

## Minutes of Statistics Users Group Meeting

Date of meeting: **13 February 2017**; Concord Room, Cyril Le Marquand House

Present: Martin Richardson, *Chair* (MR), Auberon Ashbrooke (AA), Amy Bryant, Martin Delap, Jennie Holley, Graeme Marett, John Noel, Maria Pelin, Matthew Sutton  
Secretary: Duncan Gibaut (DG)

Apologies: None

1. **a) Minutes of last meeting (13 December 2016):** agreed and signed off  
[Action DG – upload onto the Group’s website](#)

**b) Matters arising:** none

2. **Julian Barber (JB) stepping aside**

JB was appointed to the Group in November 2016. However, he has subsequently (since January 2017) been employed, through an external agency, to undertake work on a specific project in the Statistics Unit, on a part-time basis for a period of several months.

Prior to JB being engaged by the Statistics Unit, the Director of Corporate Policy in the Chief Minister’s Department was consulted. It was agreed that during this period of engagement JB would not attend Group meetings or be involved in the activities of the Group.

3. **Health Intelligence Unit**

DG updated the Group on the proposed transfer of the Health Intelligence Unit analytical function from the Public Health Directorate to the Statistics Unit. Due to ongoing budget issues involving three departments (Chief Minister’s, Health and Community and Constitutional Affairs), the requisite Ministerial Decision remained unsigned and the transfer had not formally occurred. However, three members of the Health Intelligence Unit have been physically located in the Statistics Unit since August 2016.

4. **Letter to the Chief Minister – Potential Risk to Official Statistics**

The Group considered a draft letter to the Chief Minister, produced by MR and AA, requesting a meeting with the Chief Minister in order to raise concerns the Group had relating to risks to the quality of official statistics produced by the Statistics Unit.

These risks related primarily to:

- the increased responsibility placed on the Unit due to the transfer of responsibility for producing population health statistics
- increased requests to the Unit for statistical information from external agencies
- the current structure of the Unit from the perspective of succession planning.

Considerable discussion ensued. The Chair would return to the Group with a re-drafted letter for further comment.

5. **Summary of recent Statistics Unit activity**

DG summarised the recent publications and ongoing work of the Statistics Unit. He particularly pointed out that the Business Tendency Survey (BTS) had been re-introduced into the Unit’s work programme (for background see minutes of previous meeting, 13 December 2016). The report on the December 2016 round of the BTS was published on 8 February 2017.

6. **Next meeting:** **Monday 15 May 2017**