

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY AND THE OFFICE FOR NATIONAL STATISTICS, JUNE 2017

Understanding

This Memorandum of Understanding ('MOU') represents an understanding between the Office for National Statistics ('ONS') and the Greater London Authority ('GLA').

This MOU does not affect the statutory responsibilities or functions of either the GLA or ONS, nor is it enforceable by law. However, it is intended to support both parties in working effectively together, and it is intended that both will act in good faith in accordance with this agreement.

This document includes 5 pages.

Purpose

The purpose of this MOU is to define the relationship between the ONS and GLA, with specific reference to economic analytics, outlining the roles and responsibilities of both parties.

Signed

Signed

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Andrew Collinge
Assistant Director
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(on behalf of the GLA)

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Summary

This document sets out the main obligations of the GLA to ONS and of ONS to the GLA in working together as a partnership on the provision of ONS London Statistical Support. This partnership agreement is founded on:

- Improving the evidence base for economic policymaking in London
- Statistical independence of ONS
- Statistical needs of the GLA as a governing body

1. Coverage

- a. This memorandum of understanding covers the provision by ONS started in April 2011 and revised in June 2017 of the full-time equivalent of two ONS staff with specialist knowledge to be based within the London region and known as ONS London Statistical Support.

2. Commitments

- a. ONS commits to deliver the London Statistical Support as defined below.
- b. GLA commits £140,000 per annum (excluding VAT) as agreed in the 2011 MOU to support ONS London Statistical Support and on a sustained basis thereafter with potential review points at the end of each Comprehensive Spending Review period.
- c. Both parties are keen to see the ONS London Statistical Support initiative continue to succeed, and commit themselves to working together to ensure that it does.

3. Delivery

- a. ONS London Statistical Support will provide the following functions, focused primarily on economic and labour market statistics:
 - i. to work with GLA and other regional partners (subject to the bilaterally agreed workplan) on collaborative projects;
 - ii. to provide independent advice, training and guidance to London regional and sub-regional users on the use of ONS and GSS (Government Statistical Service) statistics, including on technical issues, such as the use of statistics in monitoring performance against targets;
 - iii. to gather intelligence to help improve the quality of ONS data and processes, keeping ONS up to date with changes in London through activities such as peer review of publications;
 - iv. to act as a focus to feed views through from London regional and sub-regional bodies, assisting ONS in its decision-making through activities such as through user groups;
 - v. to provide relevant access to microdata (sources including but not limited to: IDBR, LFS, APS, ASHE) for the GLA;
 - vi. to engage in Big Data and Data Science developments, and share knowledge where possible, as is appropriate for our collaborative projects;
 - vii. to provide a point of ONS contact for key London regional and sub-regional bodies;

- viii. to facilitate provision of training, when required, to regional partners on, economic statistics, technical systems, methodological processes, and relevant topics as they arise; and
 - ix. to assess, or assist in the assessment of, locally commissioned/locally held data.
- b. All work is for the benefit of London's regional and local information base; ONS will ensure that a significant amount of the time of the London Statistical Support team will be spent on collaborative projects to support the agenda of the GLA.
 - c. ONS London will provide statistical information through normal ONS channels (eg by publishing on the ad-hoc requests internet site) in most instances. In some instances, in order to fit with GLA policy requirements (eg the London Living Wage or Employment Projections) data will be provided on a restricted basis and not published as an ad-hoc request until after publication of the relevant GLA report. This agreement acts, in effect, as a pre-payment for ad-hoc requests by the GLA Group.
 - d. ONS will agree an annual work plan with the GLA at the senior management level for each operational year, indicating how the London Statistical Support team's resource will be used.
 - e. The London Statistical Support team will report regularly on progress to both ONS and GLA including a quarterly review of work with GLA.

4. Staffing

- a. Both parties agree that the provision of suitably qualified staff with specialist skills is essential to fulfil the agreement. They also acknowledge that while the London Statistical Support staff are ONS staff, employed by ONS and reporting to a line manager within ONS, ONS will keep the GLA informed about recruitment and continued support of these staff.
- b. Both parties agree that GLA, within Civil Service guidelines, will be:
 - i. invited to comment on draft job descriptions and person specifications
 - ii. invited to meet with candidates of recruitment boards for the London Statistical Support posts, and to give their feedback to the selection panel
- c. ONS agrees to use all reasonable endeavours to ensure continuity of personnel.

5. Governance

- a. GLA and ONS will each agree a lead operational contact to consider and agree matters by e-mail where appropriate.
- b. Parties with the appropriate delegated authority for management of the memorandum of understanding – the Operational Management Team – will meet 6 monthly or as otherwise agreed. The purpose of this meeting will be to:
 - i. review delivery and discuss performance of the London Statistical Support
 - ii. ensure sustainability of the arrangement
 - iii. agree periodic evaluation at the end of each CSR period or as needed
 - iv. where relevant, agree future funding arrangements beyond the relevant CSR period dependent on review of the function.

6. Funding and Charging Procedures

- a. The GLA's annual contribution will be reduced by two-thirds of the combined monthly cost for every complete calendar month that the Grade 7 statistician post is vacant and by one-third of the combined monthly cost for every complete calendar month that the Senior Research Officer post is vacant through late recruitment or delayed recruitment of replacements.
- b. GLA agrees to fund the London Statistical Support on a full cost-recovery model as originally agreed in 2011. The GLA agrees to fund £140,000 per year (excluding VAT) on an on-going basis through quarterly invoices subject to the review points set out in 2b and the termination arrangements set out in 9c.
- c. ONS and GLA agree to pay correctly produced invoices within 30 days.

7. Confidentiality

- a. Both parties agree to treat the other party's confidential information as confidential and safeguard it accordingly.

8. Disputes

- a. If a dispute arises under this agreement, which cannot be resolved locally, it should be passed to the Operational Management Team for resolution. If, exceptionally, the dispute cannot be resolved within that team, both parties (GLA and ONS) agree to take advice from senior colleagues in order to ensure that this initiative does not founder.
- b. Both parties agree to deliver under the terms of this agreement until any dispute has been resolved.

9. Term and Termination Arrangements

- a. This agreement has immediate effect and covers arrangements for the London Statistical Support from 6 June 2017 going forward.
- b. Both parties allow for this agreement to be reviewed at the end of each CSR period, if necessary, and subject to:
 - i. continued delivery of the terms of this agreement to the satisfaction of the other party (allowing for an appropriate period to remedy defined defaults).
 - ii. periodic evaluation, as defined above, to ensure that ONS London Statistical Support is delivering the benefits that each party wants (regardless of whether or not in-year objectives are being hit)
 - iii. changing external circumstances (such as the availability of funding), outside the parties' control.

It is intended to conduct a review in advance of the 2018-19 financial year to formalise any changes to this agreement in advance of the 2018-19 charging period.
- c. Outside the scope of the evaluation process either ONS, or the GLA, may terminate this agreement at the end of any financial year (31 March) by providing 6 months' notice in writing to the other (by 30 September of the preceding year).
- d. If termination notice is provided, both parties will work together to agree priorities during the notice period and ensure a managed rundown that recognises the needs of both organisations.

10. Change Variation Procedures

- a. Each party is responsible for ensuring that the other is fully consulted, and adequate time allowed, if there are any proposals for change. All changes will be documented and agreed between both parties. Changes to the scope of the work will be specifically handled by the Operation Managers.

11. Publicity

- a. Neither party shall be entitled to make any public announcement or media release about their co-operation in relation to the proposed ONS London Statistical Support without the prior written agreement in writing from each other, which shall not be unreasonably held.