

Minutes of Statistics Users Group Meeting

Date of meeting: **4 November 2015**; Concord Room, Cyril Le Marquand House

Present: Martin Richardson, *Chair* (MR), Peggy Gielen (PG), Jennie Holley (JH), Graeme Marett (GM), John Noel (JN), Ray Shead (RS), Matthew Sutton (MS)
Statistics Unit: Duncan Gibaut (DG)

Apologies: Mary Friswell, Craig Leach, Peter Surcouf

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

b) Matters arising: none

2. **Pre-release access to Official Statistics**

Protocol 2 of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics in Jersey, and the associated document "Pre-release access", specifies the recipients who are to be granted access to the publications of the States of Jersey Statistics Unit under given periods of pre-release.

Since the establishment of the Code in May 2015, the Chief Statistician has received requests from Jersey Finance Limited (JFL), the Jersey Chamber of Commerce (CoC) and the Jersey Consumer Council (JCC) that these organisations be granted pre-release access to the publications of the Statistics Unit. Prior to the Code coming into effect, the Chief Statistician had granted such organisations pre-release access, under strict terms of embargo, on an informal basis.

The case for JFL and CoC to be considered for pre-release access was put forward by PG and RS, respectively. The Group discussed the matter at some length, including definitional issues relating to "official media organisations" and "trade associations". JN pointed out that any amendments and definitions being considered should be logical; MS suggested an inherent degree of flexibility.

From the perspective of pre-release access, the present Code was in line with that of the UK but was contrary to international recommendations for 'equality of access', enshrined in the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and the European Statistics Code of Practice, as well as being contrary to the recommendations of the Royal Statistical Society in the UK itself. By increasing the pool of organisations being granted pre-release access, Jersey would be going further than the UK and would become still more out of line with international recommendations.

At this stage, the Group's overall consensus was that no changes should be made to the set of organisations granted pre-release access.

The Group tasked DG with the following:

[Actions- DG:](#)

- [enquire with States of Jersey administrative function as to how to amend the Code of Practice](#)
- [consider and develop definitions of "official media organisations" and "trade associations"](#)
- [feedback the Group's current position to JFL, CoC and JCC](#)
- [suggest to JFL, CoC and JCC that they consider seeking political representation on this matter from the Chief Minister and/or the Council of Ministers](#)

3. **Statistics legislation**

A letter had been sent from the Chair, on behalf of the Group, to the Chief Minister recommending that he give consideration to:

- the establishment of a legal framework for Official Statistics in Jersey
- instructing the Law Draftsmen, in consultation with Statistics User Group and the Chief Statistician, to draft appropriate legislation

A meeting with the Chief Minister to discuss these matters was scheduled for 10 November 2015.

4. **SUG membership status**

All current Group members had been appointed in September 2012 for a period of three years; the Chair had been appointed by the States Assembly in January 2013.

DG informed the Group that he recently had made approaches to the administrative function in the Chief Minister's Department, the States of Jersey Human Resources Department (SOJ HR) and the Jersey Appointments Commission (JAC) enquiring about initiating the process for appointing Members and the Chair.

Actions: DG –

- [report back to the Group as and when he receives information from SOJ HR](#)
- [relay the affiliation of current Group members to JAC at the appropriate time](#)

5. **Update on Statistics Unit activity**

DG summarised the recent publications and ongoing work of the Statistics Unit:

Recent:

- Annual Index of Average Earnings, June 2015
UK- Jersey consumer price comparison
GVA and GDP, 2014
- Six-monthly Jersey Labour Market, June 2015
- Quarterly: Retail Prices Index, RPI
Business Tendency Survey
Retail Sales
House Price Index
- Monthly: Registered Actively Seeking Work (ASW)

Ongoing:

- **Household Spending and Income Survey, 2014/15**
report scheduled for release on 13 November 2015;
briefings had been arranged for all States Members and the media on 12 November 2015 (under the pre-release protocol specified by the Code of
- **Jersey Annual Social Survey, 2015**
publication provisionally scheduled for 25 November 2015
- **Rental Index**
experimental methodology being developed and trialled;
aiming for first publication in February 2016, as part of the quarterly report on the Jersey House Price Index

6. **Release Schedule for 2016**

DG presented the Group with a proposed release schedule for Statistics Unit publications in calendar year 2016. The Group approved the schedule.

Action: DG – [publish the Release Schedule on the Statistics Unit web-site](#)

7. **Next meeting: Friday 29 January 2016**