places with 16-year old Tiana for the day and she attended a series of high-level international meetings.
34. Finally, a people focused item will feature at next month's Board, covering recruitment, retention, retraining, wellbeing, career paths and inclusion. Please get in contact with the Secretariat if you would like other areas covering.

Professor Sir Ian Diamond, National Statistician, 20 October 2022

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(22)54

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. **National Statistics Designation:** We updated the Regulation Committee on progress on our designation refresh project. We are looking at ways to clearly explain and highlight compliance with the Code of Practice. The discussion with the Committee emphasised the value of using badges for clear signalling and of grading quality. It also queried whether designation should be time limited and raised the importance of flagging where improvement is required in some statistics. These are areas that we will further investigate as we continue our user testing and development.
 - ii. **R&D rapid review:** ONS has recently published [updated estimates](#) of Business Enterprise Research and Development (R&D), following some joint work with HM Revenue and Customs. We have started a rapid review of these statistics.
 - iii. **Scotland Census:** National Records of Scotland (NRS) continues its work on Scotland's Census, guided by [its International Steering Group](#), with focus on reconsidering its approach taken to coverage estimation and boosting the value of administrative data to ensure it produces the best quality estimates of Scotland population. On 17 August 2022, following some concerns, we [wrote to NRS](#) calling for greater transparency about its activity, plans and progress. Since then NRS has taken a range of steps to address the points we raised, including publishing its [high level plans](#) for taking forward its census work. We consider this to be a positive step forward and feel more reassured in NRS's actions. We would expect to see further information to be published, particularly around how NRS will measure, assess and report on data quality. We plan to write to NRS setting out our further expectations later in the year.
 - iv. **Covid Lessons Learned:** At the end of October we will publish an update to our [2021 report](#) on lessons learned for health and social care statistics from the COVID-19 pandemic. This year we have found that, while the intense demands of the pandemic have eased, a real challenge is maintaining some level of analysis relating to COVID-19 while working on other topics – particularly as new priorities emerge and while pressures on resource remain. In the context of the increased demands on producers, we have identified four key areas which support the production of statistics which serve the public good: horizon scanning, ensuring that data and statistics are available, collaboration and communication. Publication of our report will be accompanied by a range of communications activities, including a lunchtime launch event targeted at statistics producers and other stakeholders with a known interest in health and social care statistics.

Casework

3. **Annual report:** Our annual casework report has been published. This report highlights our findings of 2021/22 based on our MI. The key messages highlighted in the annual report include:
 - i. Case load remains high. The pandemic may have heightened our profile, and the interest in data being produced and used appropriately has continued onto other areas of interest.

- ii. Use/misuse of data is the biggest theme for casework in 2021/22. This is where concerns have been raised for statistics that have been used inappropriately or incorrectly in public debate.
 - iii. Intelligent transparency continues to be fundamental in supporting public trust in statistics and this is a key issue highlighted in our casework.
 - iv. Although the pandemic heavily influenced this year, we started to see a shift in interest to other topics, especially in the last quarter.
4. **Live cases:** We continue to receive casework on a breadth of topics. We are currently working on casework that covers energy, patient waiting times, sex and gender and small boat arrivals.
 5. **Closed cases:** Although we have not had any public cases since the last meeting, we have concluded casework privately on fuel bills and Office for Budget Responsibility forecasts and even received a complaint about our weights and measures blog that resulted in us amending the blog we published to be clear around our ask for consultations to have a range of responses (that might include “none of the above”) rather than an exhaustive list of responses.

Wider reach

6. OSR ran a session for the government wide DataConnect22 conference called **Trustworthiness, Quality and Value: What it means for statistical modelling**. We presented the pillars of the Code under the lens of statistical modelling, using the Guidance for Models as a basis. There was a good turnout with 90 attendees.
7. We have had two seminars for government analysts since the last meeting. Our communicating uncertainty seminar in September sold with 600 tickets requested and about 400 people attending on the day. The second on data sharing and linkage in October was also a success with around 80 participants. We had presentations from Ofsted and Administrative Data Research (ADR) UK as well as presenting our work on data sharing and linkage.
8. We published [the report from OSR and ADR UK \(Administrative Data Research UK\)](#), supported by independent researchers Kohlrabi Consulting. Together with ADR UK, we undertook a deliberative dialogue exploring public perceptions of ‘public good’ use of data for research and statistics. We followed this with a joint [blog](#) describing the motivations behind the recent report and discussing the benefits of research collaborations

Issues on my mind

9. The main issues on my mind at the moment
 - i. **Business Planning Cycle 2023/24:** While rolling planning and programming continues through our Programme Review Board and our domains and functions, we are now commencing our annual planning cycle for the 2023/24 Business Plan. This annual cycle offers us the opportunity to step back and reflect on our desired outcomes and impacts and how we best achieve them. Key milestones are:
 - 9 November: Team Planning Event;
 - 1 December: Regulation Committee: Share OSR Theory of Change and early team thinking on 2023/24 priorities and seek ideas from the Committee;
 - 18 January: Team Planning Event (building on function and domain planning);
 - 16 February: Regulation Committee: Share draft business plan with Committee for comments, and budget for sign off (we expect to be living withing current baseline and absorbing inflation);
 - 30 March: Authority Board: Share near final business plan with the Board for feedback; and
 - 20 April: Regulation Committee: Final sign off of business plan and updated rolling regulatory work programme.

Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation, OSR, 19 October 2022

Regulatory Activities Dashboard

October 2022

Authority Board

Population and Society

Assessments: OSR letter to NRS on Scotland's **Census** was discussed at Regulation Committee, outlining expectations for transparency on next steps in population estimates for Scotland
Measuring the population, estimates, migration, census (and census 2023 recommendation) and LFS. Updated report, including recommendations on migration statistics, discussed at Regulation Committee.
Compliance Check: **ONS mortality stats** aiming for publication in October
Casework: Concerns raised about the previous Home Secretary quoting unpublished statistics on **small boats** in Parliament, picked up by the media and FullFact.

Crime and Security

Think piece on **Police Recorded Crime statistics** in development for November Regulation Committee
Assessments: Scottish Government **Scottish Prison population statistics** - drafting report.
Home Office **police officer uplift statistics** designation letter due to publish in October following Regulation Committee agreement.
Compliance checks: **MoJ Women and the Criminal Justice system** letter due to publish in October.
ONS modern slavery statistics and Home Office **National Referral Mechanism** statistics letter due for publication in November.

Children, Education and Skills

Casework: **Health and Wellbeing Census in Scotland** concerns around confidentiality and ethics of the census of school age children. **Future Curriculum Body** concerns raised about DfE evidence for new arm's length curriculum body. **Student loan interest rates** concerns raised about the method used to derive the interest rate and the nature of the communication around it. **JCQ collection of sex/ gender** concerns raised about JCQ looking into collecting information on non-binary students.
Compliance Check: **Welsh Government School Workforce Annual Census** feeding into a wider review of this data collection.

Economy

Assessments: ONS **Regional GDP** Gathering further feedback following ONS's publication of new estimates of Regional GDP.
Systemic Review: **Post-Brexit ONS Economic Statistics** Gathering feedback from key stakeholders (OBR, HMT, NAO) on OSR's external scrutiny proposal.

Business, Trade and International Development

Assessment: **Business Demography**. Phase 2 follow up. **ABS** Phase 2 follow up.
Rapid Review: **DIT Inward investment** reviewing evidence and following up with DIT in October.

Transport, Environment and Climate Change

Assessments: **People and Nature Survey (PaNS)**. Reviewing evidence and meeting with users.
Casework: Ongoing casework about **Salmon Stocks** statistics. Concerns raised regarding **BEIS' UK gas statistics** and response drafted. Prepared briefings on **fuel bills, renewable energy** and the **National Travel Survey**.
Compliance Checks: **UK Food Security report** letter due to be published in October. **Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals** underway.

Health and Social Care

Assessments: ONS statistics on **Deaths in the Care Sector** due for publication in October following approval from Regulation Committee.
Casework: Concerns raised relating to the PHS dashboard on **NHS Waiting Times, public letter planned**.
Compliance Checks: ONS **Health Index** ongoing, reviewing findings with producers
Systemic Reviews: Further rounds of user engagement, following up on **Mental Health** reviews.
Publishing review of **COVID-19** lessons learned at end October.

Labour Market and Welfare

Assessments: Proposal to confirm NS designation for the **Living Costs and Food Survey** pending decision from October Regulation Committee
Compliance checks: **ONS transformation of the Labour Force Survey** (Phase 1) drafting a series of letters outlining initial findings and recommendations. Plans to publish October/November.
PAYE RTI User engagement phase taking place during October/ November.
Social Security Scotland removal of sex/gender question. Meeting with Social Security Scotland Chief Executive.
Systemic Reviews: Update blog for **Income-based poverty statistics** planned

Housing, Planning and Local Services

Assessment: **Statutory Homelessness in England statistics**: Continuing engagement in line with DLUHC action plan, ahead of December Regulation Committee.
Compliance Checks: Letter on **Scottish Government planning statistics** published in October. Follow up held with **ONS** on **Housing Affordability** outputs.
Engaging with ONS & DLUHC on **Sub-national data** developments, to support public understanding of levelling up.

Regulatory Activities Dashboard

October 2022

Authority Board

Insight

OSR Insight Forum: Held second Insight Forum meeting to discuss current themes in OSR's work across the statistics system. Lack of producer resource, data protection/sharing issues and changes in quality of statistics over time remained key issues.

Communicating Uncertainty in Statistics: Published report in September, accompanied by a blog and press release. Held successful seminar for government analysts with approx. 400 attendees and guest speakers Sarah Crofts (ONS) and Sir David Spiegelhalter.

Research

Public Perceptions of the Public Good, Collaboration with ADR UK: [Research findings report](#) published early October. ADR UK and OSR presented the work to the Scottish Centre for Administrative Data Research September.

Public Confidence in Official Statistics survey: Preparing to analyse the PCOS data to explore answers to the questions we added.

Research Programme Overview: We are reflecting on work to date and planning the future directions for the research programme.

Cross Cutting Issues

Wider reach: Our next seminar planned for government analysts: on data sharing and linkage in October.

Annual casework report 2021/22: Intending to publish following discussion at Regulation Committee.

Policy & Standards

Designation refresh: Testing of designation messaging is happening in October and November with users in collaboration with ONS Comms. Producers are piloting our new tools – four are applying the Code maturity model over the coming year, and we are trialling a second version of our guidance for summarising quality. Our regulatory team is reviewing our assessment approach.

Voluntary application and wider reach: Added the Health Foundation's evidence hub to our list of adopters. Engaging with organisations outside of government, along with some departments that are looking to adopt the Code pillars or extend their application of the Code. On the technical advisory group for developing a civic strength index and contributing to discussions with the Royal Statistical Society on public statistics.

Data and Methods

Internal work: New data science projects are on hold until we have the resource, our priority is maintaining existing tools. We have started a three-month trial of Full Fact's horizon scanning tool, to see if this can enhance our regulatory work.

Review of [data sharing/linkage](#): We're pulling together emerging findings from stakeholder interviews. Plan to publish a report in this business year. Held a successful seminar for government analysts with ~250 attendees and guest speakers from Ofqual, Ofsted and ADR UK.

Wider reach: Models guidance published in August: promoted in a [blog](#), government newsletters and presented to GSS HoPs

Update on UK trade statistics

Purpose

1. This paper provides an update to the Authority Board on UK trade statistics. These statistics have gone through a substantial transformation programme since around 2016 which has seen the frequency, coverage and granularity of our outputs increase. And, more recently, further improvements have and will be made, including responding to data collection changes, which this paper outlines.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Authority Board are invited to note:
 - i. the range of statistics the ONS produces on and recent patterns in UK trade; and
 - ii. past, recent and upcoming improvements to UK trade statistics.

Background

What statistics do we produce?

3. Over the past six years our UK trade statistics have undergone a major transformation programme which has improved the reliability and range of the statistics produced. That programme continues but is generally considered to be in a relatively mature state. Engagement with users, notably the Department for International Trade (DIT), show a high degree of satisfaction. We hope the changes made will help to re-gain National Statistics status for our trade statistics.
4. We produce and publish a comprehensive set of global trade and investment statistics, which are fully integrated with the wider set of national accounts statistics. Including:
 - i. monthly statistics on trade in goods and services, published alongside GDP estimates;
 - ii. quarterly and annual Balance of Payments estimates (the 'Pink Book');
 - iii. annual estimates of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and quarterly and annual releases on mergers and acquisition activity; and
 - iv. an expanding set of experimental sub-national estimates of both trade and FDI.
5. In addition to the regular releases we also publish ad hoc analytical articles on different topics in trade and investment, including an article recently exploring the comparative performance of UK trade compared to other G7 countries.

What do the latest statistics on trade show?

6. In broad terms, the effect of a depreciating Sterling and very sharp increases in wholesale gas prices (which directly increases the cost of gas imports as well as indirectly increasing the cost of other goods imported) has led to the value of UK imports in current prices increasing in 2022, which in turn has seen the current account deficit to widen (it was the largest on record in Q1 2022, though has narrowed in Q2 2022).
7. Looking at our most recent figure, in the three months to August 2022 the value of imports to the UK rose by 37.7 per cent in current prices, while exports have risen by 27.1 per cent compared to the same period last year. In chain volume terms the increase was 10.8 and 5.7 per cent respectively. Looking at imports, in current prices the increase from the European Union (EU) was 38.1 per cent and from outside the EU was 37.4 per cent. The value of gas imports has increased by 248.5 percent.

Discussion

Improvements made to our trade statistics

8. Compared to 2016 when the transformation programme for trade statistics was launched there has been an increase in the availability of data series, including new breakdowns by commodity and country; new subnational estimates of trade and investment flows; and improvements to all our releases to include for example more use of interactive data visualisations. These changes have come about through a combination of exploiting new data sources, expanding existing surveys (such as our International Trade in Services Survey) and new surveys launched (as we did for FDI in 2021).
9. Other improvements over the course of 2022 include:
 - i. Chained volume measures: in response to user requests and the volatility in prices seen for many goods we recently began publishing trade in goods series on a chained volume (CVM) basis, which remove the impact of price changes, to complement the current prices (CP) statistics, alongside expanding the CVM series already published.
 - ii. Gas imports deflator: in addition we moved quickly in recent months to implement an improvement to the UK trade gas imports deflator to better capture the extent that rapidly rising wholesale gas prices are impacting the value of natural gas imports.
 - iii. Balance of Payments: a series of improvements were recently implemented to our Balance of Payments estimates for 1997 to 2020 and an article released to describe them. The changes reflect a range of things including Solvency II, changes in Bank of International Settlement statistics on loans and deposits from abroad, etc.

Current work in hand

10. Trade in goods data for GB-EU: As a result of the UK leaving the EU, how HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) collect data on trade in goods with the EU has changed.
11. Being able to put an initial estimate on the effect of this change has been welcomed and we have published three articles this year (in March, July and October) as well as notes within each monthly UK trade release about the changes. Having established initial estimates of the size of the change, we're working to make an adjustment to our trade statistics. There are some methodological and feasibility questions we are addressing with HMRC, such as how we attribute the adjustment to different product categories below the headline level of imports/exports.
12. Other changes: in the next 12 months we will continue our transformation work to improve UK trade estimates; this includes work to extend the International Trade in Services survey data to include businesses with 0-9 employees and planning to address any new operational challenges such as accurate measurement of trade through freeports. Finally, we have worked closely with stakeholders to improve our estimates of the value of education exports and have moved quickly to make changes to both Pink Book 2022 and 2023 that do this

Scott Dennison, Global Trade and Investment Division, 20 October 2022

COVID-19 Infection Survey**Purpose**

1. This paper provides an update on the COVID-19 Infection Survey (CIS), the delivery of the digital transformation and analytical testing and findings.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Authority Board are invited to note:
 - i. the successful delivery of the digital transformation programme;
 - ii. the continued successful delivery and high impact of the CIS and analysis; and
 - iii. the programme is currently performing at an amber rating due to the uncertainty of future funding.

Discussion**Transformation to Digital First data collection**

3. The CIS transitioned successfully to digital first data collection by 1 August 2022, following a five month IT development and a parallel run of the methodologies through July. In line with the CIS protocol, all participants were contacted to consent to the change of design and to opt-in to the digital first model. Attrition was low, and 84.1 per cent of all participants have transitioned across to the digital CIS.
4. The success of the transition to digital first has realised monthly cost savings of £13 million.
5. The sample size is currently 369,492 participants. Full analysis of representativeness will be published in the third quality report in early December, following the release of relevant Census data. Early findings suggest minimal differences between estimates produced by remote data collection methods compared with estimates produced by study worker home visits. There is greater representation from digital data collection for individuals with disabilities and long-term health conditions. There is little change among other characteristics between the two modes of collection with early indications suggesting the response rate for younger people has increased slightly.
6. The digital parallel running with face to face data collection in July ensured that the CIS continued to deliver PCR swab and blood samples against the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) targets throughout the transition period. Importantly the parallel run provided the opportunity to assess mode effects in the data (please see points 10-13 below).
7. The digital first solution offers participants greater flexibility. The primary participation route is online, with the option to complete the questionnaire by telephone offered to meet accessibility requirements. In line with other ONS online household surveys, 95 per cent of participants are consistently responding online and 5 per cent by telephone. To date, telephone participants have tended to be those in older age groups, particularly aged over 50 and single person households. Further work is being carried out to understand the demographics of mode choices, which we will continue to offer to ensure it is fully accessible. Early indications suggest this is a similar rate to other ONS surveys.
8. Participants who do not opt-out of a specific test window, are sent test kits in the post and then asked to complete the test and online questionnaire within the stipulated 14 day test window and then send back the sample via Royal Mail. Approximately 90 per cent of participants who do not opt-out of the testing window complete the online questionnaire and return a sample.

9. The reliance on test sample return via Royal Mail, rather than immediate return via study worker, has introduced an average 2-day time lag into the arrival of the swab to the lab.
10. Since the start of digital first data collection there have been a number of obstacles that have impacted the timely return of samples to the lab and data quality, mitigations are now in place against future and on-going issues to reduce their impact:
11. These are anticipated and accepted consequences of the change of data collection method. The timeliness is under regular review, particularly in light of other potential delays. In some weeks, there may be a higher level of uncertainty in latest estimates and this is transparent in the outputs so users are clear.

CIS Digital mode effect testing and findings

12. Mode effect analysis was carried out to assess the impact of the change on our modelled positivity estimates. The point estimates of positivity for each data collection mode through July overlapped for all UK countries and English regions. Point estimates of positivity for each data collection mode also overlapped in all age groups except those in school year 7 to school year 11. Based on this, the back series of data collected through both modes was combined to provide the greatest power in outputs.
13. Mode effect analysis was further carried out to assess the impact of the change on our estimates of the proportion of the population testing positive for antibodies against SARS-Cov-2. We found no statistical evidence of a difference at the 179 nanograms per millilitre (ng/ml) level. There was statistical evidence of a small difference at the 800 ng/ml level, indicating that blood samples collected remotely were slightly more likely to have antibodies against SARS-CoV-2, however the size of the difference was small.
14. The findings of these analyses were published on [18 August](#) (positivity), and [23 September](#) (antibodies) alongside the respective first use of data collected through the remote mode in ONS publications.
15. Analysis comparing the representativeness of the achieved sample through the face to face mode and digital mode will be published in a third quality report announced for 7 December. This immediately follows the publication of Census 2021 population data underlying this analysis.

Future of CIS Digital

16. The current UKHSA funding for CIS ends on 31 March 2023. Throughout the summer, ONS have worked intensively with UKHSA colleagues to scope the future requirements for population health monitoring in 2023/24 and beyond, for which the CIS model could contribute.
17. The threat of early emergence of flu in the community this autumn/winter remains significant. During the pandemic, flu cases have been historically low and the corresponding population immunity is likely to be compromised compared to a normal, pre-pandemic "flu season". We are working with UKHSA to provide timely insight into the emergence of flu in the UK population and understand the impact on the population in the context of increased strain on the NHS and the relatively immune-naïve population, and the lack of non-pharmaceutical interventions.

Impact

18. The CIS continues to provide unique insight into the impact of Covid-19 across the country.
19. In light of the recently detected increases in positivity across the four nations of the UK, and across age groups and regions throughout England, CIS positivity analysis continues to demonstrate its use to a wide range of stakeholders across government and remains a key data source to inform decision making. This is key evidence to inform the government's alert levels, and we continue to support this through engagement with the

Cabinet Office, and UKHSA through the weekly Data Debrief Group which informs briefing to the Secretary of State for Health. This is critical to inform winter preparedness.

20. Understanding the antibody protection within the population has been a critical component of the suite of information captured through the CIS. Highlighting waning of antibodies in both the over 70s and those of working age will have had an impact on different policy decisions affecting those who are most vulnerable, and those who may be unable to work for a period of time, potentially impacting on labour market availability. We will continue to monitor this over the Winter, and this will become more important as pressure on supply chains may increase.
21. Lessons learned during the height of the pandemic have helped wider rapid analysis development such as the work recently conducted to assess risks of fuel poverty.

Next Steps and Future Analysis

22. We are currently working with our partners in Oxford University who are leading research aiming to link antibody levels to different levels of clinical protection. If successful, this will allow better predictions regarding protection from infection and the relationship between positivity and serious illness.
23. As we capture data on flu prevalence across the country this will be developed into a suite of information broken down by age, region and country, assuming we have enough positive cases to enable this.
24. We are working with key strategic partners across the NHS to understand how we can maximise the unique data and analysis available to us, to best assist with the pressures faced by partners and provide support in response to winter pressures.

**Emma Rourke, Interim Deputy National Statistician, Health, Population and Methods,
Ruth Studley, Director CDCTP Transformation and Director of CIS, 19 October 2022.**

Winter Risks – Economy, Energy, Health

Purpose

1. This paper provides an overview of work across ONS in conjunction with Other Government Departments to provide data and insight to support Government decision making on a series of Winter Risks.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Authority Board are invited to:
 - i. note the work ongoing and our relationship with Cabinet Office; and
 - ii. consider any key gaps and proposals to fill them.

Background

3. Winter Risks were first discussed by Ministers prior to the new administration. They highlighted six specific risks, many of which overlap and potentially compound. These were:
 - i. health and pressures on the NHS and Social Care;
 - ii. energy supply, price, potential shortages and impacts on the economy;
 - iii. cost of living, with a specific focus on cold homes;
 - iv. supply chain disruption, focused on food, medicines, energy and fuel;
 - v. labour market shortages, in key strategic occupations; and
 - vi. industrial action, monitoring impact.
4. The new administration has three high level priorities, the Economy, Energy and Health. These are now the lenses through which we are providing data on Winter Risks, however we remain mindful of interlinkages
5. Building on the positive ways of working and partnerships with Cabinet Office teams through the pandemic and beyond, the Analytical Hub is working in partnership with the Joint Data and Analysis Centre in Cabinet Office. This ensures our data remains relevant and timely to the priorities of the day, in this case the Prime Minister's priorities through winter, and to ensure that we are anticipating future needs. The partnership also enables us to ensure senior decision makers are briefed with quality assured data and insight. Through the Analytical Hub we are taking a oneONS approach to draw on our fullest range of data and expertise.

Vulnerable Cohorts

6. Different cohorts of vulnerable populations have also been identified through Cabinet Office and the Chief Medical Officer. As well as early estimates produced from the Annual Population Survey and other data sources, we have completed more detailed work using the Census 21 for England to provide a greater level of accuracy. This covers counts of population living in private households in England identified as:
 - i. disabled people;
 - ii. those with a long-term health condition;
 - iii. people aged 65 and over;
 - iv. children under 5 years old;
 - v. people living in home without central heating; and
 - vi. people living in deprived households.
7. We can also extend this analysis to consider where two or more vulnerabilities are known, and there is potential to extend the coverage to include Wales should there be interest and need with Welsh Government, and at more local levels.

8. We have also set out plans to link Census 21 data with primary care records to estimate the numbers of people who are vulnerable through health conditions and living in poverty using imputed estimates from the Family Resource Survey. We are also exploring possibilities of linking to Energy Performance Certificate data to understand how difficult or costly it might be to keep homes heated.

Cost of Living / Inflationary Pressures

9. We have a range of work setting out the pressures households and businesses face through the rising cost of living, the impacts that has and some of the mitigations in place. These are summarised in monthly packs shared through Cabinet Office.
10. These bring together a range of our published data from our headline inflation releases, Household Cost Indices, weekly web-scraped data on food prices, the lowest cost grocery items (updated in October) and ongoing monitoring through the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey and Business Insights and Conditions Survey. Both surveys provide fortnightly insights on how businesses and individuals are feeling in relation to rising costs and actions they are taking to mitigate these.
11. The base interest rate has also risen from 0.1 per cent to 2.25 per cent over the last 12 months and is forecast to rise further into 2023. New workstreams on housing costs (both mortgage and rent) using the sources above are underway, bringing in data and insight from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, HM Treasury, the Bank of England and Financial Conduct Authority. Whilst surveys indicate 43 per cent say that housing costs are difficult to meet, only a small proportion report being behind on rent or mortgage. Financial transactions data again shows that there has been a small pick up in failures for mortgage payments, but we are also now seeing a steady increase in the average value of monthly payments.

Workforce Shortages

12. The labour market has recently returned figures of a near 50-year low unemployment rate, and a high volume (although now falling) of vacancies.
13. We are frequently briefing Cabinet Office, making use of the Labour Force Survey, Business Insights and Conditions Survey, the Over-50s lifestyle survey and administrative sources of vacancy data from online jobsites. We are also working on skills shortages and needs through work convened by the Unit for Future Skills, bringing insight from the Department for Education, the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), to assess how skills provision can best cater for employers both in the short and medium term.
14. Earlier in the year we established estimates of staff absence rates through the COVID-19 Infection Survey (CIS) during the Omicron wave and can bring those online again. We are also working with Cabinet Office and others to assess the risks posed to critical services by industrial action across a range of sectors and occupations and for society and economy more broadly should co-ordinated action occur. As part of this we have introduced a Labour Disputes Survey to support the risk assessment.

Health Monitoring

15. We have successfully transferred the CIS to a digital delivery and are currently in the Anticipate scenario, with our focus on monitoring and reporting, anticipating/observing to determine early warnings, and flexing capacity to invest in other bespoke analysis and analysis improvements. While we may adapt our outputs to our findings, we will move to scenario Alert in concert with the UK Health Security Agency's (UKHSA) alert systems.
16. We are about to start testing and capturing flu estimates using the CIS sample, with UKHSA giving financial approval for flu testing to begin this week. As soon as they are available, outputs will be broken down by age/region/country if positivity is high enough

for this to be possible. In addition, a question is being added to the questionnaire asking whether the respondent has been vaccinated against flu. Our regular weekly, monthly and annual mortality analysis is well established, and we are able to flex to emerging needs as necessary.

17. Working with Cabinet Office, a range of NHS performance data are available to ministers for Accident and Emergency waiting times, ambulance response times, bed occupancy, capacity and discharge, staff absenteeism and more. We are working to analyse trends at hospital and trust level and developing methods to consider whether early warning signals of critical pressure are available across previous winters.

Energy Data

18. Following the Inter Administrative Committee on 5 October, we are working to create a plan for creating a coherent UK-wide measure of fuel poverty. Internal workshops have been held to consider current methodology between the Devolved Administrations as well as a suite of alternative measures on energy price, consumption and impact.
19. ONS is currently working with BEIS to acquire Electralink smart meter data on electricity consumption, the data has a three years back series and would allow for a high degree of geographical granularity. This will allow ONS to explore whether the cost-of-living pressures are affecting people's electricity consumption in near to real time. We also have access to Citizens Advice on people requesting advice with energy bills and energy debt.
20. Working with BEIS and Cabinet Office, we are also monitoring the UK's gas supply and storage capacity, as well as wider across continental Europe.

Longitudinal Winter Opinions Survey

21. We are currently scoping out the possibility of opening a longitudinal winter opinions survey through resampling previous respondents to the existing opinions survey. We would invite 3-5,000 people (including a significant number with health conditions and those in lower income deciles) to answer a series of questions on health (including GP and NHS appointments as well as their general health and impact of colder homes over winter) use of energy (including reduction of use or different strategies to cope with higher prices) and more broadly the impacts of cost of living, including changes in behaviour in consumption, dealing with housing cost increases and associated mitigations and impacts on life.

Conclusion

22. We continue to provide data and insight, often in near to real time, to support the priorities of Government and our wider users. At the same time, we are anticipating emerging needs and developing solutions in how best to meet them. Our partnership through the Joint Data and Analysis Centre in Cabinet Office, along with ONS analysts embedded within Government Departments have been key to this.

Hugh Stickland, Analytical Hub, 17 October 2022

Integrated Data Service - Update

Purpose

1. This paper provides an update on key elements of the Integrated Data Programme (IDP) and the delivery of the Integrated Data Service (IDS).

Recommendations

2. Members of the Board are invited to note:
 - i. technical solutions to address 'Safe Outputs', ensuring confidence that IDS outputs are non-disclosive;
 - ii. activity to develop the IDS data catalogue with a greater volume of ONS data (including census); and
 - iii. progress against Digital Economy Act (DEA) Accreditation, necessary for IDS to process data.

Background

3. Whilst we continue to build towards the strategic vision during this early Public Beta phase, we are also increasing tactical activity to meet expectations on early deliverables and build confidence on the status of the programme.

Discussion

4. That activity includes;
 - i. consolidation of a group of Super Early-Adopters (ahead of DEA accreditation) which, in five Safes terms, exercises greater "safe people" and "safe projects" control and hence ensures overall data security;
 - ii. enabling system access to a greater degree of ONS data from census and the Secure Research Service, which will be indexed for the first time;
 - iii. prioritisation of all security solutions which are high-impact and rapid to implement; and
 - iv. continuing to address the safe outputs technical elements, which remains critical for DEA accreditation and delivery of the IDS.
5. These measures ahead of full DEA accreditation will enable further programme progress and stimulation of additional projects, ensuring that the benefits of faster, linked and controlled access to the UK's critical national data assets are realised.

Super Early-Adopters

6. The Safe Outputs technical developments have necessitated current limits on driving up early users and projects; however, the decision to build and focus on a trusted user group rather than a full public beta will mitigate.
7. These Super Early-Adopters are made up of Whitehall departments and Devolved Administrations:
 - i. Number 10 Data Science Team;
 - ii. Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities ;
 - iii. HMRC;
 - iv. Welsh Government; and
 - v. Research Data Scotland.
8. In addition to the above, scope is being finalised with Cabinet Office's Joint Data and Analysis Centre, Department for Transport, Department for Education and Department for Health and Social Care to make ONS data available to support work on Supply Chains, Freight Movements, School Placements and Hospitals.

9. This group are being supported to propose high impact projects and are being given close supervision and assistance to resolve any challenges they face and allow user feedback. This support will be supplemented by the Data Science Campus.
10. IDS is establishing an Analytical Steering Group co-chaired by Osama Rahman (Director of Data Science Campus) with membership including the Departmental Directors of Analysis and Analysis Function Board. This group will look at the analytical priorities, data needs and the way government departments collaborate on analysis.

ONS Data (including progress on Reference Data Management Framework)

11. As previously agreed, there are currently 15 datasets available in the IDS, with a further 66 datasets in the pipeline over the next six months. This will ensure the IDS is future proofed against additional user needs alongside responding to current project requests.
12. Since the last Board update, we have made available Energy Performance Certificate data, working in collaboration with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. This is the first cross-government de-identified IDS dataset, meaning this data can be used for Levelling Up geo-spatial analysis and more easily integrated in the future.
13. The focus of the next two to three months is to increase the volume of data at pace and carry out refreshes in the data delivery plan. A revised Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings dataset will be completed in November. We are currently in the process of agreeing the 'Digital Services and Technology sprints' after 21 November to support this work.
14. To ensure continued growth of users and data, IDP are prioritising ingestion of data to include Census 2021 data, which aim to make available for the first time by the end of 2022 following appropriate security endorsement.
15. Alongside increasing the volume of data available, we are working to make the data indexable, increasing usability and realising the value of the service. A metadata solution to improve data management has been identified and is currently being tested. We are making good progress with strategic initiatives, including automation of the ingest of data to develop the deposit model accessing data at source and so engineer data more efficiently.
16. The first automatic index matching algorithm will be live in the platform by December for our address index, which is a key part of the ONS data management solution, the Reference Data Management Framework. The automatic matching algorithm for the demographic index is being developed for March, and we are initiating a new piece of work to develop a matching algorithm for the business index. We are meeting with the Digital and Data Board in February to seek support for a cross-government consistent matching service, which will be provisioned via IDS.

Security Remediation and progress towards DEA

17. The team will have all remaining tasks across security and capability controls in progress by the end of October, when the focus will shift to further improving document submission rates and assurance reviews. This will allow the team to structure the evidence pack and associated narratives before our application for accreditation in early 2023. Future papers will report on progress of reviewed and signed off documentation. Risks remain in the maturity of process documentation for some areas and the team will focus on the higher-risk and higher impact areas.

Technical solutions to Safe Outputs

18. On 14 October, the IDP cross-government Design Authority agreed the decision to implement a Cloudflare solution, which protects the interconnect between the browser and the users operating system. The chosen Cloudflare solution was found to:

- i. be the easiest to set up with minimal impact on the current technology delivery;
 - ii. be independent from, though highly integratable with all major cloud tech suppliers;
 - iii. have stronger user experience for analysts and administrators (front and backstage);
and
 - iv. provide long term advantages to platform, providing strong protection and a feature rich package that will enable further hardening of the platform's security.
19. Commercial conversations will continue with Cloudflare, as further activity needs to be completed to assess usage and agree best approach to spend. This will happen with the relevant programme teams in parallel. Timescales for implementation and testing are in development and this activity is on the Critical Path for IDP delivery.

Programme Update

20. The outline Plan on a Page (POAP) was agreed in our refreshed Business Case and our discussions with HM Treasury (HMT) and Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA). This POAP is supported by a Microsoft Project schedule.
21. A response to Treasury Approval Panel (TAP) lines of enquiry, encompassing around 50 questions covering programme governance, resourcing, stakeholder engagement, strategic position in wider government and the economic commercial and financial case will be submitted on 26 October.
22. To support the TAP, HMT and IPA are now finalising plans for a technical review which is anticipated to take place ahead of TAP on 4 November. The review will be jointly led by Central Digital and Data Office and the Number 10 Data Science Team.
23. A meeting with the IPA is to take place on 25 October to propose a date for a Gateway 4 Assessment in w/c 20 February 2023. A schedule of activity and key milestones has been drafted along with planning assumptions. All preparation can be achieved by the end of this calendar year, with documentation review/validation and stakeholder engaged complete and commitment to support the review achieved.

Alison Pritchard, Deputy National Statistician for Data Capability, October 2022