

**Welsh Statistical Liaison Committee  
A National Statistics Joint Consultative Committee  
Minutes of meeting held on 4 June 2020  
Via Microsoft Teams**

### Attendees

Glyn	Jones	GJ	Welsh Government (WG) - Chair
Jonathan	Ackland	JA	Welsh Government (WG)
Gareth	Barclay	GB	Flintshire County Council
Lucy	Butler	LB	Vale of Glamorgan County Council
Lee	Clarke	LC	Cardiff County Council
Hugo	Cosh	HC	Public Health Wales
Vicki	Doyle	VD	Caerphilly County Borough Council
Janine	Edwards	JE	Conwy County Borough Council
Helen	Jones	HJ	Senedd Research
Nia	Jones	NJ	Welsh Government (WG)
Sue	Leake	SL	Welsh Government (WG)
Duncan	MacKenzie	DM	Data Cymru (DC)
Sam	Sullivan	SS	Data Cymru (DC)

### Note Takers

Yasmin	Parekh	YP	Welsh Government (WG)
Niamh	Yale-Helms	NYH	Welsh Government (WG)

### Speakers

Martin	Parry	MP	Welsh Government (WG)
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### Apologies

Chris	Ashford	Office for National Statistics (ONS)
Neil	Townsend	Office for National Statistics (ONS)

<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome, Introductions &amp; Apologies</b>	
	SL opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. She indicated that GJ was slightly delayed but would be joining soon.	
<b>2</b>	<b>Note of last meeting and update on action points</b>	
	The note of the last meeting was agreed.  Update on Action Points from previous meeting (WSLC 2020-06 Paper 2): Action 3: To be discussed during agenda item on Population Projections.  Action 10: NJ informed attendees that progress has paused on the WIMD interactive dashboard as COVID-19 work has taken	

	<p>priority. This work will resume in future and any members with feedback on the proposals from the last WSLC meeting should email the <a href="mailto:StatsInclusion@gov.wales">StatsInclusion@gov.wales</a> mailbox.</p> <p>NJ added that new analysis of areas of deep-rooted deprivation has been published, along with further guidance on the interpretation of WIMD data.</p> <p>JE asked if data from WIMD has been used to inform any COVID-19 work. NJ responded that they are aware of WIMD being used by ONS in analysis of Covid-19 deaths by deprivation and by Public Health Wales in their analyses mapping the community response to Covid</p> <p>Action 12: Postponed due to absence of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council representative.</p> <p>Action 13: To be discussed later in meeting (Welsh Government COVID-19 update).</p> <p>No other comments were made on Action Points.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> Action 12 from February 2020 WSLC to be followed up with Nita Sparkes (NPTCBC).</p>
<b>3</b>	<b>Review of information papers</b>	
	<p>GJ stated that this section would be a brief overview of the papers to give members an opportunity to ask questions. Most of the main points would be addressed in the next agenda item.</p> <p>Statistics Wales quarterly update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No comments from members.</li> </ul> <p>Demography update (from MP):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MP noted the decision to suspend the Welsh Language Use Survey due to the current situation.</li> <li>• ONS published both UK and country-level 2019 mid-year population estimates on 6 May 2020. These are provisional estimates, released early to aid analysis relating to COVID-19. Components of population change in each local area will be published later in June 2020.</li> </ul> <p>Data Cymru (DC) update (from SS):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All DC offices are now closed and colleagues are working from home, but SS emphasized they are still available to assist wherever possible.</li> <li>• Some examples of work that DC has been involved with since the start of the pandemic include collecting data on the financial impact of Covid via a new survey and regularly updating a new mortality dashboard every Tuesday. This has primarily been used by Local Authorities, and DC are keen to look into other work colleagues may require.</li> <li>• JE enquired if DC has a specific page on their website pulling together all their Covid-related analysis. SS explained there is a plan for this to be implemented soon, but currently all data can be access via the Covid-19 banner on their website.</li> </ul>	

4	<p><b>Covid-19: Update from Welsh Government</b></p> <p>GJ explained the decision for all WG staff to work from home created some concern about data collections/processing, and other impacts of home working, but so far the transition has been successful.</p> <p>Many analysts have been redeployed within WG to assist with the COVID-19 response and the sudden demand for new analytical work. This includes moves to newly created teams like the COVID-19 Analysis Hub, and supporting policy colleagues, Emergency Coordination Centre Wales (ECCW), and the Chief Medical Officer.</p> <p>Household surveys were some of the first things to be affected due to the need to cease face-to-face surveys. It was noted that the International Passenger Survey, Annual Population Survey, and Labour Force Survey have been impacted. Sample sizes have diminished quickly and collections are now telephone-based or online.</p> <p>GJ noted the speed that new measures had been put in place to cope with these changes. It is hoped that some suspended data collections will be able to resume soon, and decisions to suspend collections taking place later in the year are still pending.</p> <p>The National Survey for Wales (NSW) has now become a telephone-based survey. The new data collection method has caused some changes to the survey design, as it is not plausible to ask respondents to participate in a 40-minute survey over the phone. A new questionnaire is being used, with topics changed to reflect those now concerning society. The sample group being used is the same as that of the previous collection, as it was not possible to use a new sample group. A link to the NSW questionnaire will be circulated.</p> <p>The survey has already received over 3,000 responses; a higher response rate than usual. There is a plan for survey findings to be released monthly, with questions altering throughout the year. GJ has asked Steven Marshall, Chief Social Research Officer, to confirm if LA-level data will be included in these monthly releases.</p> <p>The changes to NSW have had a knock-on effect on the Welsh Language Use Survey, which has been suspended. The estimates will be produced based on the nine months of data that was collected.</p> <p>From the administrative data side, a number of decisions had been taken to suspend collection of some data, delay some collections and reduce others. Practical considerations such as school closures and reducing burden on data suppliers were</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> GJ to confirm with Steve Marshall if LA-level data will be included in monthly NSW releases.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> GJ to circulate link to <a href="#">new NSW questionnaire</a></p>

taken into account. GJ wrote to Chief Executives in May outlining his plans.

GJ then shared his screen to present his recent [blog post](#) from Monday 1 June, with the [link to the plan for individual data collections](#). It was explained that some data may never be collected, and some data will be collected only partially or combined with other collections. The main concern behind this is with the quality of the data. There will also be an impact on the analysis.

Communication around releases that were not COVID-19 related became more mindful, with fewer social media posts where appropriate. Routine outputs will resume but additional analysis may not.

The pandemic has also resulted in new data collections, collected through new methods. This includes daily data from schools to Data Cymru, and from the NHS. Management information derived from these data flows are being regularly released to the public with appropriate advice on quality assurance.

GJ directed members to WG's overall COVID-19 statistical briefing page, '[COVID-19 and the production of statistics and social research](#)', and to where the COVID-19 statistical releases could be found, '[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) related statistics and research](#)'. GJ also recommended the linked ONS site.

The summary COVID data is released every Monday to correspond with the First Minister's press release. It includes data on mobility, food parcels, education, and business support.

GJ mentioned some other specific COVID releases,; this included publishing data from Care Inspectorate Wales at LA-level, which is a leading indicator for ONS data.

WG are having discussions with ONS on a large-scale infections study, which aims to measure how many people are affected in the community. The aim is to add Wales into study soon. It was noted that it is unlikely that the data will be broken down by LA, due to costs and sample sizes.

HJ noted how useful the range of data being published is to support the huge number of inquiries from Members of the Senedd and that having all the WG COVID-19 stats linked from one page has been incredibly useful.

VD indicated that at the start of the pandemic, their LA had very limited resources available the requirement to support those who were shielding. VD asked whether shielding lists which are easily accessible will be maintained. GJ explained that clarification of who should be shielding did take some time initially and that the Jigsaw project was working in the background, to ensure access to data as soon as possible.

	<p>Data Map Wales, available through certain logins, will provide access to the number of households containing vulnerable people. though there needs to be a clearer understanding of vulnerable criteria and getting data as quickly as possible.</p> <p>HC asked if there will be any more information released concerning the impact on the NSW and what data will be released. GJ to distribute link to blog explaining this. There is a publication planned at the end of the month, with ongoing monthly publications. There will not be a great deal of detail provided though.</p> <p>DM noted that he did not think there would be the same amount of data validation as previously after the pandemic.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> GJ to distribute link to blog explaining further how NSW has been impacted by COVID-19.</p>
<b>5</b>	<b>Covid-19: Update from WSLC members</b>	
	<p>GJ noted that the Wellbeing of Wales report is a statutory requirement to report on wellbeing indicators; it will include lagged data from the previous year. It is unlikely that the report will be as detailed as the previous year.</p> <p>Attendees may be asked again by the UK Statistics Authority for feedback on the Wellbeing of Wales report as their National Statistics assessment has now been delayed.</p> <p>There was a discussion about local authority well-being assessments, whether they will be required to the same timescale and the impact of Covid-19 on the assessments.</p> <p>JE stated that work on these had begun before the pandemic and that policy implications, including available evidence, need to be considered. GJ to feed this back to policy colleagues.</p> <p>VD highlighted to her local authority colleagues that in her area there were several projects on hold. JE asked if VD could share a summary of what they were doing for information. VD to send this to GJ for distribution.</p> <p>GJ stated that, with the shift to virtual meetings due to COVID-19, it would be possible to make a more collaborative space for WSLC in the future..</p> <p>GB noted that in their area their Wellbeing report was nearly completed and that it mainly depends on the availability of data. JE noted that by September a report prepared prior mostly prior to Covid may not reflect changed priorities as a result of the pandemic.</p> <p>VD also noted that all service areas have been affected and so things will change due to that. GB agreed but noted that if work has already been done, it is beneficial to be more transitional within their work.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> GJ to feedback JE comments about the impact of COVID-19 on LA wellbeing assessments to policy colleagues.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> VD to send email surrounding suspended projects for LAs to GJ for him to distribute to attendees.</p>

	<p>GJ further prompted any attendees for feedback on their experiences. JE stated that the public's expectations on statistics has changed and that the policy approach needs to change.</p> <p>GJ stated that they will provide this feedback and noted that ministers have made it clear that changes will be made after this.</p> <p>Agreed by attendees that it varies within authorities with how they have responded to the situation. GJ encouraged attendees to share any further contributions with the WSLC list.</p>	
<b>6</b>	<b>Population Projections</b>	
	<p>Item led by Martin Parry – WG</p> <p>MP stated that ONS published their 2018-based National Population Projections for Wales in October 2019; this had showed a shift in the projected demographic, including an unusual population decline. WG queried this, but were assured they were correct.</p> <p>Following this, the WASP expert group agreed the Sub-national Population Projections for Wales should be re-based to 2018 and these were published March 2020.</p> <p>On publication of the 2019 provisional Mid-year estimates of population for Wales on 6 May ONS found an error in their 2018-based projections for Wales, which is described on their <a href="#">website</a> in detail. There was a cross-border discrepancy (65,000 too low for Wales). ONS plan to correct their projections for solely Wales. This was agreed with the devolved governments and is set to be published by 11 June with a full dataset later in the month.</p> <p>After consulting with experts and user groups the WG have taken the the 2018-based Household and National Projections off the WG website. Corrected projections from WG are to be released imminently (date to be confirmed).</p> <p>Housing Need Estimates will be affected, which have been postponed from 20 May. These will be released sometime after the Sub-national Population Projections release.</p> <p>JE stated that a user group meeting is needed as soon as possible, as there are methodology issues that need to be considered. MP agreed to set this up.</p> <p>SL noted the previous action point which was a proposed population symposium. MP said this has been postponed. Whilst the current focus is on preparing the corrected projections (including National Park Projections)it would be possible to hold an event after that.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> MP to organise user meeting group to discuss population projections release.</p>

	<p>GJ noted some topics surrounding population will be affected by COVID-19, i.e. birth rate, which will be interesting to discuss.</p> <p>MP noted that the International Passenger Survey has been suspended but that ONS are still publishing migration data based on flights.</p> <p>JE suggested a current higher importance of internal flows, including people moving in and out of populated cities.</p>	
<b>7</b>	<b>Census Update</b>	
	<p>This item was due to be led by Neil Townsend (NT) – ONS, but due to technical difficulties NT was unable to join the call. GJ read out a written update NT had provided instead.</p> <p>ONS are continuing work towards the 2021 Census, in line with up-to-date guidance from the applicable governments. Their intention is to proceed as planned, but it will be affected by COVID-19. The field address check is not going ahead; this will be replaced with extra desk-based research. Other local engagement will be taking place and some related publications will be delayed.</p> <p>ONS are developing contingency plans should Covid-19 have an ongoing impact. There is ongoing activity with legislation. The Census Order has gone through parliament in Wales and the UK. Census Regulations were laid in the Senedd on 1 June, coming into force before summer recess. GJ to send link to new regulations to members.</p> <p>ONS are engaging online with LAs through a series of virtual workshops, which have been both well-attended and well-received. The next Census Advisory Group for Wales (CAGW) meeting is taking place in the week following this WSLC meeting via Google Meet. Members were asked to let GJ know if they would like to join the meeting, as they can be flexible in letting others join even if they are not within the group.</p> <p>VD noted that the virtual workshop they recently attended was useful and detailed. The slides for this are available. VD also asked for the Google Meet invitation for CAGW to be circulated. SK also added that they had received no updates CAGW and they are unaware of the next meeting. GJ will look into this.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> GJ to circulate link to <a href="#">Census (Wales) Regulations 2020</a>.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> GJ to ask for invite to next CAGW to be distributed to VD, SK and any other members interested in attending.</p>
<b>9</b>	<b>Any other business</b>	
	<p>Next meeting to be held on 8 October 2020.</p> <p>Attendees were encouraged to suggest future agenda items in addition to those suggested during the previous meeting.</p>	

## Summary of Action Points

No.	Action	Who?
1	Action Point 12 from February 2020 WSLC to be followed up with Nita Sparkes (NPTCBC).	NS / FCP
2	GJ to confirm with Steve Marshall if LA-level data will be included in monthly National Survey for Wales (NSW) releases.	GJ
3	GJ to circulate link to new NSW questionnaire.	GJ
4	GJ to distribute link to blog explaining further how NSW has been impacted by COVID-19.	GJ
5	GJ to feedback JE comments about the impact of COVID-19 on LA wellbeing assessments to policy colleagues.	GJ
6	VD to send email surrounding suspended projects for LAs to GJ for him to distribute to attendees.	VD / GJ
7	MP to organise user meeting group to discuss population projections release.	MP
8	GJ to circulate link to Census (Wales) Regulations 2020.	GJ
9	GJ to ask for invite to next CAGW to be distributed to VD, SK and any other members interested in attending.	GJ / NT