

**UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY**

***Minutes***

**Thursday 30 April 2026**

**London Office**

**Hybrid Meeting**

**Members Present**

Penny Young (Chair)

Dr. Jacob Abboud

Peter Barron

Ed Humpherson

Professor Dame Carol Propper

Professor Sir David Spiegelhalter

Professor Mairi Spowage

Dr. Sarah Walsh

**Other Attendees**

James Benford

June Bowman

Kirsty Campion (for item 10)

Lucinda Eggleton (for item 6)

Mary Gregory

Sarah Jennings (for items 10 and 11)

Sarah Moore

James O'Brien (for items 10 and 11)

Natalie Tarr (for item 10)

Tom Taylor

**Apologies**

Darren Tierney

**Secretariat**

Sally Jones

Tom Marsh

## **1. Apologies**

- 1.1 Apologies were noted from Darren Tierney.

## **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 26 March were agreed.

## **4. Report from the Authority Chair [SA(26)25]**

- 4.1. The Chair reported on her activities since the Board last met. The recruitment process for two independent members of Regulation Committee had concluded with the appointment of Darren Morgan, who had attended his first meeting on 23 April, and Professor Sir David Spiegelhalter, whose term would commence on 1 June following his term ending as a Non-executive Director in May.

## **5. Report from the Permanent Secretary [SA(26)26]**

- 5.1. The report from the Permanent Secretary was noted in his absence. James Benford and Mary Gregory additionally highlighted the following:

- i. the second quarterly update on the Economic Statistics Plan (ESP) and Survey Improvement Enhancement Plan (SIEP) had been published with feedback from stakeholders noting the transparency of reporting and welcoming the waiting room concept;
- ii. the Internal Audit Report on ESP had been shared with the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) ahead of discussion at its meeting on 14 May. The report concluded with limited assurance, which highlighted the complexity of the work and where the programme is in its development. ONS had separately undertaken an independent review of ESP which combined with broader lessons learned on change management from previous ONS programmes. The appointment of a Director for Economic Statistics Improvement would also support ONS mature in its approach to complex change;
- iii. the next ESP/SIEP update ONS would reset the recovery plans, bringing together the end to end view across surveys and production to ensure greater delivery predictability and realistic timelines;
- iv. the approach to administrative based population estimates statistics at a local level with work ongoing to develop an improvement action plan;
- v. the results of the first quarterly ONS Pulse Survey, which had been set up to help measure progress against people priorities in between People Surveys, showed progress across many of ONS's people priorities.

- 5.2. Members discussed the performance report and highlighted the increased number of overdue internal audit actions since the last report. It was clarified that some had already been completed since papers had been issued and there was no longer an increase in the number. The Board highlighted the importance of timely completion of audit actions noting that ARAC would discuss further at its next meeting. It was noted that business survey performance reflected a mixed approach with some, not all, business surveys, mandated.

- 5.3. The Board noted the second quarterly publication of delivery progress of ESP/SIEP and progress made.

## **6. Report from the National Statistician's Office [SA(26)27]**

- 6.1. Lucinda Eggleton provided an update on activities across the National Statistician's Office (NSO) highlighting that Darren Tierney would be attending the next meeting of the National Statistician's Inclusive Data Advisory Committee to discuss the recent announcements by ONS on prioritisation and potential implications for the inclusiveness of key data sources. James Benford had visited Eurostat to discuss opportunities for collaboration on economic statistics and Artificial Intelligence readiness. James Benford reported on the opportunities for

shared learning noting that discussions had included ONS's achievement on use of AI classification.

- 6.2. The Board noted the progress made in driving response to the UK Statistics Assembly, which had been recognised by the Deputy Heads of the Government Statistical Service. The Board noted thanks for ongoing work by the GSS harmonisation team on the development of a harmonised standard for data collection on sex, following detailed discussion by a number of NEDs. The Chair had attended the Inter Administration Committee held at the Northern Ireland Statistics Research Agency, which had considered the system wide approach to coherence. Members noted that NSO colleagues should liaise with OSR given the extensive work already undertaken by OSR on comparable UK wide data.

## **7. Report from the Director General for Regulation [SA(26)28]**

- 7.1. Ed Humpherson updated the Board on the work by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) since the last meeting focusing his report around OSR's strategic themes: OSR as a credible and rigorous regulator, system catalyst and public use of statistics.
- 7.2. OSR had considered its regulatory work on ONS population statistics following ONS's change in approach to Administrative Based Population Estimates, and highlighting the outcomes of the regulatory review OSR had recently undertaken a compliance review of ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates. The review highlighted concerns around the quality of subnational estimates. The draft report had been shared with ONS and would be published after the upcoming elections.
- 7.3. OSR had published a statement: Understanding National Health Service planned care waiting times statistics across the UK, which had been a recurring theme during the local election period. The statement noted the difficulty of making comparisons of health data across the UK and that it was incumbent on political figures to use data and statistics responsibly and not risk misleading the public, especially on matters of high public interest.
- 7.4. The Board heard that OSR had received its first piece of casework on harmonisation of ethnicity standards. It was noted that the next DG update to the Board in May would reference the Northern Ireland Labour Market Statistics.
- 7.5. The Board discussed a specific piece of casework relating to misleading references to the increase in the number of people in receipt of Universal Credit by Shadow Cabinet members. The Board agreed the importance of responding publicly before the upcoming elections if feasible.

## **8. Report from the Chair of the Regulation Committee**

- 8.1. The Chair reported on the work of the Regulation Committee, which had last met on 23 April 2026
- 8.2. The Committee had considered:
  - i. OSR's compliance report on the ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates and approved the report noting the need for consideration on handling regarding any accreditation decision for local level estimates. It was agreed that the Population Statistics System Committee (subcommittee of the Authority Board) would oversee ONS's implementation of recommendations providing an additional layer of assurance and oversight;
  - ii. OSR's response to ONS's Economic Statistics quarterly update, noting the progress made and remaining risks;
  - iii. members confirmed the accreditation of the 2021 Census in England and Wales outputs (excluding gender identity statistics); and confirmed the accreditation of statistics on the NHS workforce in Scotland;
  - iv. the work by OSR on Intelligent Transparency and the development of a minimum viable product of a Public Use of Statistics Profile to assess departments' compliance with intelligent transparency and standards for public use of statistics, data and wider analysis; and

- v. OSR's strategy evaluation plan and its approach to considering methodology as part of regulatory work.

8.3. The Committee had welcomed Darren Morgan to his first meeting as an independent member.

## **9. Communications Update**

- 9.1. Peter Barron and Sarah Moore reported on recent media coverage since the last meeting, which had been positive particularly in relation to the annual update to the inflation basket and introduction of scanner data. That said it was acknowledged that, given the challenges and context that media sentiment reporting would continue to be variable in the coming months.
- 9.2. The Board welcomed the improved external sentiment rating noting thanks for the work by the Communications Team, which would continue to be transparent in support of users and stakeholders. It was agreed that a substantive item on the longer term Communications Strategy would be scheduled for the May Board meeting.

## **10. Strategic Risk Profile [SA(26)29]**

- 10.1. Natalie Tarr and Kirsty Campion introduced a paper which provided the Board with an updated strategic risk profile following separate workshops with NEDs and ONS Executives. The refreshed strategic risk profile had also been considered by ONS Executive Committee (ExCo) and the ARAC.
- 10.2. The Board heard that a major transformation of the risk profile was not being proposed. There were a number of key changes to risk articulation and risk appetite ranges including: a new strategic risk around the delivery of Census 2031; closure of the quality management framework risk as the framework forms part of the quality strategic risks; a rearticulation of user needs risk and an increase in appetite range reflecting ONS's more open approach to making prioritisation decisions; splitting of the finance risk into two – one in relation to finances and the other in relation to delivery of strategic ambition; and a rearticulation of the data risk. The Authority wide overarching risk had been rearticulated to cover oversight and assurance of official statistics alongside independence. This risk would have three supporting pillars (ONS, GSS and OSR) with each owning relevant controls. A recent workshop with GSS Deputy Heads identified some areas for control which would feed into this risk.
- 10.3. With regard to the risk profile the People strategic risk had returned to appetite as a result of improvements in culture and resourcing, following discussion by the People Committee. It was acknowledged that both the quality economic statistics and technological resilience strategic risks would likely remain outside of appetite for some time. The Risk and Assurance Team expected a number of risks would return to appetite within a few months and reported an improved position.
- 10.4. Members discussed the update. The following points were made in discussion:
  - i. members agreed with the proposed changes to the Authority's strategic risk profile;
  - ii. addressing common foundational weaknesses/themes such as governance and oversight of programmes and technological issues could help mitigate a number of risks simultaneously;
  - iii. the need for ARAC to test the improvements to the risk profile through new reporting by the Risk and Assurance team to the May ARAC meeting. The Head of Assurance and Head of Risk confirmed that they were assured by the proposed changes to the risk profile, noting that they needed to test the effectiveness of the controls as they mature, and if any proved not to be effective, in line with good risk management, some risks may move out of appetite;
  - iv. the overarching Authority risk could also include a control for the Board in addition to ONS, OSR and the GSS, given the failure of activities here could lead to lack of trust;
  - v. the rearticulation of the 'optimising value for users' risks aligned to strategic priorities could be considered in the context of ONS's mission statement, 'to deliver trustworthy, independent, high quality statistics that underpin the UK's most critical economic and societal decisions and inform the public'. Doing so would emphasise the point around prioritising statistics that underpin critical decisions; and

- vi. the value of introducing a trigger mechanism and escalation process for strategic risks reporting out of appetite for a period of time, noting ARAC's role in flagging risks to Board. The R&A team are currently reviewing their risk and assurance framework and would ensure clear lines of escalation are further built on.
- 10.5. The Board agreed the changes to the Authority's strategic risk profile including the rearticulation of the overarching risk, trust and independence which would be owned by the Permanent Secretary (until a National Statistician arrived) and overseen by the Board. It was also agreed that the overarching risk remains outside risk appetite for now and that the Risk and Assurance Team would consider how best to introduce a trigger mechanism for strategic risks to ensure the right level of oversight and challenge.

## **11. ONS Business Plan [SA(26)30]**

- 11.1. Sarah Jennings introduced the final draft of the 2026/27 2028/29 ONS Business Plan for approval ahead of publication in May. The draft plan had been circulated to members for comment in correspondence ahead of the meeting.
- 11.2. The Board heard that development of the plan had been a key focus for the ExCo and Senior colleagues in recent months. The aim of the plan was to clearly articulate ONS' workplan and priorities - what they would deliver - as well as being transparent about the challenges ahead for ONS in terms of its recovery. The three year spending review process had enabled ONS to look beyond the immediate and produce a three year plan. Engagement with colleagues across the organisation on the development of the plan, incorporated lessons learned outcomes from the activity undertaken in summer 2025, which had highlighted areas for development acknowledging that previous planning approaches could be improved. The need for stronger planning and prioritisation were also key themes reflected at the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee Inquiry sessions and by the Devereux Review. The approach going forward would be more disciplined incorporating a more mature methodology to sequence and manage complex change. Four main changes activities had been prioritised to be progressed immediately: Census 2031, the Statistical Business Register, Transformed Labour Force Survey and Content and Website Transformation. A new mechanism – the Waiting Room – had been introduced with activity only initiated when fully resourced and supported by agreed delivery criteria. The Performance and Change Committee, a subcommittee of ExCo, would have responsibility for oversight of the plan escalating to ExCo (and the Board) when required.
- 11.3. Members discussed the update. The following points were made in discussion:
- i. the value of the delivery assurance framework in place, which would help identify blockers to delivery of the plan;
  - ii. the need to review the Performance Overview section of the plan to ensure it reflected the extent of the difficult organisational context over the last year;
  - iii. the impact on core funding 2026/27 in relation to the Census 2031 programme ringfence. Discussions by the finance team were ongoing with HMT colleagues. The business plan might need to be revisited depending on the outcome of these discussions;
  - iv. a recognition that the plan incorporated a bottom up and top down approach – it would be important to monitor how the reality tracks plan through the year;
  - v. the need for clarity on the Waiting Room mechanism to ensure users and stakeholders understood the approach;
  - vi. more clarity in the way workstreams were allocated against outcomes and objectives including the role of an NSI; and
  - vii. strengthening reference to the role of the Authority Board in providing support, oversight, scrutiny and challenge to hold ONS to account on delivery.
- 11.4. The Board endorsed the draft ONS Business Plan subject to the comments made in this discussion. There was a need to adjust the tone of the plan to provide clarity on past and remaining challenges in terms of ONS recovery. In terms of public transparency it would be useful to provide more detail.

## **12. Any Other Business**

- 12.1. Professor Mairi Spowage informed the Board that she had been asked to Chair the Secure Research Service Strategic Governance Board in the absence of a National Statistician. She had also accepted an invite to join the GSS Leadership Development Programme Steering Group.

# UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

## Agenda

**Thursday 30 April, 11.45-14.45**  
**Newport Boardroom,**  
**Hybrid Meeting**

**Chair:** Penny Young

**Apologies:** Darren Tierney

**Attendees:** Kirsty Campion (for item 8), Lucinda Eggleton (for item 4), James O'Brien (for item 9), Natalie Tarr (for item 8)

**NED Session:** 11.15-11.45

10.05-11.10 45 mins	NEDs – ONS Direct [R.102] (ahead of the main meeting starting)	
1 11.45-11.50 5 mins	Minutes and matters arising from previous meeting Declarations of interest	Meeting of 26.03.26
2 11.50-12.00 10 mins	Report from the Authority Chair	SA(26)25 Penny Young
3 12.00-12.05 5 mins	Report from the Permanent Secretary	SA(26)26 Information paper
4 12.05-12.15 10 mins	Report from the National Statistician's Office	SA(26)27 Lucinda Eggleton
5 12.15-12.25 10 mins	Report from the Director General for Regulation	SA(26)28 Ed Humpherson
6 12.25-12.30 5 mins	Update from Committee Chair <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regulation Committee</li> </ul>	Oral update Prof Dame Carol Propper
7 12.30-12.40 10 mins	Communications update	Oral update Sarah Moore Peter Barron
12.40-13.00 20 mins	Break	
8 13.00-13.20 20 mins	Strategic Risk Profile	SA(26)29 Natalie Tarr Kirsty Campion
9 13.20-13.40 20 mins	ONS Business Plan	SA(26)30 Sarah Jennings James O'Brien
10 13.40-13.45 5 mins	Any Other Business	
11 13.45-14.45 60 mins	NEDs Session – Statistical Business Register Kate Davies	

**Next meeting: Thursday 21 May, London Boardroom**

*Chair's Report, April 2026*

**Purpose**

1. This paper provides the Authority Board with an overview of the Interim Chair's activity in April. We will have an opportunity under this item to discuss our priorities as a Board in the coming months.

**Review of recent activities**

2. On 7 April, I convened the Ad Hoc Panel for Assurance of Key Government Statistical Service (GSS) Guidance in the Absence of a National Statistician to consider progress on the development of a harmonised standard for data collection on sex. It was reassuring to see that the pace of the work had improved, in line with feedback from the Board. It is expected that the standard will be published by the end of July.
3. On 14 April I attended the Inter-Administration Committee (IAC) in Belfast and also used it as an opportunity to catch up with colleagues in the Devolved Administrations more broadly. IAC discussed the Blueprint for the UK Statistics System, Harmonisation Question Guidance and the Centre for Equalities and Inclusion Governance. It was heartening to see the level of collaboration underway going on across the nations of the UK. I confirmed that the Board is willing to support the Chief Statisticians as needed during the continuing absence of a National Statistician.
4. On 21 March I wrote to our responsible minister, Satvir Kaur MP, to seek approval for the strategy for Non-Executive Director appointments to the Board. I hope to begin a recruitment exercise in May.
5. On 20 April I attended a workshop, alongside my Non-Executive Director colleagues, to discuss the work undertaken by the Deputy Heads of the GSS to develop a GSS Risk Register. We will have an opportunity under a separate item to discuss how this work will join up with the existing UK Statistics Authority Strategic Risk framework.
6. Progress continues on the recruitment of the next permanent National Statistician. The panel hope to be able to make an announcement on the appointment in due course.

**Correspondence**

7. On 23 March I wrote to the Leader of Wandsworth Council, Councillor Simon Hogg regarding the presentation of council tax 'freezes'. This letter was in an advisory capacity against the Standards for Public Use of Statistics, Data and Wider Analysis.
8. On 25 March I wrote to leaders of political parties in advance of the May 2026 elections to ask their parties and candidates use statistics appropriately and transparently during the campaign.
9. On 25 March I wrote to Michael Marra MSP about claims which compare waiting time statistics in England and Wales, with Scotland.
10. On 2 April, I responded to a letter from Julie James MS following my intervention in March about the Welsh Government's selected measure for apprenticeship starts in Wales.

**Looking ahead**

11. The next meeting of the Population Statistics System Committee will meet on 20 May to discuss the Census Recommendation, the risk of non-response and the Office for Statistics Regulation's (OSR) approach to the Census and Population Statistics System.

**Penny Young, Interim Chair, 23 April 2026**

*Permanent Secretary's Report, April 2026*

**Purpose**

1. This provides the UK Statistics Authority Board (the Board) with an overview of activity since the last Board meeting on 26 March 2026.

**The business planning process is nearing conclusion, with numerous initiatives in place to minimise risk of underspend**

2. We are currently carrying out financial 'close down' activity for 2025/26 and as is usual at this stage in the annual cycle final figures for the year are not yet available. Our provisional view on the year-end position aligns with previous updates I have provided to the Board. This predicted surplus is at a similar level as that reported in 2024/25, but it should be noted that the organisation also benefitted from an additional one-off funding delegation from HM Treasury for the continuation of Transformed Labour Force Survey/Labour Force Survey (TLFS/LFS) dual run during 2025/26.
3. As previously reported, the key driver of the surplus was the continued over-optimism in staffing assumptions in prioritised areas. Whilst full time equivalent (FTE) levels grew month on month throughout the year this growth was at a far shallower trajectory than was consistently forecast. Investment opportunities were agreed in Quarter 3 to reduce costs in future years but their impact on expenditure was netted off by the continued lower than forecast salary expenditure month on month.
4. In advance of 2026/27, action has been taken to ensure that we optimise the funding available to us. We have increased our financial risk appetite from the current very cautious level which has influenced the recent pattern of under expenditure. Through business planning we are also taking a degree of measured financial risk from the outset of this year as well as maintaining a shortlist of investment opportunities to be deployed as circumstances allow but much earlier in the annual cycle.
5. This month, I have issued revised delegation letters setting clear expectations of all budget holders this year with a particular focus on workforce forecasting accuracy. The delegation letter is underpinned by a bolstered financial monitoring, sign off and challenge process with additional modelling and upskilling support being made available to help business areas improve.
6. Since March Board, significant progress has been made on business planning. We will shortly begin operating a Waiting Room mechanism. This is designed to help us focus our collective energy and resource on change we have the capacity to deliver. Our highest priority change activity will join our change portfolio, signifying that we will collectively prioritise effective delivery of those initiatives above other change ambition once we are assured that conditions for success are met. Other change activity will be placed in the waiting room, meaning that we are taking a conscious choice to reduce, delay or stop work which, while important, does not meet those conditions for success. We will then focus on testing whether a small number of Waiting Room items can be prepared for successful delivery – these initiatives will be in the change pipeline.
7. Through combining a more rigorous approach to understanding progress against delivery plans for our top programmes with a stricter discipline around what work we allow to proceed, it is my hope that we will also be able to act much earlier in the financial year to address any emerging risks of underspend. However, it must be re-stated that we operate on an annual fiscal cycle with budgets that are legal limits and no ability to hold or draw on reserves, so financial management requires delicate balancing through the year.

**Following a positive result in the ballot, our new hybrid working principles have been implemented, bringing an end to the trade union dispute**

8. I am pleased that both Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS) and Prospect members have voted in favour of our new hybrid working principles. These principles have now been implemented, and I will continue to report on how implementation is going. Colleagues in People and Places Directorate (PPD) are working on finalising a forward communications plan to further support this rollout.
9. At the same time, I have put in place a light-touch process to provide an overview of Senior Civil Servant (SCS) office attendance, to help with organisational oversight and reporting. I am keen that the SCS community lead by example when it comes to hybrid working, and a key part of this is ensuring there is clear and consistent visibility of where SCS colleagues are working each day. This helps our teams – and other colleagues – understand when leadership will be on site, support collaboration and engage more effectively.
10. The consultation for the long-term People Plan recently closed with over 350 colleagues providing written feedback alongside the local sessions held with directorates. People Committee have agreed to the six high-level priority pillars: employee experience, capability, pay and reward, organisational effectiveness, recruitment and resourcing, and leadership and management.
11. We have also launched the first quarterly organisation-wide pulse survey following People Committee endorsement. Each quarter will include a core set of questions to track experience and engagement, alongside a smaller number of rotating questions to allow deeper insight into specific areas. This quarter we have included questions on performance management to inform the development of the new approach.

**Work continues to minimise delivery risk across the portfolio, with a refreshed risk profile being proposed**

12. Six strategic risks are currently outside of risk appetite in relation to trustworthiness, user needs, quality of economic and population statistics, prioritisation, and technological resilience. Recurring key themes across the risk profile include continued reliance on business planning, a lack of clarity on the conditions for success of change initiatives, the need for better management information to support decision making and a drop in quality of strategic and directorate risk updates.
13. Once we adopt the refreshed risk profile, Strategic Risk 1 (SR1) 'User Needs' will be within appetite as we are willing to take more risk and have made a conscious decision to prioritise quality over quantity and are therefore unable to meet all user needs. SR2 'Delivery of Strategic Ambition' and SR9 'Quality Population Statistics' are expected to return to appetite in the next two months once business planning has been completed and communicated, as well as mitigations being put in place to address the risks related to resourcing and external data supply for population statistics. SR5 'Our People' has returned to appetite due to improvements in culture and resourcing alongside positive trends in metrics and assurance activity outcomes.
14. Across our portfolio, several programmes are reporting amber/red (Business Surveys Transformation Programme, TLFS) The delivery confidence for the Integrated Data Programme (IDP) remains amber at closure. Census 2031's delivery confidence remains amber/green, with the programme progressing and major points being met, however the ambitious ramp up needed to resource key roles in the programme continues to present a risk to delivery, though work is in progress to mitigate this. Reliance on scarce digital and data resource, and uncertainty over costs until procurement completes are the other main risks to delivery.
15. Of the 19 Key Milestones published in the Strategic Business Plan, 17 were marked as completed by the end of 2025/26. One, relating to co-ordinating and strengthening our

stakeholder and user engagement approach, remains red. The primary driver of this relates to uncertainties external to the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The 19<sup>th</sup> milestone originally in the plan relates to Trade and GDP statistics has been moved from March 2026 to March 2027.

16. External sentiment continues on an upwards trajectory, with March's green rating being the most positive month for sentiment since 2024. While significant risks remain around specific areas – notably the labour force surveys – recent coverage suggests the ongoing recovery work is being well received by the media. Coverage of the annual inflation basket update was the most prominent and positive media theme of the month, generating strong national, broadcast and specialist interest. Media outlets repeatedly used the basket to illustrate changing consumer habits and the relevance of ONS inflation statistics to everyday life. The coverage, including a feature in the Times emphasising the depth, longevity and credibility of our approach to measuring inflation, combined with numerous references of the introduction of supermarket scanner data, helped us reach a range of citizen audiences.

**We are continuing to make good progress against our recovery plans, with work underway to ensure greater deliverability predictability**

17. This month we published the quarterly Economic Statistics Plan/Surveys Improvement and Enhancement Plan (ESP/SIEP) update. We received a positive reaction from a number of key stakeholders who appreciated the openness of our count and welcomed the waiting room concept I mentioned earlier. The media coverage, whilst focused on the TLFS update as anticipated, was balanced and all picked up on our broader messaging about the progress we have made against the ESP and SIEP plans.
18. At year end, 67 per cent of milestones were completed with the publication reflecting the significant progress we have made balanced with the ongoing challenges related to the complexity of some of our transformation ambitions.
19. When we next update, we will be resetting the recovery plans, bringing together the end-to-end view across surveys and production areas and ensuring we have greater delivery predictability. This reset will be accompanied by comprehensive communications and engagement initiatives to inform stakeholders about proposed changes to the plans and associated governance processes.
20. This month, we announced that the earliest transition from the LFS to TLFS for our headline labour market statistics will move from November 2026 into 2027; a 2027 transition has always been part of our scenario planning and is now considered the most likely outcome due to the limited data availability. We have, however, implemented all agreed major design improvements to the TLFS – including data rotation, improved pay and earnings questions, and a higher respondent incentive – to strengthen data quality.
21. Monthly Business Survey performance is approaching historic highs, with a 74.1 per cent response rate, close to the pre-COVID peak in 2019. Targeted changes to ways of working enabled by a move off legacy technology have improved efficiency and outcomes.

**Darren Tierney, Permanent Secretary, 23 April 2026**

## *National Statistician's Report, April 2026*

### **Purpose**

1. This paper provides the UK Statistics Authority Board (the Board) with an overview of the National Statistician's Office (NSO), and wider Government Statistical Service (GSS), activity since the last Board meeting on 26 March 2026. The National Statistician's Report will continue over the coming months whilst recruitment for a permanent National Statistician is ongoing.

### **National Statistician's Committees and Panels**

2. The Dynamic Population Model (DPM) Subgroup of the **Methodological Assurance Review Panel (MARP)** is reviewing its scope and Terms of Reference (ToR) given the pause on the DPM work and the review of the future direction for population statistics. Any proposed changes will be reviewed and agreed by the MARP chair and the Executive Director for Population Statistics whilst there is no National Statistician in post.
3. At the most recent meeting of the **National Statistician's Inclusive Data Advisory Committee (NSIDAC)** on 31 March 2026, the Committee considered recent announcements of Office for National Statistics (ONS) priority activities and possible implications for the inclusiveness of key data sources. They agreed to invite the ONS Permanent Secretary, Darren Tierney, to brief them on this at their next meeting in June. They also considered progress towards Inclusive Data Principle 6 focusing on broadening the range of methods used to understand experiences across the UK population, drawing on innovative recent work from each country of the UK. The Committee was very interested in further opportunities to discuss projects individually in greater depth, promoting further knowledge exchange between Committee members and presenters, and follow up discussions will be organised.
4. The **National Statistics Executive Group (NSEG)** met on 31 March 2026 and considered a range of topics, including progress in delivering the UK Statistics Assembly recommendations, covering user engagement, granular statistics, use of administrative data, and UK-wide coherence. Members noted that progress is being monitored through a new tracker, but the level of progress remained constrained by feasibility and resourcing pressures across the GSS. The Group emphasised the importance of being clear with users about what can and cannot be delivered, calling for stronger central coordination and visibility of risks, which the NSO has taken on board. NSEG also noted plans for a public update in Summer 2026 alongside consideration of interim engagement activity.
5. The recruitment campaign for new **National Statistician's Data Ethics Committee (NSDEC)** lay members was set to close on Friday 17 April 2026, with the first interviews expected week commencing 11 May, but the campaign has been extended to 15 May to allow further applicants to express interest.

### **NSO Activity and Engagement**

6. A delegation from the ONS and Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) visited **Kazakhstan** towards the end of March 2026 to lead a regional workshop on quality and trust in official statistics. Delegates from all five Central Asian National Statistics Offices (NSOs) took part, reflecting a shared commitment to producing high-quality statistics and making effective use of administrative data.
7. Also in the last week of March 2026, the International Relations Team (IRT) supported delegates from the Surveys and Economic Statistics (SES) Environment Division at the

joint UNECE/OECD expert meeting on the **System of Environmental Economic Accounting (SEEA)** in Geneva. The aim of the SEEA expert meeting is to provide a platform for exchange of knowledge and experience on SEEA implementation and to facilitate coordination between all relevant partners in the OECD and UNECE regions.

8. A delegation from ONS visited **Central Statistics Office (CSO) Ireland** from 20-22 April 2026 to share experiences on labour accounts, infrastructure accounts, monthly GDP, supply use tables and digital trade. James Benford joined the visit for a day and was invited to the CSO Management Board meeting where they discussed common challenges facing both organisations.
9. At the time of writing, International Relations colleagues are working with James Benford so that he is ready for his visit to **Eurostat** from 27-28 April to discuss opportunities for deeper collaboration on economic statistics, including national accounts, large case units, and Artificial Intelligence (AI) readiness.
10. Following the United Nations endorsement of the **Standards for Official Statistics on Climate–Health Interactions (SOSCHI)** indicators, the Climate Health team have published an opensource R package called “climatehealth”. This package is available to all analysts via [CRAN](#) and [GitHub](#) and provides an authoritative set of tools for modelling climate-health impacts, helping to ensure consistency and quality of official statistics reporting internationally.
11. The **GSS Policy and Coordination** team successfully supported the Cabinet Office on its [response to recommendation 5 of the independent review of the UK Statistics Authority](#), which focuses on plans to tackle the challenge of comparable UK-wide data.
12. The **Analysis for Action** team (formerly the Pandemic Preparedness Toolkit team) hosted the Wellcome Trust at the start of the month for a progress update and to discuss approaches to maximising the impact of the work. Then week commencing 20 April 2026, the team hosted all project partners from Argentina, Malawi and Nepal at our London office. This was the first opportunity for the full partnership to collaborate in person. The week’s agenda focused on progressing the Analysis for Action website, planning stakeholder engagement ahead of the September 2027 launch, and sharing knowledge and experience with ONS colleagues.
13. The latest UK Census Committee (UKCC) and Inter Administration Committee (IAC) meetings took place on Tuesday 14 April 2026. An important topic of discussion for the NSO was the **GSS Coherence Strategy**, which looks at bringing together statistical outputs on the same topic to provide a clearer, more consistent picture of the UK. This is an important development in driving forward progress against actions that came out of the UK Statistics Assembly, and IAC endorsed the developing strategy.
14. At the same meeting, IAC also endorsed the **Centre for Equalities and Inclusion’s** proposed research plan and prioritisation, reflecting the GSS, systemwide relevance of the work this team is doing.
15. The Harmonisation team have been working with the Ad Hoc Panel for Assurance of Key GSS Guidance in the Absence of a National Statistician (convened by the UK Statistics Authority) to agree publication priorities for the **GSS harmonised standards**. An update on Harmonisation work on sex and gender identity to deliver evidence-based questions, and a statement on data collection guidance, is planned for May 2026. GSS materials apply across Great Britain and as we are currently in the pre-election period for the devolved administrations, we are not planning to make a public announcement before the end of this period. The Harmonisation team will attend NSEG in June to provide further updates to that group and continue to work with the Authority ad-hoc panel for oversight on research plans.

16. On 27 March, the Analysis and Methods team within the NSO published an analysis of the sociodemographic, health, education and employment characteristics of young people (aged 16 to 24 years) who were **not in education, employment, or training (NEET)** in England in 2021. These estimates are derived from Census 2021 data linked to administrative records on health, births, deaths, and employee earnings. This work was commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to inform the Milburn review into Youth inactivity.

### **Broader UK Statistical System**

17. A six-monthly update on progress with **GSS Vision implementation** was well received by NSEG at the end of March with agreement to run another annual survey in early summer across the community to complement wider metrics used to measure progress towards the GSS Vision, '*Strength in Numbers*'.
18. Work continues across the GSS community to implement the new **Code of Practice for Statistics** with many departments looking to publish their Statistical Workplans for the coming financial year with Heads of Profession (HoPs) sharing experiences at their quarterly meeting in March.
19. The Deputy Heads of the GSS continue to progress the **leadership development proposition** with positive feedback from both HoPs and NSEG. There is now a motivated group of volunteers from across the system who will make up a Steering Group for the programme with a first meeting planned in May.
20. The **GSS AI group** have met and are reviewing departmental guidance to assess gaps from a statistical viewpoint. They are also collecting unpublished policies from across the GSS HoPs community and considering how to share case studies and best practice whilst ensuring coordination with wider work across the Analysis Function (AF) and the Royal Statistical Society (RSS) (for potential training opportunities).
21. The **Chief Statisticians of the devolved governments** led an interactive panel session '*Looking ahead to 2026/27 in the UK Statistics System*' on 14 April with around 250 attendees from across the community.
22. The GSS has just launched the new [GSS Learning Hub](#). This is a central location for event sign-ups, useful links, and our catalogue of event recordings, currently containing 24 sessions from last year's GSS Conference, community calls and member sessions. New content will be added over time, an important resource for the whole community.
23. Following discussions with HoPs, we have consolidated key strategic risks facing the GSS covering areas such as loss of identity, weakness in leadership, erosion of skills, reduced capacity, technology and AI, and reputation. The draft **GSS risk register** was discussed with the Board on Monday 20 April, providing an opportunity to test the framing of these risks and consider alignment with the Authority risk profile. There was a good range of feedback which will be used to clarify and refine the focus of each risk, strengthen the mitigations, and consider how we manage and accept risks within current constraints. This will also be referenced in the broader risks paper later in the agenda.
24. Demand is proving high for the [Analysis in Government \(AiG\) Month](#) webinar sessions taking place in May 2026 with the theme '*Impact in Action*'. Sessions include those with AiG Award winners and keynotes from Authority Board members, David Spiegelhalter (Non-executive Director) and Ed Humpherson (Director General for Regulation). Over 2,500 tickets have already been booked.
25. The **Departmental Directors of Analysis (DDANs)** meeting on 16 April 2026 covered a range of important topics, including: how we can improve the support provided to arm's length bodies (ALBs), an update on the Strategic Data Roadmap and National Data Library, the updated Magenta Book, and planned work on National Scenarios.

**Lucinda Eggleton, Director, National Statistician's Office, 23 April 2026**

***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. I have framed this update around OSR's strategic themes to support a strategic view of recent activity and current priorities:
  - i. Credible and Rigorous: We will continue to be a credible and rigorous regulator by forming robust, clear and well-communicated judgements on compliance with the Code;
  - ii. System Catalyst: As a catalyst, we will continue our supportive approach to engaging with producers, and through this, set the agenda for system-wide improvement, demanding openness, responsiveness and innovation;
  - iii. Public Use of Statistics: To continue to be visible in defending the appropriate use of statistics in public debate, we will reinforce expectations of good information use and intervene firmly in cases of misleading or inappropriate use of statistics; and
  - iv. Enhance our own Trustworthiness, Quality and Value (TQV): We will focus on maintaining our independence and strengthening our capability and processes.

**Credible and Rigorous Regulator theme**

3. We have published a series of reviews, including two key reviews:
  - i. Compliance review of Treatment of Seasonality in Office for National Statistics' (ONS) Quarterly GDP statistics – we found that ONS has followed internationally recognised best practice in its approach to seasonal adjustment and made three recommendations to address the risk that early signs of change may not yet be visible in statistical tests; and
  - ii. Assessment of statistics on higher education, further education, apprenticeships and adult community learning in Wales, – we have identified several requirements that Medr must address before all six sets of statistics can become accredited official statistics.
4. We also published a Compliance review of National Health Service (NHS) England's Referral to Treatment statistics; Compliance review of Estimates of additional housing need; Compliance review of statistics from the Cyber Security Breaches Survey; and Compliance review of Abortion statistics for England and Wales .
5. In addition, we have published several blogs - most notably a guest blog in which Professor Sir David Spiegelhalter explores why trustworthiness, not trust, should be at the heart of statistical communication.

**System Catalyst theme**

6. We are developing our annual State of the System report which we will share with the Regulation Committee, Authority Chair, ONS, National Statistician's Office (NSO) and Government Statistical Service (GSS) deputy heads in June, for early July publication.
7. We continue to track engagement with the refreshed Code. OSR has engaged with around 3,000 people since publishing version 3.0 in Autumn 2025. Most recently, I presented to the Analysis Function Board on the refreshed Code of Practice (3.0), with particular focus on the Standards for the Public Use of Statistics, Data and Wider Analysis and to the Board of the Government Economic Service.

8. Three members of my team joined an Authority delegation to Kazakhstan, where they co-led a technical training session on quality and trust in statistics for Central Asian National Statistical Offices. I presented to an International Statistics Institute webinar on Quality Assurance.

#### Public Use of Statistics theme

9. We opened a further 18 cases before the end of the 2025/26 year, meaning a total of 167, a drop from the previous year's 219. We have 13 cases in 2026/27 as of 17 April.
10. During this period, we published letters from the Chair [to Rt Hon Eluned Morgan MS](#) and [Julie James MS](#) on claims about Welsh apprenticeship numbers. We wrote [a statement on statistics](#) from the Crime Survey for England and Wales. The Chair also [wrote to the Rt Hon. the Lord Udney-Lister and Sir Paul Beresford](#) regarding Council Tax increases, alongside a [letter to Cllr Simon Hogg](#), Leader of Wandsworth Council. We have received two private complaints in response to the Chair's letters on this topic, which raise concerns about the timing and nature of this intervention, and specifically whether it was impartial. I consider that OSR acted in line with our published interventions policy when handling this case but, in line with the UK Statistics Authority complaints policy, we are reviewing the case internally and will consider if it has wider implications for future cases.
11. As planned, we have convened an OSR 'election stand up' team to keep abreast with how statistics are being used in public debate in the run up to the Scottish and Welsh elections, and the local elections in England.

#### Enhance Our Own TQV theme

12. We have developed a draft OSR Evaluation Strategy and related Key Performance Indicators, which we presented to the April Regulation Committee and plan to publish shortly.

#### **On my mind**

13. I have set out what is currently on my mind below:
  - i. continuing to ensure we communicate our judgements in line with our ambition to be credible and rigorous;
  - ii. putting in place a credible and rigorous, but proportionate, approach to prioritising accredited official statistics that have not been reviewed for some time; and
  - iii. our regulatory work on ONS population statistics following ONS's change in approach to move away from the Admin Based Population Estimates.

**Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation, OSR, 17 April 2026**

***Strategic Risk Profile Update***

**Purpose**

1. This paper provides the Authority Board (the 'Board') with an updated Strategic Risk profile following strategic risk workshops and discussions at the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) on 12 March 2026.

**Recommendations**

2. Members of the Board are invited to:
  - i. review the updated Strategic Risk profile and risk appetite levels;
  - ii. review analysis of the wider Strategic Risk profile, with particular focus on risks outside of risk appetite; and
  - iii. review the analysis of the strategic risk owned by the Permanent Secretary, overseen by the Authority Board – 'Trustworthiness, Impact and Independence'.

**Background**

3. The strategic risk profile demonstrates the most significant risks to the successful delivery of the UK Statistics Authority priorities and objectives, owned by the Authority senior leadership. Following our emerging risk workshops with executive and non-executive directors, we have presented a refreshed risk profile for discussion. This was discussed and approved at Executive Committee (ExCo) followed by the March ARAC.

**Discussion**

**Strategic Risk (SR) profile refresh and risk appetites**

4. Whilst a major transformation is not proposed, there are some key changes to risk articulations and risk appetite ranges to draw to Board's attention:
  - i. a new strategic risk around delivery of a census (SR8) that provides value to users but also covers the risk of impacting wider business priorities;
  - ii. the removal of SR3 'Quality management framework' as the framework is now used as a control to support mitigating our quality risks through SR7 and SR9;
  - iii. SR1 'User Needs' – a rearticulation related to optimising value within our financial constraints. An increase in appetite range to cautious to open is proposed, reflecting that we are cautious in ensuring we optimise value for prioritised users, but we are more open to making prioritisation decisions as we cannot meet all user needs;
  - iv. SR2/3 'Finance / Strategic Delivery' – This risk has been split into two risks, one in relation to finances for the Authority and one in relation to delivery of our ambition for ONS. An increase in appetite for SR2/3 is also proposed to reflect our willingness to take more risk in relation to finance and delivery;
  - v. SR11 'Data management' – a rearticulation relating to the ownership of data, governance over sourcing, management, utilisation and the missed opportunity risk for efficiencies and quality improvements;
  - vi. SR12 'Technological infrastructure' – a refreshed articulation to incorporate a more forward-looking and organisational wide view around our architecture and incorporating the wider legacy risks beyond digital services;
  - vii. as we move into reporting against the refreshed Strategic risk profile, the controls which are still required from our 2024/25 SRs will be moved to the refreshed versions as applicable; and
  - viii. our overarching risk has been rearticulated into an Authority wide risk which will cover oversight, and assurance of official statistics, alongside independence. This risk will have three pillars across Office for National Statistics (ONS), Office for

Statistics Regulation (OSR) and Government Statistical Service (GSS), with each pillar having a local owner, Darren Tierney, Ed Humpherson and the National Statistician (once appointed).

5. The updated Strategic Risk profile includes the risk descriptions, appetite ranges and changes for each risk. We would welcome the Board's review of these both to ensure that they are a fair representation of the risks we face and the continued appropriateness of appetite calibration.

Trustworthiness, impact and independence strategic risk (SR0)

6. The overarching risk SR0 remains outside appetite since September 2025, at that time it was assessed as such due to the challenges related to trust in the organisation and outcomes of the Sir Robert Devereux review and Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee (PACAC) Inquiry.
7. Detailed updates on the controls for April are provided and report an improving picture, which tallies with the positive trajectory of the wider SR profile, whereby a number of out of appetite risks are moving towards in appetite.
8. Our communications control has moved to green with continued delivery of the Turnaround Communications Strategy. The media RAG rating has moved from Red to Green over the past five months which is a notable improvement.
9. ONS control on delivery of published improvement plans notes significant achievements in place in the last three months, it is acknowledged that the plans were ambitious and will be reset to align with ONS business planning.
10. OSR has recognised that ONS is reporting on its performance quarterly as required, has been more open in talking about errors and been clear and transparent with regard to plans for economic statistics and surveys.
11. Noting we are due to report under the refreshed profile as of May ARAC, we welcome the Board's view on the current and future score of this risk. Whilst this risk, in its current guise, is heading towards in appetite, the score should be reassessed as part of the rearticulation.

Wider Strategic Risk profile

12. Six out of eleven strategic risks are reporting outside of risk appetite. Once we adopt the refreshed risk profile, SR1 will be within appetite as we are willing to take more risk and have made a conscious decision to prioritise quality over quantity and are therefore unable to meet all user needs.
13. SR5 'Our People': Has returned to appetite due to improvements in culture and resourcing alongside positive trends in metrics and assurance activity outcomes. This evidence supported a slight reduction in score for this risk, bringing it in appetite but at the top end, endorsed by April People Committee however, some challenges are still to be fully addressed.
14. In addition to SR1, we expect to see the following risks returning to appetite within the next two months:
  - i. SR2 'Delivery of strategic ambition': Business planning has completed with decisions taken on our core priorities which are in the process of being communicated through April / May. Additional controls are being implemented to reduce the risk of underspend in 2026/27, including better forecasting; and
  - ii. SR9 'Quality Population Statistics': mitigations are helping to address the risks related to resourcing and external data supply, and the metrics show a generally positive picture. Risks remain, including uncertainties around business planning outcomes, current methods and data supplies.

15. SR7 'Quality economic statistics': There has been good progress in delivering improvements in quality, alongside a slight improvement in quality risk [Quality Improvement Plans (QIP)] metrics. Key risks and challenges remain, including the complexity of our systems and processes, our ability to resource the skills and capacity required, and dependencies on constrained resources. April's Strategic Design Committee endorsed a reduction in the risk score from 20 to 16, however, it will be some time before SR7 is likely to be back in appetite.
16. SR12 'Technological resilience' continues to report as out of appetite, with legacy remaining an area of concern. Work is underway to ensure there is a holistic understanding of the risks and impacts we face, the work which is already underway to address legacy, and whether residual risks are tolerable. ARAC will be informed on the progress of this through the SR12 strategic risk update.
17. Recurring key themes across the risk profile include continued reliance on business planning, a lack of clarity on the conditions for success of change initiatives, the need for better management information to support decision making and a drop in quality of strategic and directorate risk updates.

### **Conclusion**

18. Six strategic risks are currently outside of risk appetite in relation to trustworthiness, user needs, quality of economic and population statistics, prioritisation, and technological resilience; however, we anticipate many of these to return to appetite in short succession. This paper has highlighted some challenges that Board should be aware of including the importance of business planning, prioritisation and change, as well as legacy concerns. It also highlights the need for ongoing accountability, ownership and insights (including Management Information (MI)) to support managing risk and making informed decisions. The refreshed risk profile seeks to ensure we have a clear view of our strategic risks and how they are being managed and we invite the views of the Board on the profile and risk appetite.

**Natalie Tarr, Head Assurance and Kirsty Campion, Head of Risk, April 2026**

**ONS Business Plan 2026/27 – 2028/29**

**Purpose**

1. This paper provides the Authority Board (the Board) with the final draft of the 2026/27 – 2028/29 Office for National Statistics (ONS) Business Plan (BP) for comment and endorsement ahead of external publication on the Authority website in May.

**Timing**

2. External publication of the BP is scheduled to take place mid-May.

**Recommendations**

3. Members of the Board are invited to discuss and approve the final draft BP.

**Background**

4. Spending Review 2025 (SR25) provides a three-year planning horizon (2026/27–2028/29), enabling ONS to move beyond short-term, annual business planning. This Business Plan is the first to cover a three-year period and sets out how ONS will deliver its new Strategic Outcomes and Objectives across that timeframe. However, the reality is the position is dynamic, this is the start of that ‘journey’ and that’s a conscious choice we’re taking to address our biggest strategic issues of stronger delivery and clearer prioritisation.
5. The three-year SR25 period has enabled ONS to sequence work across that time frame, prioritisation our efforts on the most vital activity now, and delivering other work later in the period. This smooths demand on the organisation and optimises the use of resources over time.
6. The removal of programme ringfences (other than Census 2031) provides greater flexibility in planning and stronger control over deployment of our finite resources. Subject to Census 2031 costs and HM Treasury agreement to relax the ringfence, this creates an opportunity to develop targeted investment initiatives across the three-year period, supporting greater operational sustainability. A funded multi-year plan will also provide assurance to our stakeholders that we are addressing the challenges in our outputs and help rebuild confidence amongst colleagues.
7. Engagement with colleagues and lessons-learned activity undertaken during summer 2025 provided a clear signal that previous planning approaches were not as effective as intended. The need for stronger planning and prioritisation were key themes and recommendations of both the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee (PACAC) Inquiry and the Devereux Review.

**Discussion**

8. This year’s business planning adopted a new approach focused on prioritisation, affordability, and delivery confidence. Business areas first submitted high-level plans, which were then reviewed collaboratively through Director-level workshops to agree organisational priorities. These priorities will inform milestone development across a three-year horizon rather than a single year.
9. As part of this exercise, a new mechanism—the Waiting Room—was introduced to strengthen decision-making on complex change. It ensures change activity is only initiated when fully resourced and supported by agreed delivery criteria, helping to manage the overall volume of complex change at any one time. The Waiting Room process has now been developed and will be submitted to the Executive Committee (ExCo) for endorsement on 6 May. It is important to note that through the business

planning exercise, we have prioritised four main change activities to be progressed straightway. These are Census 31, the Statistical Business Register, Transformed Labour Force Survey (TLFS) and Content and Website Transformation. All other change activities that cannot be delivered within the Directorate's resources (money and people) must go through the Waiting Room (i.e. any change activity that needs extra money and / or enabling resource).

10. The business planning exercise was undertaken in close collaboration with key stakeholders, including Finance and the People and Places Division (PPD). ExCo was also closely engaged throughout, with regular updates and recommendations provided for information and endorsement.
11. In developing this Business Plan, a more streamlined approach was adopted compared with previous years. This reduced both the planning burden on business areas, by drawing on existing information where possible, and the associated governance, with the Plan submitted once to this meeting—the April Authority Board—for approval.
12. For assurance, please note that leaders across the organisation and the Non-Executive Directors have been given a chance to review, comment, and shape the version. There is a table showing key stages leading up to publication in mid-May.
13. At a high level, the main changes to this BP compared to previous BPs are:
  - i. the Business Plan places less emphasis on historical performance information and greater emphasis on planning content, including the new planning approach and future plans, resulting in a more forward-looking document;
  - ii. we have presented a more balanced view in light of challenges identified at PACAC and in the Devereux Review;
  - iii. Priority Outcomes have been replaced with the new Strategic Outcomes and Objectives, which form a core part of the organisational framework. They underpin the organisation's mission, provide clarity for decision-making, and act as the foundation for business planning, strengthening ONS's ability to deliver value and maintain high standards of professional practice;
  - iv. this BP explains the use of the new Waiting Room mechanism to ensure change activity proceeds only when fully resourced and delivery-ready, helping to manage the overall volume of complex change. This will support rebalancing the change portfolio and protect delivery of the organisation's highest priorities; and
  - v. we have aligned to other externally published documents (i.e. the Economic Statistics Plan and the Survey Improvement and Enhancement Plan) in addition to the Annual Report & Accounts.

## **Conclusion**

14. Feedback from the Authority Board will be addressed and incorporated into the final BP ahead of publication in May on the Authority website.
15. A placeholder will be included for the 2026/27 key milestones, which will be added in June following completion of the Business-level milestone stage of the planning exercise.
16. The Strategic Risks will be reviewed and updated following board approval at the end of April ahead of publication of the BP.
17. The section on the Statistical Business Register Project will be updated as appropriate with information from the ten-week review that is currently underway.

**Sarah Jennings, Strategy and Change, ONS, 23 April 2026**