

Demographic Statistics Advisory Group Meeting**Date:** 17 January 2020**Time:** 10.30 am**Location:** Conference Room, Colby House, Belfast

Attendees		
Present	Dr David Marshall (Chair) Sandy Fitzpatrick Michael Gallagher Dr Ian Shuttleworth Simon Hookham Colin McElhinney Prof David Martin Susan Henderson	NISRA, Director of Census and Population Statistics NISRA, Head of Census Derry & Strabane Council School of Geography, Archaeology & Paleoecology, Queen's University Equality Commission for NI Pricewaterhouse Coopers University of Southampton Land and Property Services
In Attendance	Jonathan Harvey Dr Daniel McConville Eileen Byrne Denise Rainey	NISRA, Census Office NISRA, Census Office NISRA, Census Office NISRA, Census Office
Secretary	Mark Hunter	NISRA, Census Office
Apologies	Dr Dermot O'Reilly Virginia McVea Dr Esmond Birnie	Queens' University NI Electoral Office Ulster University

1. Welcome and apologies

Dr Marshall welcomed members to the meeting, thanked those present for their attendance and recorded apologies for those unable to attend. Dr Marshall went on to explain the purpose of the meeting, which was to provide members with an update on plans for the 2021 Census, to brief members on the 2019 Rehearsal and to provide an update on Demographic Statistics plans.

Introductions

As it has been some time since the previous meeting of DSAG, members and those in attendance introduced themselves.

2. Minutes from previous meeting

The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed and the following update on action points was given:

Action Point Number	Action Point Detail	Action Point Update
AP5 (14/3/18)	Demographic Statistics to send a letter to Council Chief Executives and Chief Planning Officers, to explain clearly the distinction between local area population projections and local area population forecasts.	<u>Closed</u> – 17/01/20 – Dr Marshall proposed closure as Local Council Engagement is a separate Agenda item and will be discussed in detail later in the meeting.
AP1 (26/2/19)	NISRA to bring a further paper to DSAG on output geography and to publish this and send to local councils as part of finalising the Outputs Strategy	<u>Closed</u> – 17/01/20 – Dr Marshall proposed closure as Local Council Engagement is a separate Agenda item and will be discussed in detail later in the meeting.
AP2 (26/2/19)	DSAG members to advise Richard Elliott by noon on Friday 1 March if they would like to engage with the expert panel meeting in London on 1 April.	<u>Closed</u> – 17/01/20 – DSAG members have been advised accordingly.

3. 2021 Census Update – 2019 Rehearsal

Dr Marshall gave a brief update to the meeting on activities that have taken place since the previous meeting. He explained that the Census Act has been amended so that no penalty will be incurred for failure to answer Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation questions. The meeting was informed that NISRA, in partnership with the Central Statistics Office (CSO) in Ireland hosted the 2019 International Census Forum in September.

Denise Rainey then gave a presentation on the 2019 Census Rehearsal.

Points arising from this agenda item:

Sandy Fitzpatrick provided details on the Census Smart Address Register and the work that has taken place to make it “smart”. Addresses are analysed to ascertain if they have a digital signal. If it is known that an area has limited broadband, the address may be treated as paper first. In addition, where it is estimated that a household contains only persons aged 70 or more a paper first approach may be used. Census Office are also looking at indications of

tenancy by using internet information on Private Rentals. All of this information will inform the initial mail-out process.

In response to queries from Michael Gallagher and Dr Shuttleworth, Dr Marshall provided detail on feedback from Contact Centre Staff. There were three broad types of query from those on telephone - elderly respondents who wanted to obtain a paper questionnaire, younger respondents with concerns on privacy and individuals who had difficulty in answering on behalf of others who lived in Houses of Multiple Occupancy

Susan Henderson asked for clarification on the Census Coverage Survey. It was explained that a random sample of postcodes in Census Rehearsal areas are selected to take part in our rehearsal of the Coverage Survey and this allows NISRA to estimate who was missed in the Rehearsal. Further discussion took place on the reasons given for refusing to take part, the availability of response rates for different areas and the information that will be taken from partly completed electronic forms.

Ian Shuttleworth made the points that Census Office should check that advertising works in other languages and consideration should be given to Student engagement.

Michael Gallagher suggested Census Office engage with local councils when recruiting field staff and made the point that Councillors are unaware that the Census will take place online and that this needs to be communicated to them.

2021 Census questionnaire (proposed position)

Dr McConville delivered a presentation on the final 2021 Census questionnaire.

Points arising from this agenda item:

Professor Martin asked if Administrative data will form part of the historical record and be available to researchers in the future. Dr Marshall noted that generally this will be the case but not so in relation to the work NISRA are undertaking on UK Armed Forces Veterans.

4. Population Statistics Update

Eileen Byrne presented a Population Statistics update outlining the latest NISRA population publications and the schedule for the forthcoming 2018-based Population Projections for Areas within Northern Ireland (due to be released in April 2020).

5. Local Council Engagement

Eileen Byrne noted that a population statistics user engagement event will take place on 13 February 2020. Dr Marshall explained that NISRA would like to engage with local councils separate to this event on the Census. Michael Gallagher suggested communicating via the SOLACE group. It was further suggested that wider public engagement could be made via the Confederation of British Industry, Universities, Schools and community groups.

6. AOB

As there was no further business to discuss, Dr Marshall thanked members for their attendance and closed the meeting.