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| Notes from: | UK Advisory Forum on Ageing 7 July 2009 |
| Chair: | Angela Eagle, Minister of State for Pensions & the Ageing Society Baroness Sally Greengross, Equality and Human Rights Commission |
| Members: | Raj Kaur representing Phil Hope, Minister of State for Care Services Amy Campbell representing Ian Austin, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (CLG) John Storey representing Shona Robison, Minister for Public Health Scotland Steve Milsom representing Gwenda Thomas, Deputy Minister for Social Services Wales Richard Barnes, Deputy Mayor of London - London Regional Forum (pm only) Pauline Cushing - East of England Regional Forum Glenn Marshall - London Regional Forum (am only) Norman Jemison - North East Regional Forum Pauline Walsh - North West Regional Forum James Rose - South East Regional Forum Audrey Cloet - South West Regional Forum Christine Eade - West Midlands Regional Forum Shelagh Marshall - Yorkshire & Humber Regional Forum Michelle Mitchell - Age UK Jenny Owen - Association of Directors of Adult Social Services Alan Hatton-Yeo - Beth Johnson Foundation Kate Groucutt - Carers UK Gilly Crosby - Centre for Policy on Ageing Marjory Broughton - UKOPAG representing Mervyn Eastman - Change Agents GB Lizzie Iron - Citizens Advice Stephen Burke - Counsel and Care Denise Keating - Employers Forum on Age Philip Johnson representing Chris Hayes - Government Office Network Stephen McNair - National Institute of Adult Continuing Education Dot Gibson - National Pensioners Convention |
| Apologies: | Margaret Richie, Minister for Social Development Northern Ireland Hon Alderman The Hon Joan Taylor MBE - East Midlands Regional Forum Cllr David Rodgers OBE - Local Government Association Chris Ball - The Age and Employment Network |
| Officials: | Charlie Massey - Department for Work and Pensions Hugh Pullinger - Department for Work and Pensions |
| Facilitator: | Joanne Rule - 4 coaching |
| Secretariat: | Elaine Stewart - Department for Work and Pensions Gwen Wolf - Department for Work and Pensions Tony Mantell - Department for Work and Pensions |

Welcome

Hugh Pullinger

Hugh Pullinger welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the UK Advisory Forum on Ageing and set the context for the Forum:

- The establishment of a UK Advisory Forum was the key recommendation of John Elbourne's Review of Older People's Engagement with Government and a central part of the Government's response *Empowering engagement: a stronger voice for older people*.
- The Government recognises the importance and value of local and regional engagement with older people and their representatives.
- The Forum is co-chaired by the Minister of State for Pensions and the Ageing Society, Angela Eagle, and the Minister of State for Care Services, Phil Hope.
- The Forum will:
 - Oversee the progress of both PSA 17 "to tackle poverty and promote greater independence and well-being in later life" and PSA 18 "promote better health and well-being for all";
 - Advise on the implementation and development of the soon to be published Ageing Society Strategy; focusing on changing attitudes and behaviours, addressing ageism, preparing for later life, improving engagement;
 - Provide leadership for fundamental cultural change;
 - Identify and advise on new issues and challenges arising from the demographic ageing of the UK population.
- The outcomes of the Forum will be reported to the appropriate Cabinet Committee.

Aims and Aspirations

UK Advisory Forum on Ageing

This was a facilitator led session centred on table discussions. Forum members focused on how they saw the role of the Forum and how it might operate. Feedback from the discussions included:

- The Forum should be able to exercise control and say/understand:
 - What it wants to achieve;
 - How it prioritises;
 - What authority and resources it has to do the above;
 - How it engages with the wider community;
 - Political consensus across all parties.
- The Forum has to be given the time to learn how to work together and to have the time and opportunity to agree what to focus on and how to act on this, including through setting up task and finish groups.
- The Forum has to find ways to ensure that it is hearing the views of all communities, including the hard to reach.
- The Forum will actively engage with the consultation for the Ageing Society Strategy and the Social Care Green Paper.
- The Forum should be kept informed of progress with PSA 17 and PSA 18, connecting with how this is received by different communities and identifying and promoting the spread of good practice.
- The Forum must establish measures to test progress, e.g. commissioning a poll to assess public attitudes, with subsequent follow-up polls at 12 monthly intervals.
- The Forum should set up an action group to drive forward promotion of the Ageing Society Strategy in the media, promoting positive images of older people and seeking to influence media portrayals of older people and change stereotypes; getting the message across to all age groups
- The Forum should set up an action group to progress approaches making it easier for people to make decisions on a range of issues, e.g. complex financial packages, post retirement employment.

Opportunities & Challenges

Angela Eagle, Minister of State for Pensions and the Ageing Society

The Minister of State for Pensions and the Ageing Society, Angela Eagle thanked everyone for their recognition of the role that the Forum could take and for their commitment in being willing to take an active role. The Minister briefly outlined the demographic changes faced by society and set out what she saw as the opportunities and challenges these presented to the Forum:

- To challenge how society addresses the fact of ageing;
- To challenge stereotypes of older people;
- To challenge outdated attitudes and create a new reality;
- To recognise that the Government can only do so much and that the real battle was to change the reality “out there”;
- To be the voice of older people; building two-way communications from the bottom up and ensuring a good dialogue at all levels of government;
- To go out and evangelise; to champion change – can’t just sit back and wait for things to happen;
- To recognise that Ministers are members of the Government and might, therefore, sometimes be constrained;
- To have a real influence on policy;
- To see their voice loud and clear in the Forum’s future work programme.

Priorities

UK Advisory Forum on Ageing

This was a facilitator led session centred on table discussions. Forum members focused on identifying relevant issues and started to put them in some form of priority order:

- The Forum is a strategic group not an information monitoring group. It needs to shape and inform the work of task and finish groups and aim to be clear on the priorities it seeks to achieve and not have too many priorities.
- Promoting and supporting Government Departments in working together.
- Understanding the current situation and activity across the UK to enable the identification and promotion of good practice through organisations/groups/individuals that are making things happen/taking things forward.
- Understanding the links between income, social inclusion and engagement, seeking to address barriers, and promote equality.
- Promote attitudinal change through a range of approaches including intergenerational activity and challenging the media.
- Take a role in Age-proofing – there is no area where age does not have an impact.
- Working with Older People's Champions to develop the role, and support wider engagement and communications.

Future Work Programme

UK Advisory Forum on Ageing

This was a facilitator led session centred on table discussions. Forum members focused on translating their priorities into a future work programme, including identifying potential task and finish groups:

- Ageing Society Strategy – to have the opportunity for an information session and to decide on how best to engage with and advise on the implementation and subsequent development of the Strategy, and to contribute to consultation.
- Health and Well-being – to understand current activity and promote good practice, access to low level services, early intervention, etc.
- Income – to address all issues associated with older people’s income, including post retirement employment, complex financial packages, service improvements to benefit delivery, consistent access and availability to other services, e.g. Warmfront/Affordable Warmth.
- Attitudinal Change – to promote positive images of older people and seek to influence media portrayals of older people and challenge stereotypes; getting the message across to all age groups through intergenerational activity.
- Age proofing – across all government strategies and policies, supported by improved cross government working.
- Regional Engagement Strategies and Structures – to understand the different regional structures and ensure consistent commitment through a range of approaches; to take a measure of engagement at all levels and identify options to address gaps ensuring that all voices are heard.
- UK Focus – share developments from devolved nations; explore synergies between the Department for Work and Pensions, the Department of Health and Communities and Local Government.

Closing Remarks

Baroness Sally Greengross

Baroness Sally Greengross brought the meeting to a close by asking the Forum to reflect on the event and highlighting the key areas for action:

- Ageing Strategy – Forum members to be provided with a copy of the Strategy as soon as possible after it has been published and an information event to be arranged to enable early engagement with implementation.
- The Forum has to be advised of the extent of its authority and level of funding available to support its activity.
- Consider ways/means to influence attitudes on ageing, through the possible use of media, surveys or other activity. To promote a sea-change in the way media approach and represent the older person.
- Consider next steps to influence and introduce an age proofing mechanism, so that any policy development and delivery has fully captured age proofing aspects, including possible cross generational activities.
- Forum representatives to highlight issues to Forum Secretariat via email

Evaluation Comments on the First Meeting

UK Advisory Forum on Ageing

Forum members were asked to note of both “What went well?” and “What could be better?” before leaving the meeting. These views are summarised below:

What went well:

- Meeting was facilitated, not chaired, which created an informal dynamic and encouraged participation.
- Table discussions with mix of people from different backgrounds and with different perspectives.
- Sense of common interest, feeling of positive energy, willingness to work together and commitment to action.
- Opportunity to develop the Forum’s future work programme and agree own priorities.
- Membership includes all English regions and devolved nations, most were represented at the meeting and all representatives played an active part in discussions.
- The venue was good with an excellent lunch.

What could be better:

- More Ministerial time is essential.
- Very difficult to reach conclusions on a future work programme before the publication of the Ageing Society Strategy.
- Need to be given a defined set of aims, information on Government/Departmental priorities, “lead” members, a committee structure to follow and whole group discussion in plenary session.
- Inevitably with a first meeting we covered a lot of ground quite thinly; future meetings should be more in-depth, e.g. focusing on 2-3 substantial items with break-out discussions, and possibly progression through task and finish groups.
- Future meetings should follow different formats depending on the aim of the session; also table groupings should change.
- The day was too long, future meetings should be shorter with detail covered in task and finish groups.
- The time constraints on the meeting, although inevitable, were too tight.
- The table discussion approach made it difficult to identify clear outcomes to feedback.
- The room was too hot and stuffy.

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Action Points

| No. | Item | By When | Status |
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| 1 | UK Advisory Forum members to advise Secretariat of task and finish groups they would like to set up | 7 Aug 09 | Paper prepared for meeting on 20 October 2009. |
| 2 | UK Advisory Forum members to provide their postal address to Secretariat | 31 July 09 | Cleared |
| 3 | Secretariat to forward electronic and hard copies of the Ageing Society Strategy to Forum members when it is published. | 31 July 09 | Cleared |
| 4 | Secretariat to arrange a session on the Ageing Society strategy for Forum members. | 7 Aug 09 | Session arranged for 2 September 2009; members advised 6 August 2009. |
| 5 | UK Advisory Forum members to review the draft Terms of Reference provided, and send comments to the Secretariat. | 31 Aug 09 | |
| 6 | Secretariat to copy NIACE policy paper to all members when received. | 31 Aug 09 | Cleared |
| 7 | Secretariat to copy NW Regional Forum publications to all members when received. | 31 Aug 09 | Cleared |
| 8 | Secretariat to copy SW Regional Forum publication to all members. | 31 Aug 09 | Copies sent to Regional Forum reps – more copies requested. |
| 9 | Secretariat to advise Forum members on the authority/power that it has. | 11 Sept 09 | |
| 10 | Secretariat to advise on funding available to support UK Forum activity. | 11 Sept 09 | |

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Action Points

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| 11 | Secretariat to amend draft Terms of Reference and forward signed-off version to Forum members. | 25 Sept 09 | |