Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation

Dr Philip Wales
Chief Executive & Registrar General
Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
(by email)

30 August 2023

Dear Phil

NISRA Outputs Consultation

Thank you for setting out the financial pressures that NISRA is facing and outlining your plans to review NISRA's statistical outputs in the light of those pressures.

Value for money is an important consideration, and engaging with users to understand their evolving needs is an important element of providing that value. It is therefore encouraging to hear of your plans to both engage proactively with users alongside the consultation to help give you a rounded view of the relative value of your statistics to users. This framework produced by the UNECE may be helpful to you in measuring the value of your official statistics.

It is important to recognise that just because a set of statistics has been produced in the past, this does not mean that it must continue to be produced in the same way, with the same periodicity for evermore. The Code of Practice does not mandate a fixed form of presentation or requirement for extensive narratival content, and it is good that you are open to exploring different ways of serving user needs. Your approach of reflecting which outputs to stop, which to postpone and which to change in the various ways that you've outlined is therefore a comprehensive approach to provide you with feedback to help you make what will inevitably be difficult decisions.

Thank you also for outlining the wider risks to the statistical system in Northern Ireland. I would be very happy to arrange a meeting to work with you to help maximise the value of NISRA's statistics. My office will be in contact with yours to find a suitable time.

Yours sincerely

Ed Humpherson
Director General for Regulation