



Sir Michael Scholar KCB
Chair of the UK Statistics Authority
Statistics House
Islington
London
EC1R 1UW

27th April 2011

Dear Sir Michael,

THE CITIZENSHIP SURVEY

Thank you for your letter of 8 April to the Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP in relation to the Citizenship Survey, which I have carefully considered and, in particular, your remarks about the responses to the consultation and your invitation to consult further with the National Statistician. I have been asked to reply.

You rightly recognise in your letter that following the consultation on the future of the Citizenship Survey, I have taken the decision to discontinue this expensive survey (approximately £4million per survey year). As I have set out in the Department's response to the consultation we are moving away from costly top-down monitoring and measurement of policies and do not believe that the costs of the survey can be justified for these purposes. We would expect other providers who have a priority need for data of this type to take steps to provide it themselves, in the academic or external market. As such, continuing with such expenditure on a central survey cannot be justified in the current fiscal climate.

Equally, while there may be suggestions to reduce the survey costs, they do not address the Department's view that continuing expenditure on an expensive central survey of this kind does not fulfil a priority need.

In conclusion I am grateful to you for your remarks, and for the offer to meet Jill Matheson to discuss further options. I am, however, not persuaded that any further meeting of that kind with me, or my Ministerial colleagues, would serve a useful purpose. Clearly, however, in the context of the emerging wellbeing index, it may be appropriate for other departments and the ONS to develop and fund new work which covers any new requirements for similar data of this kind.

Yours sincerely
Andrew Stunell

ANDREW STUNELL MP

Andrew Stunell MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

Department for Communities and Local Government

Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU

Tel: 0303 444 3440

Fax: 0303 444 3287

E-Mail: andrew.stunell@communities.gsi.gov.uk

www.communities.gov.uk

Our Ref: ER/ST/015577/11