UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Minutes
Thursday 26 January 2023
London Boardroom

Present
UK Statistics Authority
Sir Robert Chote (Chair)
Sian Jones (Deputy Chair)
Professor Sir John Aston
Sam Beckett
Professor Sir Ian Diamond
Richard Dobbs
Ed Humpherson
Nora Nanayakkara
Professor Sir David Spiegelhalter

Also in attendance
Owen Brace
Robert Bumpstead
Greg Ceely (for item 8)
Megan Cooper
Emma Hickman (for item 9)
Sally-Ann Jones (Secretariat)
Liz McKeown (for item 9)
Darren Morgan (for item 10)
Alison Pritchard
Libby Richards (for item 9)
Emma Rourke (for item 8)
Hugh Stickland (for item 10)
Ruth Studley (for item 8)
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 20 December 2022 were agreed.

4.   Report from the Authority Chair [SA(23)01]

4.1   Non-Executives had met prior to the Board meeting. They had discussed topics including the recruitment process for Non-Executive Directors, and the ongoing campaign for the National Statistician.

4.2   The Chair reported on his recent activities since the Board last met. On 11 January Sir Robert Chote, Professor Sir Ian Diamond and Sam Beckett had attended a meeting with Simon Case, Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Civil Service, to discuss the breadth and delivery of work by ONS.

4.3   Sir Robert alongside Sir Ian had visited a number Government Statistical Service Departments: the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on 10 January; the Ministry of Defence on 16 January; and the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs on 19 January, to hear about their work and discuss how the Authority could support them.

4.4   Sir Robert had attended a meeting of the Committee on Standards in Public Life on 19 January.

5.   Report from the Chief Executive [SA(23)02]

5.1   Sir Ian provided the Board with an overview of activity and issues since the last meeting, highlighting the following:

  i.   Sir Ian had hosted a series for workshops with colleagues at Grade 6 and 7 across the organisation, focusing on leadership and creating a shared one ONS culture;
  ii. ONS was among the winners of the Glassdoor Employees Choice Awards;
  iii. Sir Ian had represented ONS on BBC Radio 4's Any Questions on Friday 13 January, which had covered topics including the economy and the National Health Service;
  iv. The new Manchester location had been opened on 23 January, with a recruitment focus on critical skills;
  v.   progress of work across the organisation on efficiencies and prioritisation being led by Sir Ian with Rhys Thomas and Megan Cooper ahead of the submission to HM Treasury in early February;
  vi. progress towards developing the evidence base to underpin the recommendation on the future of population statistics with a substantive paper to be taken at the next meeting; and
  vii. the continued support by ONS for colleagues at the National Records of Scotland on the Scotland Census 2022.

5.2   The Board heard about the response by ONS to the error in the international Comparisons of Productivity (ICP) National Statistics release that had been published on 11 January. A correction had subsequently been published on the

ONS website on 23 January and quality assurance processes had been reviewed. Sir Ian had convened a group, to consider the quality framework underpinning economic statistics. Statistical quality was a focus for Mike Keoghan, Deputy National Statistician for Economic, Social and Environmental Statistics, as Chair of the ONS Quality Committee.

5.3 Sir Ian was scheduled to visit the Darlington site on 30 January for staff talks and attendance at HMT's Executive Committee meeting.

6. Report from the Director General for Regulation [SA(23)03]

6.1 Ed Humpherson provided an update on regulation activity. The analysis of casework showed that in 2022 the volume of casework was higher than the last pre pandemic period.

6.2 The Board heard that Ed Humpherson had met Mathew Rycfroft, Home Office (HO) Permanent Secretary regarding the issues previously raised by OSR. The HO Permanent Secretary had confirmed his support for the principles of intelligent transparency across the department.

6.3 With regard to recruitment, Rob Kent-Smith had been appointed as Deputy Director. Recruitment more generally continued to be a short term risk within OSR, with work ongoing with recruitment colleagues to address the issue. It was noted that challenges related to the recruitment market, not recruitment processes.

6.4 On 19 January Ed Humpherson had presented at the Economic Statistics Centre of Excellence conference: *Public Understanding of Economics: How we can communicate economic statistics better to the wider public.*

6.5 Board members discussed OSR's proposal to research and publish a think piece on police recorded crime statistics that had been considered by the Regulation Committee in December 2022. Members welcomed the clarification that this was part of a wider plan by OSR to address a long standing issue, following the de-designation of ONS crime statistics for England and Wales in 2014. It was agreed that further details on the broader action plan would be brought to the next meeting.

7. Report from the Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

7.1 Nora Nanayakkara reported on the work of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee which had last met on 19 January.

7.2 The Committee had considered:

  i.   the financial position of the organisation;
  ii.   delivery of the Internal Audit Programme 2022/23;
  iii. the implementation of the Risk and Assurance Strategy;
  iv.   the Census Data Collection Transformation Programme with a focus on the risk profile for the delivery of the future of population statistics programme;
  v.   the COVID-19 Digital Survey; and
  vi.   the External Audit planning report for the 2022/23 financial statement audit for the Authority

7.3 The Committee had also discussed a report on Shared Drives Security and Data Protection, which had highlighted areas to strengthen in the organisation's control framework. The Board heard that an action plan had been put in place

and progress would be reported to the March Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meeting.

8.   Excess Deaths [SA(23)04]

8.1   Ruth Studley and Greg Ceely introduced a paper which considered excess mortality reported across England and Wales.

8.2   ONS produce excess mortality analysis based on deaths registered and baselined to a five-year average excluding 2020 but including 2021. A number of organisations produce estimates of excess deaths in England including the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities and EuroMOMO. ONS had published a blog on 12 January 2022 explaining the methodology underpinning its analysis of excess deaths.

8.3   The Board discussed the methodology being used by ONS and by other producers. A technical working group would be established to consider excess death calculation methods.

8.4   The Board would remain engaged as the work progressed with a report back in three months on the outcome of the technical working group.

9.   ONS Local and Sub National Statistics [SA(23)05]

9.1   Liz McKeown, Libby Richards, Emma Hickman and Samantha Toon introduced a paper which provided an update on ONS's progress in delivering the Government Statistical Service (GSS) Subnational Data Strategy.

9.2   The Board heard that ONS had provided leadership to the improvement of subnational data, statistics and analysis across government through the creation of a Senior Subnational Data Group led by Sir Ian.

9.3   ONS Local was the new analytical advisory service for local decision makers with dedicated analysts based across the United Kingdom. ONS Local would support users to navigate sub national data and analysis; make links between national and ONS data with local data; and join up geographically disparate areas with similar challenges.

9.4   The Board commended the ONS on the developments, including its innovative research and expansion of the use of data sources, data science and methodology delivering UK wide and local insights. The Board noted the importance of the independence of ONS data.

10.   Labour Market [SA(23)06]

10.1 Darren Morgan and Hugh Stickland introduced a paper which looked at recent trends affecting the UK labour market, particularly economic inactivity, and the key role ONS is playing in developing the evidence base to inform policy.

10.2 The Board heard that ONS had quickly stood up a survey to better understand the motivations of those aged 50 and over who had left the labour market. The survey had so far been conducted twice. How demographic changes contributed to the change in economic inactivity was also considered.

10.3 The Board noted their thanks for an excellent presentation.

11. Integrated Data Service [SA(23)07]

11.1 Alison Pritchard introduced a paper which provided an update on the progress of the Integrated Data Programme (IDP) responsible for the delivery of the Integrated Data Service (IDS).

11.2 The Board heard that HMT had approved the IDS Full Business Case. Digital Economy Act accreditation was scheduled for discussion by the Research Accreditation Panel on 17 March. The dashboard of Key Performance Indicators would help inform the Board on progress against the programme's key deliverables. The Infrastructure and Projects Authority would commence the Gate Review 4 on 20 February.

12. Any Other Business

The next meeting would take place on 23 February.

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Agenda

26 January 2023, 10.30-14.00,
Hybrid Meeting

Chair: **Sir Robert Chote**
Apologies: Professor Jonathan Haskel, Rhys Thomas
Attendees: Emma Hickman (for item 7), Liz McKeown (for item 7), Darren Morgan (for item 8), Libby Richards (for item 7), Emma Rourke (for item 6), Hugh Stickland (for item 8), Ruth Studley (for item 6)
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 20 December 2022
2 11.05-11.15 10 mins	Report from the Authority Chair	SA(23)01 Sir Robert Chote
3 11.15-11.45 30 mins	Report from the Chief Executive	SA(23)02 Prof. Sir Ian Diamond
4 11.45-11.55 10 mins	Report from the Director-General for Regulation	SA(23)03 Ed Humpherson
5 11.55-12.05 10 mins	Report from Committee Chairs • Audit and Risk Assurance Committee	SA(23)04 Nora Nanayakkara
6 12.05-12.25 20 mins	Excess Deaths	SA(23)05 Emma Rourke Ruth Studley
12.25-12.35 10 mins	Break	
7 12.35-13.05 30 mins	ONS Local and Sub National Statistics	SA(23)06 Liz McKeown Libby Richards Emma Hickman
8 13.05-13.30 25 mins	Labour Market	SA(23)07 Darren Morgan Hugh Stickland
9 13.30-13.50 20 mins	Integrated Data Service	SA(23)08 Alison Pritchard
10 13.50-14.00 10 mins	Any Other Business	

Next meeting: 23 February 2023, London Boardroom

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Chair's Report, January 2023

Purpose

1. This paper provides the Authority Board with an overview of the Chair's activity in December and January.

Review of recent activities

2. The National Statistician and I have visited statisticians in various government departments recently to hear about their work and discuss how the Authority can support them:

   i. the **Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities** on 10 January;
   ii. the **Ministry of Defence** on 16 January; and
   iii. the **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)** on 19 January.

3. On 11 January I joined a regular **Cabinet Office stocktake meeting** to assess the performance of ONS against its responsibilities across government and the Civil Service.

4. On 19 January I am attending a meeting of the **Committee on Standards in Public Life** to talk about the Authority's work regulating the quality of official statistics and challenging misuse of statistics by public figures.

5. For the **National Statistician recruitment campaign**, I have had ongoing meetings with the assessment panel and with candidates. Interviews will take place in early February.

6. I also met this month with two colleagues moving to new roles in the statistical system soon: **Tom Taylor**, the Authority's incoming Director of Finance, Planning and Performance, and **Phil Wales**, the next Chief Statistician for Northern Ireland.

Casework and correspondence

7. On 16 December, I replied to **Dr Sandesh Gulhane MSP** about Accident and Emergency waiting times in Scotland. In my letter I said that this particular case is indicative of a longstanding broader challenge in getting comparable data on healthcare provision across the UK, between nations and within them.

8. On 23 December, I replied to **Dame Angela Eagle MP** about government statements on the cost to households of public sector pay increases.

Sir Robert Chote, Chair, 19 January 2023

Chief Executive's Report, January 2023

Purpose

1. This provides the Authority Board with an overview of activity for January 2023.

Summary

2. January has marked the start to another busy year with the organisation recognised as one of the UK's greatest places to work by Glassdoor, opening our new office in Manchester and reaching a key delivery milestone in the Integrated Data Service (IDS) with the onboarding of Super Early Adopters, alongside further new census releases.

3. I was also delighted to represent the Office for National Statistics on BBC Radio 4's Any Questions? on Friday 13 January. I appeared alongside David TC Davies, Secretary of State for Wales, Vaughan Gething MS, Welsh Government Minister for the Economy, Plaid Cymru Senedd Member Delyth Jewell and presenter Alex Forsyth. This was broadcast live from Newport Cathedral and we covered topics such as NHS, economy, the coal mine in Cumbria and threat to steel jobs in Wales.

Review of recent activities

4. This month saw our latest '**stocktake**' with colleagues at the Cabinet Office, including the Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Office Permanent Secretary. Colleagues were impressed by the breadth of work ongoing within the organisation and the strides we were taking to ensure ONS remains a great place to work.

5. ONS were among the **winners of the annual Glassdoor Employees' Choice Awards**, placing twenty first in the UK's Top 50 Best Places to Work 2023. ONS is the only Civil Service department to make it onto the list in the nine years that Glassdoor have run this annual award in the UK, and only organisation with its headquarters in Wales. This is a fantastic achievement and builds on our successes in November when we ranked number one for work life balance for a second year in a row.

6. January also saw the beginning of our lease at the Tootal Building in **Manchester, which will provide space for up to 100 colleagues**. Expanding our presence into Manchester supports the Places for Growth agenda and looks to increase our skills and diversity, especially in digital and tech. We began advertising the location on vacancies at the end of 2022, and have already made appointments to the location.

7. Turning to the wider analytical community, guidance has been given to Government Statistical Service (GSS) Heads of Profession for Statistics to provide them with consistent advice on practices to take during **industrial action**, to ensure any impacts to Official Statistics and users are understood and managed.

8. Internationally, a delegation from **Singapore's Ministry of Communications and Information** visited our London office on 9 January to meet with ONS representatives from Public Policy Analysis and Communications and Digital

Publishing. The highly productive meeting focused on the challenges faced when collecting data and how research findings are disseminated to stakeholders.

9. Beyond this, two corporate statements from the Authority, one from myself and one from Ed Humpherson, plus accompanying exhibits, were sent to the **COVID-19 public inquiry** team.

10. January also saw further releases of **Census 2021 data**, including on topics that previous census's had not historically captured data on such as **gender identity**. Our release on sexual orientation and gender identity received widespread positive coverage this month, with media outlets noting this was the first time this information had been provided on a voluntary basis at such scale. ONS Director of Population Statistics Jen Woolford gave interviews for BBC News with clips used across national and regional broadcast and further coverage across the Guardian and Pink News.

11. As part of our work on winter pressures, we published our initial **Flu/Respiratory Syncytial Virus pilot findings from the COVID-19 Infection Survey** in December 2022. This included a [blog on the National Statistical page](#), [data tables on the ONS website](#) and a [collaborative article with University of Oxford on the ONS website](#) exploring symptoms. This work aligns with the future scope of public health monitoring and the discussions around the future of the COVID-19 Infection Survey.

12. In addition, we are developing a model to investigate the effects of NHS wait times on deaths. We will be publishing this on the ONS website and in a medical journal in February.

13. This month also saw the unfortunate publication of an **error in our International Comparisons of Productivity (ICP) National Statistics** release. The mistake occurred because of human error by ONS staff in ingesting data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development website prior to running our analysis. ONS staff from multiple business areas have reviewed the ICP system and identified no further issues, subject to a final check by ONS Quality Centre experts. Key users will be advised prior to the release of corrected data.

14. Work is also underway in collaboration with Cabinet Office to help measure the **economic and social impacts of Industrial Action**. Using both the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey for individual experiences and the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) for business, we can bring together insights with financial transactions, retail sales, footfall and other real-time indicators to consider disruptions to travel and work, leisure and access to health care services. An article is planned for later this month.

15. Beyond this, the **Veteran's Survey,** which was launched as a self-select survey last November, has had a tremendous response – achieving 24,000 responses against a 'target' of 13,000. We have also now had permission to contact prisons, for additional returns. We are looking at what we can take from this success, to assist in designing ongoing ad-hoc, and perhaps regular, social surveys.

16. In celebration of one year since the release of the **GSS Subnational Data strategy**, we are hosting an **event in Birmingham on 24 January** to celebrate and showcase ONS's developments to its local data, statistics, and analysis offer. This event is being hosted in conjunction with **Core Cities** who are an

organisation that seek to utilise large cities in the UK to help create a stronger, fairer economy and society. This will align with the publication of **Gross Value Added at Lower Level Super Output Areas level for the first time**, as well as further outputs looking at the night-time economy, and analysis on employment in Towns and Out of Towns, all released on the same day.

17. The fourth **Health and Economy Roundtable between ONS, HMT and UK Health Security Agency** took place on 9 January 2023. HMT presented a summary of work on the links between health and the economy, particularly inactivity. The Department of health and Social Care discussed their evidence base for policies targeting reducing ill-health related economic inactivity. This included interest in asking ONS to link the national waiting list dataset with HMRC RTI data to understand links between NHS wait times and economic inactivity. ONS colleagues will meet to discuss next steps to ensure ONS continue to support the evidence base.

18. On the IDS, the first **Super Early Adopters** (SEAs) onboarding sessions have taken place to support 30 users from four Government departments receiving access to census data for the first time. This makes the full dataset available to government analysts at a pace previously unachievable for Census '11. These users are in addition to the existing 27 existing users. The use of SEAs allows for the programme to resolve emerging challenges and it also provides user feedback, so that exploratory projects and high impact research projects involving linked data are refined in the first quarter of 2023.

Professor Sir Ian Diamond, National Statistician, January 2023

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

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.
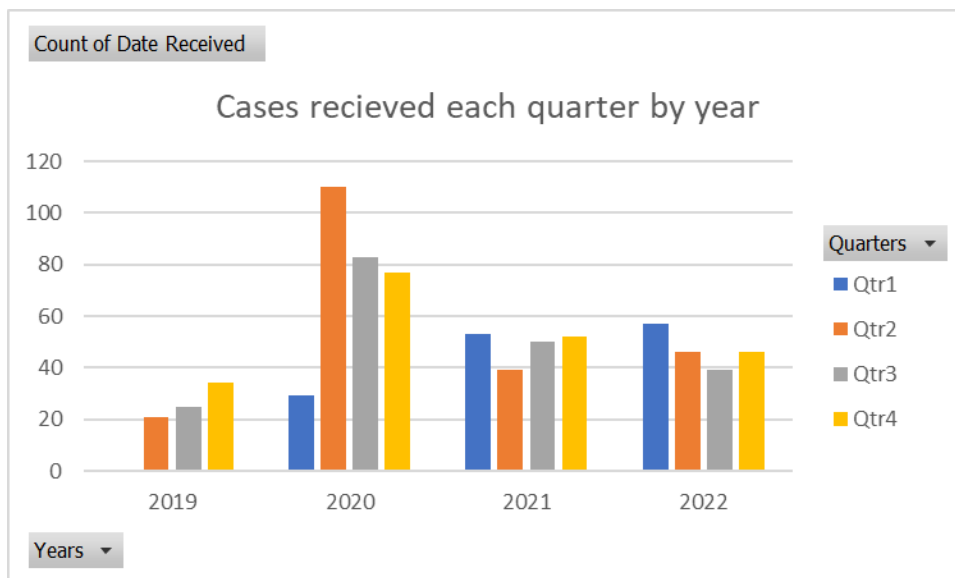
Discussion

2. Given the short number of working days between the last Board meeting and this one, there are fewer things to highlight than usual. Our main areas of focus since the last Board meeting have been:

    i. Draft business priorities: We are continuing to engage with stakeholders and ask for comments on our published priorities for 2023/24. We have had a range of feedback. One theme has been that we should seek stronger alliances with organisations who care about the quality of public statistics more broadly – that is, statistics not produced by Government bodies which are used prominently in public debate, such as sentiment surveys produced by business lobby groups. We will consider how we might extend our alliances around such "public statistics" (the Royal Statistical Society's new term for this phenomenon).

    ii. Police recorded crime: This information paper sets out our proposals to research and publish a think piece on police recorded crime statistics. This paper was discussed at the December 2022 Regulation Committee and the committee approved the approach.

Casework

3. Since the last meeting we have received casework raising concerns about pay rise costs, transport use, asylum back logs, teacher pay, and delayed discharges from hospitals in Scotland.

4. We made only one public casework intervention since the last meeting. Robert Chote replied to Dr Gulhane MSP on A&E waiting times. We also closed private cases on Scotland care statistics and inflation.

5. As requested at the last meeting the graph below shows the number of cases received since 2019 per year. Whilst we do receive duplicate concerns from the public, in 2021 and 2022 we received a substantial number of duplicate cases on two topics. The graph below shows cases received since 2019 minus 43 duplicate cases on ICU bed usage and 187 duplicate cases on a weights and measures consultation. The inflated duplication of cases on these topics were due to social media campaigns and do not represent the "normal" caseload.

6. Two key points emerge from these charts:

    i. the COVID-19 surge in casework in Quarter 2 2020 (Apr-June 2020) emerges clearly; and

    ii. the 2022 figures show that casework has settled at a higher level than the last pre-pandemic quarters (quarters 2-4 2019 and quarter 1 2020).

7. Whilst Q4 for 2022 shows a reduction in cases compared to 2020 and 2021 it is important to note that the cases we dealt with were much more varied. In both

2020 and 2021 COVID-19 was the dominant topic in our casework. Given the number of cases we had for COVID-19 we could often reuse or update previous cases and had a good ground level knowledge of the data. With the more varied caseload we have to build knowledge afresh for each case.

8. Specifically, in Q4 2022 we dealt with cases on Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act, renewable energy, Ofsted, A level results, academies, police numbers, the economy, NHS waiting times, pay, unemployment, housing, immigration, sex and gender, small boats, deaths, slavery and transport.

Home Office updates

9. I met with Matthew Rycroft, Home Office Permanent Secretary, last week to discuss correspondence on various Home Office cases at the end of last year. The meeting was very constructive, and he supported our principles of intelligent transparency. He is keen to drive this through the department and welcomed our suggestions around producing more responsive data releases on topical issues.

Issues on my mind

10. The main issue on my mind now is:

Recruitment: I am pleased to say that we have appointed Rob Kent-Smith as my deputy, to start in April. Rob is an experienced statistician, having worked on National Accounts in ONS. He is currently working in the Welsh Government on transport and infrastructure policy. He will be a fantastic addition to my senior team.

Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation, OSR, 18 January 2023

Regulatory Activities Dashboard   January 2023   Authority Board

Labour Market and Welfare

Compliance checks: ONS transformation of the **Labour Force Survey** (Phase 2) underway
PAYE RTI QA meeting with HMRC/ONS planned for January 2023 to share findings and discuss proposal to draft an assessment report.
Social Security Scotland removal of sex/gender question for disability payments discussed with Social Security Scotland Chief Executive. Discussion ongoing re regulatory approach
Systemic Reviews: Update blog for **Income-based poverty statistics** planned early 2023.

Population and Society

Assessments: **Scotland Census** continues with likely reporting in the new year. Interim correspondence between OSR and NRS published in November.
Measuring the population, plans for wider user engagement given the significant nature of the transformation programme.
Migration transformation ongoing. Next publication date for ONS is February 2023.
Compliance Check: **ONS mortality stats** aiming for publication in December
Casework: Concerns raised about the use of statistics on the backlog of open asylum applications.

Children, Education and Skills

Casework: Quality of the data presented in a recent **Oak National Academy** report on teacher workload and curriculum. Oak is a not an OS producer but is an ALB of DfE so have agreed DfE will raise with them. Query from a Channel 4 News journalist about **Ofsted figures on the proportion of schools rated good or outstanding,** no issue identified so shared useful contextual information. Investigating concerns about the **figures on teacher pay** quoted by DfE SoS Gillian Keegan during an interview.
Compliance Check: **Welsh Government School Workforce Annual Census** feeding into a wider review of this data collection.

Health and Social Care

Assessments: Re-assessment underway for OHID **Adult Oral Health Survey statistics**.
Casework: Letter published to MSP on A&E waiting times in Scotland. Investigating concerns about **vaccine coverage.**
Compliance Checks: ONS **Health Index** ongoing, reviewing findings with producers.
Systemic Reviews: Further rounds of user engagement, following up on **Mental Health** reviews.

Housing, Planning and Local Services

Assessment: **Statutory Homelessness in England statistics**: Continuing engagement in line with DLUHC action plan
Compliance Checks: Letter published for **ONS Housing Affordability** outputs.
Engaging with ONS, DLUHC and LUHC committee on **Sub-national data** developments, to support public understanding of levelling up.

Crime and Security

Think piece on **Police Recorded Crime statistics.** Proposal paper shared with Authority Board (annex to DG's regulatory update).
Assessments: Scottish Government **Scottish Prison population statistics** report published.
Compliance checks: Drafting letters for ONS **modern slavery statistics** and Home Office **National Referral Mechanism** statistics.

Economy

Assessment: **Post-Brexit ONS Economic Statistics**
Producer Price Index pilot assessment applying Quality Framework and speaking with key stakeholders.
Casework: DLUHC Council Tax Rebate Scheme statistics – speaking to DLUHC stats team.

Business, Trade and International Development

Assessment: Monitoring **UK Trade** Continuing engagement in line with ONS action plan.
Systemic Reviews: **Industrial Classification project work update for the** April Regulation Committee on ONS SIC consultation.

Transport, Environment and Climate Change

Assessments: **People and Nature Survey (PaNS).** Report published early Jan 2023
Casework: Ongoing **Salmon Stocks** statistics.
Compliance Checks: **Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals** underway.

Data and Methods

Internal work: Until we have more resource, our priority remains maintaining existing tools. Recruitment is ongoing.
Full Fact Tool: Based on feedback from across OSR, we have decided to extend our access to Full Fact's horizon scanning tool until March, to see if it can enhance our regulatory work. We will review again and decide on future options in March.
Review of data sharing/linkage: We're pulling together emerging findings from stakeholder interviews and will present these at reg comm in Feb Plan to publish a report in the spring 23 and currently working on first draft of this.

Insight

Intelligent transparency: We held two round table events in December with external stakeholders. Stakeholders were very positive about OSR's intelligent transparency principles, and we identified some areas for further improvement in our guidance. We are planning a third-round table within government stakeholders next.
Recruitment: Recruiting for a new Evaluation and Insight Manager is ongoing.
Insight Committee: We have recruited five statistical producers to join our Insight Committee, to suggest and shape insight projects undertaken by OSR. Their input will help us ensure we are working on issues of primary relevance to producers and help us to better communicate what we learn in a way that adds value for OSR and statistical producers.

Cross Cutting Issues

Policy & Standards

Designation refresh: Following user testing of designation messaging with ONS Comms we are developing proposals on the future messaging around the designation. Producers are piloting our new tools – five 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 refreshing our assessment approach, conducting pilot assessments and developing guidance.
Voluntary application and wider reach: We are 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. We are holding discussions with Ofcom to support their development of transparency reporting and share our thinking of TQV. We added the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities to our list of adopters for their Ukraine sponsorship scheme data. We now have 35 entries.

Research

Research Programme Overview: In collaboration with people across OSR, we are reflecting on what we know about public good to date (from research and regulatory work) and planning the future directions for the research programme.

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Excess Deaths Update

Purpose

1. This paper sets out the Office for National Statistics' (ONS) response to the high level of excess mortality reported across England and Wales.

Recommendation

2. Members of the Authority Board are invited to note:

   i. excess mortality continues to attract significant interest from a range of actors; and there are multiple, collaborative work streams to help with the understanding of excess death and its drivers; and

   ii. there is a continued high proportion of excess mortality as seen through deaths registered weekly in England and Wales (numbers of deaths) and monthly mortality analysis (numbers of deaths and age-standardised mortality rates).

Background

3. Building on the work presented to the UK Statistics Authority Board on international comparisons of excess mortality in October 2022, this paper sets out the latest insights and work programme to increase breadth and understanding of all our excess mortality analysis.

4. The ONS weekly death registrations publication has highlighted a resurgence in excess deaths in 2022 **.** Latest estimates (published Friday 20 January) show that there are excess deaths in terms of numbers of deaths but not in terms of age-standardised mortality rates. There has been coverage of these findings across several different media outlets.

Discussion

5. Several organisations release estimates of excess deaths in England. These are usually defined as the difference between the number of deaths expected and the number that were registered over a given time period. Figures for the latter are generally consistent between organisations, but expected numbers of deaths are often calculated differently, leading to inconsistent conclusions on trends.

6. [ONS](#) produce ad hoc excess mortality analysis based on deaths registered and baseline to a five-year average excluding 2020 but including 2021. We also include excess deaths as part of BAU publications such as deaths registered weekly in England and Wales and Monthly mortality analysis. We produce excess on both occurrences (with and without adjustment for registration delays) and registrations. We also calculate for number of deaths and age-standardised mortality rates.

7. Another producer, the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) produce a modelled estimate of death occurrences based on the number of death registrations in a given period and use the trend of 2015 to 2019. The model takes into account population changes, ethnicity, sex and levels of deprivation. This analysis is produced monthly, based on weekly data. The analysis conducted by EuroMOMO is also an estimated excess mortality over time model, using a baseline over the past 5 years.

8. The insight derived from an excess deaths measure is dependent on how you measure the baseline. Generally, most people agree that we are seeing excess deaths, but the extent is complicated to define.

9. The number of deaths in 2020 (607,922) was the second highest on record (behind 1918) and the age-standardised mortality rate (which takes into account and controls for changes in population and its underlying age structure) was the highest since 2008, so it was not used for the 2021 five-year average and 2015 to 2019 was used instead. However, we did include 2021 in the five-year average for the comparison to 2022 as the age-standardised mortality rate for 2021 was similar to 2015 which we still use in our five-year average, despite being a high mortality year.

10. The decision to not include 2020 but to include 2021 in five-year averages was made through a working group consisting of representatives from ONS, National Records of Scotland (NRS) and Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) and was implemented across the UK. Representatives of the Office of Health Improvements and Disparities were part of this group but decided to continue using a 2015 to 2019 five-year average.

11. We continue to investigate the impact the age structure of the population and causes of death are having on age-standardised mortality rates. We are seeking to understand how the changes in mortality rates in each age-group are feeding through to the age-standardised mortality rates.

12. We have been reviewing our current mortality analysis plans in light of the changing context to inform our priorities. We are responding directly and in collaboration with other organisations such as OHID.

13. We continue to monitor and publish weekly death registrations (numbers) and Monthly Mortality Analysis (numbers and age-standardised rates) publication, this includes:

    i.   weekly deaths contains information on deaths due to respiratory diseases, influenza and pneumonia and COVID-19;
    ii. weekly deaths also provides excess deaths by place of death;
    iii. monthly mortality analysis has the ten leading causes of death including comparisons to the five-year average; and,
    iv. December's monthly mortality analysis release contains extra tables on excess mortality for both December and year-to-date (i.e. provisional 2022).

14. We published international comparisons of excess mortality on 20 December 2022.

15. We also publish ad-hoc outputs on excess mortality whenever relevant, and we are planning on making this a more regular release (either quarterly or monthly) whilst there is high interest.

16. We are investigating topics of interest, for example heat-periods (with the UK Health Security Agency) or deaths in private homes, as well as mortality displacement due to the pandemic (however this is now temporarily paused due to prioritisation of other requirements).

17. We are developing a model to investigate the effects of NHS wait time on deaths.

18. We published [Winter mortality 2021 to 2022](#) on 19 January, providing more insight into winter trends in a pandemic/post-pandemic time.

19. We expanded the international comparisons of excess mortality work with Department of Health and Social Care and GO-Science. Alongside the release mentioned above we published:

    i.   comparisons of international measures of excess mortality ([here](#)); and
    ii. comparisons of causal factors impacting international excess mortality before and during the COVID-19 pandemic ([here](#)).

20. We have established a temporary arrangement to provide early Management Information on weekly deaths with named people from the Joint Data Analysis Centre to inform operational decision making.

21. We are aligning our work with OHID resulting in a number of positive actions:

    iii. we produced a joint paper for Chief Medical Officer and briefed ministers on the methodology differences between our excess deaths calculations;
    iv. ONS are changing statistics to use 2021 mid-year population estimates for age-standardised mortality rates to reflect the latest population structure;
    v.   ONS created single year of age standardised rates to explore how this affected excess mortality; it made little difference to our conclusions. There are no plans to publish this exploratory analysis;
    vi. OHID are running models on a different selection of years, to measure the impact of year selection; and
    vii. we are working towards a joint paper providing a definitive shared view on best method to use to devise expected deaths.

22. The above all aims to come to a one-UK view. A technical working group is being set up to look at current measures of excess mortality. This is both cross-UK and cross departments.

23. Additionally, in response to cardiovascular disease (CVD) deaths and excess mortality there is a collaboration between the ONS and OHID and its work includes:

    i.   analysis looking to estimate the relative contribution of excess cardiovascular deaths to excess mortality;
    ii. presentation of the work to the "CVD Prevention Rapid Analysis: Excess Mortality Working Group" on 20 December and it was well received;
    iii. ONS and OHID are aiming to produce an initial report in February;
    iv. a comparison of findings between organisations will be produced (by the ONS and OHID); and
    v.   planning longer-term analysis using socioeconomic and demographic data from the census and more complex statistical models.

24. Finally, we are estimating mortality using NHS hospital waiting times. The initial analysis is nearly complete and indicates potential associations for further review. We are exploring this analysis further, looking to adjust for the weather and COVID prevalence and considering alternative modelling methods.

Next Steps

25. Different measures of available excess mortality can give different messages which can confuse users, however a newly established technical working group will harmonise methods.

26. Our priority is to bring together the work already completed, to increase coherence and understanding of the principles which underpin our choice of methodology as the authoritative measure of excess deaths.

Ruth Studley, Director of Health Analysis and Pandemic Insight, Sarah Caul, Head of Mortality Analysis, Surveillance of Health and Life Events, 23 January 2023

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Subnational Statistics and Analysis and ONS Local update

Purpose

1. This paper provides an update on the ONS's progress in delivering the Government Statistical Service (GSS) Subnational Data Strategy; providing necessary evidence and insight to inform key policy issues and decisions and supporting local decision makers.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Authority Board are invited to:

   i. note the progress made; and
   ii. offer feedback on the updates provided and the areas for future focus.

Background

3. Although the UK government's 'levelling up' agenda has triggered renewed interest in regional disparities, the need for better subnational statistics has been recognised for many years. Independent reviews of economic statistics undertaken by Allsopp (2004) and Bean (2016) both have sections dedicated specifically to regional statistics.

4. The Centre for Subnational Analysis, established in 2018 to give priority and focus to this within ONS, was the predecessor for what is now the Subnational Statistics and Analysis Division, formed in June 2021. During the summer of 2021, the division worked closely with the Levelling Up Taskforce in the development of the Levelling Up White Paper, advising on metrics, supporting the technical annex and providing quality assurance on the evidence base.

5. More broadly ONS has increasingly been able to provide leadership to the improvement of subnational data, statistics, and analysis across Government, facilitated by the creation of a Senior Subnational Data Group led by Sir Ian Diamond, and supported by officials from the Cabinet Office (CO), No10, and His Majesty's Treasury (HMT). This group, formed of chief analysts from across government, was tasked with improving the quality and accessibility of sub-national and local data, facilitating data sharing and coordinating analysis, as a critical enabler of levelling up.

6. The work of this group is reflected in the GSS Subnational Data Strategy, published by the Subnational Statistics and Analysis division in December 2021. The strategy aims to drive improvements across the entire statistical system, providing outputs that can be used to better inform policy decisions for Levelling Up. Within ONS we established a project (funded by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)) working in collaboration with the Spatial Data Unit in DLUHC to meet the ambitions of the strategy, including improvement in the coherence of data across the four nations of the UK. The interest in UK wide data is being driven through the Union Policy Implementation Committee and ONS is working with the Devolved Administrations to deliver improvements in key policy areas. The business case for the collaborative project, the Levelling Up Subnational Data Project (LUSD), was fully approved in August 2022.

7. The LUSD project sits alongside a wide range of work that ONS also does to improve subnational statistics. In May, we published a comprehensive [workplan](#) showcasing how ONS will deliver against the GSS subnational data strategy over the next 12 to 18 months. The LUSD project is working closely with the ARIES programme to ensure there is close alignment with our delivery partners and a 'One ONS' approach to delivering complex change.

Discussion

Delivering through the LUSD project

8. There has been notable progress in the four packages of work that make up the LUSD project. Firstly, we are transforming our economic and social indicators by increasing the granularity of subnational statistics to produce small area estimates, as well as improving the coherence of available statistics across the UK; this pillar aligns to the Ambitious pillar of the ONS strategy:

    i. we have improved the granularity of our Gross Value Added (GVA), Research & Development (R&D) business and public expenditure, and we are working to improve the Public Sector Finances estimates and Subnational Trade statistics.

9. We have set up the Levelling Up Data Analysis (LUDA) X-Govt platform (powered by the Integrated Data Service) and the governance needed for the platform to operate successfully. This package aims to improve the Sustainability of our work by building capability and capacity across government, reducing duplication through X-Government collaboration to innovate and provide a single source of truth.

    i. We have onboarded ONS and external Government department users onto the LUDA platform including DLUHC, 10 Downing Street and HMT, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, and the Department for Education (DfE), and built a strong collaborative network of platform users, with regular user group meetings held to gather feedback and user requirements.

    ii. We have initiated the Similar Local Authorities (LAs) project: cluster analysis of LAs against each of the individual missions and the overall headline metrics. This offers local decision makers the opportunity to collaborate with other LAs, potentially through ONS Local. It may also support policy evaluation through having a ready-made 'control' group if we can establish consistent groups of similar LAs.

    iii. Alongside this, Explore Subnational Statistics (ESS) is an improved digital dissemination service to understand local areas better across the UK, helping users find, visualise, compare and download a wide range of subnational statistics in one place. We launched the Subnational indicators explorer (ESS Alpha prototype) alongside Levelling Up White Paper in February 2022, to widespread positive stakeholder feedback, and we update the indicators quarterly. There are currently more than 30 indicators, broadly in line with LU metrics, from publicly available data sources produced by ONS, DLUHC, DfE, Ofsted, the Department for Transport, the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, Ofcom, and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency.

10. ONS Local is our new DLUHC-funded analytical advisory service for local decision makers with dedicated analysts based across the whole of the UK. This

is built on experience from the Cities Analysis team, which sat within the Centre for Subnational Analysis and worked with Combined Authorities.

i. The first six to nine months of ONS Local has focused on designing this Radical, Innovative service, hiring the regionally and nationally dispersed team, and understanding from our users in local government what they would like to support them better. For Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland, we will have Devolved Liaison Officers, who aim to provide a completely bespoke offer to support existing structures and networks in those nations, ensuring we provide an Inclusive service.

ii. We have led a range of engagement and consultation activities across local government to develop and co-design our service offer with users. This, to date, has included inviting over 300 key stakeholders to hybrid roundtable events to gather new ideas and feedback, engaging with each of the English Mayoral Combined Authorities through over 40 bilateral meetings, sharing updates in subnational data and analysis via our monthly newsletter, and hosting six webinars as part of our new "ONS Local presents" series.

iii. The ONS Local team are already delivering impact for local government partners. For example, in the Greater London Authority, we have produced bespoke analysis on creative industries in London to support the evaluation of creative enterprise zones and inform future funding strategy.

11. We are conducting Innovative research and expanding the use of new and administrative data sources, data science and methodology delivering new UK wide and local insights to understand places that are struggling. This work aligns to the Radical pillar of the strategy as we develop new innovative ways to better understand people's lives in the UK.

i. The Data Science Campus's Levelling Up squad produced UK-wide analysis to understand hyperlocal public transport availability. This work supports commutability, connectivity and access type questions and informs policymakers' decisions. We have used this work to support DLUHC's Deep Dives for Blyth and Liverpool in winter 2022.

ii. We have acquired a wide range of real time financial data sources capturing aggregate UK spending by households and businesses which allow for regional breakdown and comparisons. This data was used to inform key policy issues such as cost of living (income deprivation rate by LA) and to estimate the economic impact of unexpected events (e.g., State Funeral).

Wider developments and next steps

12. These new developments sit alongside a wide range of other subnational statistics and analysis that we continue to deliver and improve. Taken together these provide a comprehensive suite of insight for local areas. Some of the recent highlights include:

i. new experimental statistics on housing affordability (including Scotland for the first time), energy efficiency of housing, UK house building (Local authority level data across the UK) and private rental affordability (including Wales and Northern Ireland);

ii. experimental data on Local Businesses that carry out international trade in services 2020, subnational Trade in Services and Trade in Goods with 2021 data and timeseries;

iii.   published experimental estimated value of exports and imports of goods and services for 2020 for International Territory Levels 1, 2 and 3, and city regions and experimental subnational foreign direct investment inward and outward positions, earnings and flows statistics;

iv.   new indictors and analysis of UK job quality, supporting the evidence for the Levelling Up Well-being mission;

v.   Health Index tool to help people to understand the health of their local populations, by combining data from over fifty data sources to produce a single independent measure of health, available down to local authority level; and

vi.   the interactive Census maps which allow you to choose from a range of variables and see patterns at a glance across the country or at a local neighbourhood level.

13. Bringing all these developments together ONS co-hosted a conference with Core Cities in Birmingham on 24 January to celebrate what had been achieved in the year since the GSS Subnational Data Strategy. The event showcased the achievements from across the office in the subnational space, as well as how local users use our outputs. It also gave a spotlight to three outputs published that day:

i.   GVA data at Lower Layer Super Output Areas level aims to give a better understanding of hyper-local economy from the perspectives of both businesses and households. Producing data in 'building block' units allows users to create their own bespoke, flexible geographical areas – ones that matter to them – for analysis. These can then provide insights on regional disparities in productivity that will inform DLUHC's and policymakers' decisions.

ii.   New analysis on the Night-Time Economy provides new insight on its importance and the differences across the country.

iii.   An output extending our Towns and High streets analysis to out-of-town areas. Being able to identify the location of business and employment growth more accurately will help policymakers consider the drivers behind high employment growth in out-of-town locations, the impact of this on towns and cities, and how policy might respond to this.

14. Looking forwards, we will continue to focus on what is most important to our users, both in local and central government and beyond. We will continue supporting the Levelling Up missions on R&D, Well-being, and Pride in Place, and continue to build our offer to stakeholders in the regions and nations through ONS Local and our Devolved Liaison Officers. Over the next three to six months, our key focuses will be:

i.   Using the Longitudinal Education Outcomes data to investigate the effect of place characteristics on geographic mobility across Towns and Cities to follow geographical trends as people move around the country. This will help us build an understanding of places and the impact that educational outcomes and geographic mobility have on the workforce available there.

ii.   Performing cluster analysis of similar LAs against each of the individual missions and the overall headline metrics. This will offer local decision makers the opportunity to collaborate with other LAs, potentially through ONS Local, and will also support policy evaluation giving a ready-made 'control' group.

iii.   Improving UK-wide regional estimates of business R&D statistics and public funded R&D, producing new breakdowns of geography, to enable more accurate measurement of the impact of policy interventions and monitor progress.

iv.   Provide a recommendation on the measures of national well-being, after a review and consultation period in 202, to ensure we are measuring what really matters to people's quality of life.

v.   Continuing to provide data, analysis, and visualisations for requests on the Pride in Place mission and work with DLUHC to develop suitable metrics.

vi.   Using administrative data, central and local government expenditure data, and existing local authority data to assess the feasibility of a local authority level view of the public finances to provide key input for debates about spatial inequalities.

vii.   ONS Local will build on its consultative work with each region of England with further roundtables in Q1 2023 and begin agreeing work plans with key local government stakeholders, as well as developing our service offer to each of Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland, in close collaboration with the National Statisticians of each nation.

Conclusion

15. We are making excellent progress against the ONS subnational workplan and meeting the ambitions of the GSS subnational data strategy, as well as supporting DLUHC through our collaboration. We have successfully grown the team across the UK and are working with an extensive range of central government and local stakeholders to ensure we are having a noticeable impact, meeting the user needs, adding value to the analytical community and policy makers and ultimately providing the data and insights for decision makers that can make a difference to citizens right across the UK.

Liz McKeown, Director Public Policy Analysis; Emma Hickman, Deputy Director, Subnational Statistics and Analysis; and Libby Richards, Deputy Director, ONS Local and Devolved Liaison Officers, 18 January 2023

The UK Labour Market post-pandemic

Purpose
1. This paper looks at recent trends affecting the UK labour market, particularly economic inactivity, and the key role ONS is playing in developing the evidence base to inform key government policies.

Recommendations
2. Members of the Authority Board are asked to consider the evidence base developed by the ONS on economic inactivity and to advise on where additional analysis would be helpful.

Background
3. In some ways, the UK labour market has been far more resilient than expected through the COVID-19 pandemic. Unemployment has not increased anywhere near as much as predicted and has recently been close to record lows; we have also seen redundancies at historically low levels. However, employment is below where it was at the start of 2020 with one of the big drivers being the increase in the number of people no longer working or looking for work (the "economically inactive"), driven by those aged 50 and over.

4. Most advanced economies had an increase in inactivity during the pandemic. However, the UK is one of the few to still be experiencing this participation challenge. This sharp reduction in labour supply has contributed to record levels of job vacancies and businesses facing a shortage in workers that is widely perceived to be an important factor in holding back economic growth in the medium term.

5. As a result, economic inactivity is a focus for government policy with the aim to increase the number of people returning to the workforce and to retain those currently employed. Indeed, the Prime Minister has recently launched a review on the topic with findings and a response to them expected in the Spring 2023 budget. The ONS is playing a key role in providing the evidence base on the topic and has been engaging and advising (including at Ministerial level) right across Whitehall.

Discussion
6. The latest information on the labour market, for September to November 2022 shows that employment (16-64) is 268,000 below the level it was pre-pandemic. For the same age cohort and over the same period, there are 575,000 more people economically inactive, of which 308,000 are between 50-64. Two reasons dominate for this extraordinary increase in the number of people economically inactive – retirement and ill health.

7. We very quickly stood up a survey to understand the motivations of those aged 50 and over who have left the labour market to help the government development policy. The survey has so far been conducted twice (February 2022 and August 2022). We found the vast majority who left the Labour Market did so sooner than expected with the main reasons retirement, ill health and a change in lifestyle. In terms of being tempted to return, far more of those in their 50s told us they could be tempted in the most recent survey (72 per cent) compared with the first (58

per cent), perhaps reflecting the cost of living challenges; the vast majority (close to 90 per cent) did not, though, want to return full time. Flexible working patterns are clearly a critical factor that could tempt people to return to the workforce whether that is working at home, choices about the hours worked and being able to fit around caring; good pay became a more important factor in the second survey, again perhaps reflecting the cost of living squeeze.

8. We have also looked at how demographic changes have contributed to the change in economic inactivity, and we see that changes in demography account for the increased inactivity for the youngest (16-17) and the oldest (60-64) cohorts but not the key 45-59 one. In addition, it is projected that an ageing population combined with this change in behaviour (of disengaging with the Labour Market) continues, it is estimated that between Jul-Sep 2022 and 2026, the number of people inactive could increase by close to 300,000. You can therefore see why addressing economic inactivity is such a key topic for government policy.

Conclusion

9. The ONS is playing a key role in informing a key government policy. It is clear that addressing ill health and encouraging those over 50 to return to the Labour Market (and to retain those who remain in the workforce) is important and that the availability of flexible working patterns will be key in that. In addition, being 'policy prepared' for the large increase in those 16-20 over the next three years also seems important.

Darren Morgan, Director, Economic Statistics Production and Analysis, 17 January 2023

Integrated Data Service – Update

Purpose

1. This paper provides an update on the progress of the Integrated Data Programme (IDP), responsible for the delivery of the Integrated Data Service (IDS).

Recommendations

2. Members of the Authority Board are invited to note:

   i.   progress against programme milestones;
   ii. additional improvements made to ensure reporting reflects progress the IDS is making when it comes to users, data, and analytical projects.

Background

3. The IDP plans to enter public beta service in March 2023, with tactical activity underway to meet key deliverables and secure cross-government buy-in and support for the IDS.

Discussion

4. Updates of relevance include:

   i.   additional improvements on the information and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) provided to the board has been made; and
   ii. programme delivery confidence assessment remains Amber.

Ensuring consistency and confidence in the IDP's KPIs

5. The KPI dashboard presents the current and historic numbers of projects, users, datasets, organisations and collaborative projects and how these have changed over time to track monthly progress. Going forward, this dashboard will be updated each month to inform the board on progress against the programme's key deliverables.

6. The dashboard provides users with interactive visualisations, allowing cutting and slicing of data based on characteristics of the data (e.g., user accreditation status, project status, data provider etc.) The performance management team are currently working on adding a projected forecast to the IDS dashboard to provide greater insight of future usage.

7. This dashboard will also be developed further for the next Authority Board to provide:

   i.   a longitudinal view of users, including forecasts;
   ii. the number of datasets from a longitudinal perspective, the present and the expected forecast in the upcoming months; and
   iii. count of projects and their alignment to some of governments top priorities.

8. Further updates and improvements to the dashboard will also be made in alignment with future KPI priorities. The team will provide a bespoke session to go through the different aspects of the dashboard for clearer interpretation.

Milestone progression

9. Programme delivery remains on track. All milestones are currently undergoing RAG rating, which will be reflected in the February board update.

10. The programme is preparing for the Infrastructure and Projects Authority Gate Review 4 which will commence from 20 February.

11. The programme remains on track to achieving Digital Economy Act accreditation for March 2023, with 95 per cent of evidence received and 85 per cent of initial evidence assurance check completed and ready for submission at the end of the month.

Progress on onboarding new users and data assets into IDS

12. The programme successfully onboarded 28 users from three Government organisations on 10 January, in addition to the existing 26 existing service users. Two additional SEA users will be onboarded shortly. This will allow the programme to answer emerging challenges and allow user feedback, so that exploratory projects and high impact research projects involving linked data are refined in the first quarter of 2023.

13. User feedback will be captured in a support forum which will drive further service development, demonstrating the programme's user-centric design.

14. The next tranche of SEAs will begin in February and will include users from HMRC and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. The programme has also reached out to the Department for Work and Pensions and HMT and will issue an invite to the Ministry of Justice, the Department for Education (DfE) and the Department for International Trade (DiT), subject to continued successful implementation of the security mitigation plan.

15. A project proposal has been received from HMRC and is being submitted to the UK Statistics Authority for routine approval. A timeline setting out plans for additional SEA projects and departmental access will follow in February's update.

Securing buy-in for the IDS: engagement update

16. The IDS presented at the CDDO's December Functional Leader Group (FLG) to promote the data capabilities within the IDS and how Other Government Departments can integrate the technology in the departmental infrastructures to create an interoperable system. FLG has asked for this to be refined and reviewed at the Chief Technology Officer council before this goes to the Digital and Data Board, a forum of Permanent Secretaries. Sir Ian Diamond attended the Digital and Data Board in December to emphasise the importance and value of regular data sharing across government departments, which was met with collective enthusiasm by the board.

17. Osama Rahman, Director of the ONS, Data Science Campus, will be promoting the new IDP Analytical Advisory Group in the January, Departmental Directors of Analysis meeting. The group will support collaboration in data sharing and analysis to enable improved, evidence-based decision making and the inaugural meeting for the IDP Analytical Advisory Group will be held in February.

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