

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER  
BY DEPUTY M.R. SCOTT OF ST. BRELADE  
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON TUESDAY 30th MAY 2023  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 6th JUNE 2023**

**Question**

“Regarding the Statistics User Group, will the Chief Minister advise –

- (a) why the Group was inquorate from November 2022 to April 2023, notwithstanding its statutory role in overseeing the quality, relevance, and integrity of statistics published by the Government and other public authorities and the statutory requirement that the Chief Statistician set the policies and priorities of Statistics Jersey on the advice of the Group;
- (b) in the absence of the Group, on whose advice the Chief Statistician set the policies and priorities of Statistics Jersey from November 2022 to April 2023;
- (c) on what date the former Chief Minister was advised of the need to fill vacancies in the Group to avoid it becoming inquorate; and
- (d) which government officer was responsible for ensuring the vacancies should be filled?”

**Answer**

(a) Under the Law, the Statistics User Group is comprised of a Chair and “no fewer than 6 Members”. Three of the six Members of the Group indicated they did not wish to be reappointed following the expiry of their current terms, leaving the Group short of the statutory requirement. A recruitment process commenced immediately, including development of the job specification, and concluded with seven new Members being appointed by public Ministerial Decision on 3rd April 2023.

This is a voluntary organisation, so the contribution of all current and past Members is appreciated. It is a testament to the importance of these groups that so many new, high-calibre Members were able to be appointed.

(b) The Statistics Users Group normally meets three times a year. The last formal quorate meeting was November 2022, when Statistics Jersey’s 2023 operational plan and strategic priorities were discussed. Statistics Jersey policies are set only occasionally – and no such policies required the advice of the Statistics Users Group during 2021 or 2022. There are two policies that do now need discussion, which were completed in March, and will be discussed at this year’s first meeting which is scheduled for 2nd June 2023.

The Chair and the appointed Members of the Group, and Chief Statistician, have nevertheless continued with their respective activities, save that, clearly, the Group has not exercised its statutory powers. This included meetings on the development of the new Statistics Law, reviewing the draft results of a Statistics Users Survey, and participation in the Advisory Panels for the Jersey Opinions and Lifestyle Survey and Children and Young People’s Survey.

(c) I was aware of the recruitment exercise to secure new Members and approved their appointment. However, I was not aware that the Group was below its quorum during the above period. The appointment of seven new Members means the Group is now at its maximum membership of 10 Members, providing the Group with resilience for the future.

(d) The recruitment of new Members was led by the Chair of the Group, following notification to the Jersey Appointments Commission, with the guidance of the Head of the Ministerial Office, and updating the Chief Statistician and Chief Officer for the Policy, People, and Modernisation Directorate in the Cabinet Office.