

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Minutes

Thursday, 7 February 2013
Boardroom, London

Present

UK Statistics Authority

Mr Andrew Dilnot (Chair)
Professor David Rhind
Professor Sir Adrian Smith
Mr Richard Alldritt
Dr Colette Bowe
Mr Partha Dasgupta
Dame Moira Gibb
Dr David Levy (until item 10)
Ms Jil Matheson
Mr Glen Watson

Secretariat

Mr Robert Bumpstead
Mr Joe Cuddeford

Other Attendees

None

Apologies

None

1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

2. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes, matters arising from the previous meetings

The minutes of the previous meetings held on 18 December 2012 and 9 January 2013 were agreed as true and fair accounts.

4. Authority Chair's Report

4.1 The Chair reported on his recent activities, which included:

- i. a visit to HM Revenue and Customs to meet with professional statisticians and the Head of Profession for statistics;
- ii. a visit to the Home Office to meet with professional statisticians, the Head of Profession for statistics and the Chief Scientific Adviser;
- iii. a meeting with the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Charities, Social Enterprise and Volunteering; and
- iv. a meeting with the Governor of the Bank of England.

4.2 The Chair had replied to a letter from Rachel Reeves MP about the Prime Minister's interpretation of trends in UK debt levels.

4.3 Interviews had been held for the appointment of two non-executive directors to the Board and the results would be known in due course.

5. Reports from Authority Committee Chairs

Office for National Statistics (ONS) Board

5.1 Professor Sir Adrian Smith reported on the meeting of the ONS Board held on 22 January 2013. The meeting had considered the plans, priorities and budgets for ONS, and a draft strategy for ONS. Other issues discussed included progress with the Web Data Access Project and workforce planning.

5.2 The ONS Board had agreed to hold a discussion session to consider the wider questions of long-term operating models and income generation for ONS. All members of the Authority Board would be invited to this session, which was scheduled for March.

Committee for Official Statistics (COS)

5.3 Professor Rhind reported on the meeting of COS held on 24 January 2013. The meeting had considered the work of the Quality Improvement Fund, plans to deliver quality assurance across the GSS, the Monitoring Work Programme for 2013, and the work of the Good Practice Team. Current work regarding the provision of official statistics to inform the debate on Scottish independence had also been considered.

Assessment Committee

5.4 Professor Rhind reported on the meeting of the Assessment Committee held on 24 January 2013. The meeting had considered proposals for the re-assessment of the RPI, and the assessment of the CPI-H and RPI-J. It was expected that a draft Assessment Report for the re-assessment of RPI would be available for consideration at the March Authority Board meeting.

6. Retail Price Index: Next Steps

- 6.1 The Board noted that the new RPI-J price index, which had been announced by the National Statistician following a public consultation, would be published for the first time on 19 March 2013.
- 6.2 As had been previously announced, the Authority would undertake a review of the governance arrangements for price indices. It would also appoint an independent expert to lead a broad review of price indices to ensure that these statistics best meet user needs in the future.

7. Authority Strategy [SA(13)02]

- 7.1 Mr Bumpstead introduced a draft statement of the Authority's strategy, which had been revised following discussion of a previous draft at the December 2012 meeting.
- 7.2 The Board considered the revised draft and made a number of suggestions for a further draft. The strategy would be revised and published in due course.

8. ONS Strategy [SA(13)03]

- 8.1 Mr Watson introduced a draft strategy for ONS.
- 8.2 In welcoming the strategy, the meeting made a number of suggestions for a further draft. The strategy would be further considered at a future meeting of the ONS Board.

9. ONS Planning and Priorities [SA(13)04]

- 9.1 Mr Watson provided an update on progress with planning work to meet the financial challenges ONS faced for the next two years. ONS was in discussion with HM Treasury about this. The Board would be kept apprised of developments.

10. Authority Governance

- 10.1 The meeting considered various aspects of the Authority's governance, including the respective roles of the Committee for Official Statistics, the Assessment Committee and the ONS Board; the nature, and arrangements for consideration, of work carried out by the Head of Assessment's team that was not formal assessment; and the process for handling issues raised with the Authority.
- 10.2 It was agreed that proposals would be developed for discussion at the next meeting.

11. Public Administration Select Committee [SA(13)05]

- 11.1 The meeting noted a summary of progress with the PASC's programme of work on statistics. It was agreed the Authority's work in the context of statistics to inform the debate on Scottish independence would be considered at the next meeting.

12. Consultation on the Official Statistics Order (Wales) 2013 [SA(13)06] and the Official Statistics Order 2013 [SA(13)07]

- 12.1 The Authority Board noted that it had been consulted under section 6(3) of the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and welcomed the inclusion of those public bodies listed in the draft Official Statistics (Wales) Order 2013.
- 12.2 The Authority Board noted that it had been consulted under section 6(3) of the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and welcomed the inclusion of those public bodies listed in the draft Official Statistics Order 2013.

13. Monitoring Update [SA(13)08]

Mr Alldritt introduced a paper which reported progress with monitoring reviews and related work. The following three draft 'outlines' for monitoring reviews were agreed for publication:

- i. hospital waiting times;
- ii. use of official statistics by the financial services industry; and
- iii. ad hoc statistical news releases.

14. Assessment Reports for Approval [SA(13)09]

14.1 Mr Alldritt introduced a paper which provided a summary of current and planned assessment activity. At its meeting on 24 January, the Assessment Committee had recommended that the following assessment reports should be published:

- i. AR 243: Housing Statistics (Homes and Communities Agency);
- ii. AR 244: Statistics on Youth Justice for England and Wales (Youth Justice Board and Ministry of Justice); and
- iii. AR 245: Statistics on Rail Passenger Numbers and Crowding (Department for Transport).

14.2 The meeting approved the assessment reports for publication.

14.3 The Board noted that the Requirements made within nine previous assessment reports had been satisfactorily completed by the respective producer departments. Consequently, the Board endorsed the assessment team's recommendation that the nine sets of statistics should be confirmed as National Statistics.

15. Any other business

The next meeting of the UK Statistics Authority Board would be in London on Tuesday 5 March 2013.

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Agenda

Thursday, 7 February 2013

Board Room, Drummond Gate, London, 12:00 - 16:00

Chair: Mr Andrew Dilnot

Apologies: Mr David Levy

1	Minutes and matters arising from previous meetings Declarations of interest	Meeting of 181212 Meeting of 090113
2	Authority Chair's Report	Oral report Mr Andrew Dilnot
3	Reports from Authority Committee Chairs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ONS Board • Committee for Official Statistics and Assessment Committee 	Oral reports Professor Sir Adrian Smith Professor David Rhind
4	Price Indices: Next Steps	Oral report Mr Andrew Dilnot
5	Authority Strategy	SA(13)02 Secretariat
6 7	Office for National Statistics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy • Planning and Priorities 	SA(13)03 SA(13)04 Mr Glen Watson
8	Authority Governance	Discussion Mr Andrew Dilnot
9	Public Administration Select Committee	SA(13)05 Secretariat
10 11	Statistics Orders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh Government • Cabinet Office 	SA(13)06 SA(13)07 Secretariat
12	Monitoring Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft outline: Hospital waiting times • Draft outline: Use of official statistics by the financial services industry • Draft outline: Ad hoc statistical news releases 	SA(13)08 Mr Richard Alldritt
13	Assessment Reports for Approval	SA(13)09 Mr Richard Alldritt
14	Any other business	

Next Meeting: Tuesday, 5 March 2013, Drummond Gate, London, 12:00 – 16:00

SA(13)02 – Authority Strategy

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SA(13)02

Authority Strategy

This document has been published on the UK Statistics Authority website.

To see this document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/news/statistics-authority-statement-of-strategy.pdf>

SA(13)03 – Office for National Statistics: Strategy

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SA(13)03

Office for National Statistics: Strategy

This document will be published on the Office for National Statistics website in due course.

The document will be available at:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/about-ons/what-we-do/corporate-documentation/strategies-and-policies/index.html>

SA(13)04 – Office for National Statistics: Planning and Priorities

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SA(13)04

Office for National Statistics: Planning and Priorities

This information is included in the Office for National Statistics Business Plan that has been published on the Office for National Statistics website.

To see this document go to:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/about-ons/what-we-do/ons-business-plan/index.html>

SA(13)05 – Public Administration Select Committee

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Public Administration Select Committee

Information regarding the inquiry of the Public Administration Select Committee (PASC) into communicating and publishing statistics and evidence provided by the Authority to PASC can be found on the Parliament website at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/public-administration-select-committee/inquiries/parliament-2010/>

SA(13)06 – Statistics Orders: Welsh Government

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Statistics Orders: Welsh Government

The Official Statistics (Wales) Order 2013 has been published on the Assembly Wales website at:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-business-fourth-assembly-laid-docs.htm?act=dis&id=243264&ds=3/2013>

SA(13)07 – Statistics Orders: Cabinet Office

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Statistics Orders: Cabinet Office

The Official Statistics Order 2013 has been published at:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2013/9780111534519>

SA(13)08 – Monitoring Update

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SA(13)08

Monitoring Update

Monitoring Reports and Briefs are published on the UK Statistics Authority website at:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/monitoring/monitoring-reviews/index.html>

SA(13)09 – Assessment Reports for Approval

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SA(13)09

Assessment Reports for Approval

Assessment Reports are published on the UK Statistics Authority website at:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/index.html>