

Minutes of Statistics Users Group Meeting

Date of meeting: **11 September 2017**; Concord Room, Cyril Le Marquand House

Present: Martin Richardson (Chair), Auberon Ashbrooke, Amy Bryant, Martin Delap (MD),
Jennie Holley, Graeme Marett, John Noel,
Secretary: Duncan Gibaut (DG)

Apologies: Maria Pelin, Matthew Sutton

1. a) **Minutes of last meeting (15 May 2017):** agreed and signed off
[Action DG – upload onto the Group’s website](#)

b) Matters arising:

i. Letter from the Statistics Users Group to the Chief Minister:

Potential Risks to Official Statistics

The Group had sent a letter to the Chief Minister (dated 23 March 2017) requesting a meeting to discuss concerns it had relating to risks to official statistics produced by the Statistics Unit.

At the scheduled meeting a further funding issue would be brought up by the Group: DG pointed out that the budget transfer of £164,000 from the Health and Social Services Department (HSSD) to the Statistics Unit, as prescribed by Ministerial Decision, was insufficient to cover the staff costs of those employees transferring from HSSD and who were to be paid from the Statistics Unit budget

ii. Funding requests

DG had informed the Group at the 15 May 2017 Group meeting that he had submitted two requests to the Treasury & Resources Department for the funding of two projects:

- Census 2021
- Household Spending and Income Survey

There was no further progress to report at this stage.

[Action – DG to keep the Group informed of any developments](#)

2. Pre-release access to official statistics

Based on the principle of equal access to statistical information for all users (as enshrined in the United Nations Fundamental Principles for Official Statistics and the European Statistics Code of Practice), DG (in role as Chief Statistician) proposed to end pre-release access of publications produced by the Statistics Unit, effective 1 January 2018.

Currently, the pre-release access of official statistics (to States Members, States of Jersey senior officers and the media) is governed by the Code of Practice for Official Statistics in Jersey: <http://www.statesassembly.gov.je/AssemblyReports/2015/R.63-2015.pdf>

DG informed the Group that in the UK pre-release access of official statistics had ended on 1 July 2017 (except in specified exceptional cases); he had previously circulated three documents (links below):

- Letter from UK National Statistician to Chair of UK Statistics Authority: <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Letter-from-John-Pullinger-to-Sir-David-Norgrove-15-June-2017.pdf>

- Letter in reply from Chair of UK Statistics Authority to UK National Statistician:
<https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Letter-from-Sir-David-Norgrove-to-John-Pullinger-15-June-2017.pdf>
- Press release from Royal Statistical Society welcoming end to pre-release access:
<http://www.rss.org.uk/Images/PDF/about/press-releases/2017/PRESS-RELEASE-ON-ONS-DECISION-TO-END-PRE-RELEASE-ACCESS-TO-OFFICIAL-STATISTICS.pdf>

The Group agreed with the Chief Statistician's proposal to end pre-release access of official statistics in Jersey, effective 1 January 2018.

Actions

- DG to announce publicly the decision to end pre-release access of official statistics, to coincide with the release of the 2018 publication schedule of the Statistics Unit
- DG to present a provisional publication schedule to the Group at its next meeting (13 November 2017)
- DG to arrange modification, subject to clarification on the required procedures, of relevant sections of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics in Jersey, including specification of a small number of exceptional cases

3. **Statistics and Census Law**

DG circulated a copy of the draft Law and the covering Report. At previous meetings he had updated the Group on the status of the Law as it progressed through law drafting and consideration by Law Officers.

Action – DG to keep the Group informed as the Law progressed to the Council of Ministers for consideration to be lodged as a Report and Proposition with the States Assembly.

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

DG summarised the recent publications of the Statistics Unit.

- Population update
- Survey of Financial Institutions, 2016
- Index of Average Earnings, June 2017
- Retail Prices Index, RPI
- House Price Index
- Business Tendency Survey
- Registered Actively Seeking Work
- Public Health - upcoming release on disease prevalence projections

5. **AOB**

MD asked that consideration be given at the next Group meeting to areas of the Statistics Unit's work which could be audited from the perspectives of methodology and quality.

6. **Next meeting: 13 November 2017**