

**Update of Measures of Spatial Deprivation  
Minutes of the First Steering Group Meeting  
2pm Thursday 10th March 2016  
Clarence Court, 10-18 Adelaide Street, Belfast**

<b>Present: Name</b>	<b>Department / Organisation</b>
Dr David Marshall (chair)	NISRA
Dr Tracy Power	NISRA
Brian Green	NISRA
Dr Jos Ijpelaar	NISRA
Claire McCann	NISRA
Alan Beggs	Newry, Mourne and Down Council
Teresa Canavan	Rural Development Council
Glyn Capper	DOJ
Aidan Campbell	Rural Community Network
Dr Paul Caskie (standing in for Norman Fulton)	DARD
Michelle Crawford	DSD
Dr Stephen Donnelly	DELNI
Simon Hookham	Equality Commission
David Hughes	DE
Liz Loughran	DOE
Hugh McNickle (standing in for Michael Gallagher)	Derry City and Strabane Council
Dr Eugene Mooney	DHSSPS
Tom Reid	DRD
Joe Reynolds	OFMDFM
Louise Scullion	Causeway Coast and Glens Council
Andrea Thornbury	NICVA
<b>Apologies:</b>	
Joe Frey	Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Sharon McNicholl	Belfast City Council

### **(i) Welcome and introduction**

David Marshall opened the meeting, welcomed everyone present and initiated round-the-table introductions.

### **(ii) Background to the Update and Overview of Deprivation work**

Brian Green delivered a presentation providing background information on the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures 2010 and an overview of the work to be carried out in terms of taking the planned update forward. Jos Ijpelaar informed the group about the 36 recommendations that arose from the 2010 MDM report and advised that they will be considered by the seven Domain Expert groups that have been established.

David Marshall invited a discussion on the background and the recommendations. Eugene Mooney asked who will decide on the relevance of indicators. Brian Green advised that they will be considered by the domain expert groups, who will be best placed to advise if the indicators are still appropriate or should be replaced by more up to date and/or relevant data. The Steering Group will however also be involved in ratifying any major decisions regarding indicators.

Aidan Campbell was concerned that the Proximity to Services Domain may show some rural areas to be deprived when they are not. He was also concerned that the Proximity to Services domain does not correlate with the other six Domains; most deprived areas are so on all Domains except Proximity to Services. He questioned whether the NIMDM has specified the conceptual model of deprivation properly. Brian Green explained that the current guidance on using the Multiple Deprivation Measure for rural areas suggests focussing on Small Areas to identify pockets of deprivation. He added that the weighting of the domains is something that NISRA would consider as part of the update and that sensitivity analysis will assess the impact of the proposed weights on the ranking of areas in terms of spatial deprivation.

Paul Caskie queried how the Measure would take account of depopulation and employment opportunities as indicators of deprivation. David Marshall noted that this will be considered by the appropriate Domain Expert Groups and specifically the Urban Rural Research group. Brian Green added that the latter group will consider if there is likely to be any urban-rural bias in the chosen indicators, providing support to the other Domain Expert Groups as appropriate.

Hugh McNickle raised the issue that people mostly use the Multiple Deprivation Measure and don't know enough about the individual domains and how to use them. Brian Green acknowledged that there was scope to do more in terms of educating key users on this matter and reassured the Steering Group that such activities would form an integral part of the dissemination strategy after the new measures are published.

Simon Hookham questioned the interaction of childcare facilities and employment, suggesting that childcare provisions should perhaps be included in the Employment Domain instead of Access to Services.

Michelle Crawford asked how deprivation aligns with the Programme for Government (PfG) and pointed out that there is currently a significant programme of Welfare Reform underway, which will impact on many people currently in receipt of various benefits and clearly have a notable affect on future data. Brian Green noted that Welfare Reform is currently on the Risk Register and will require ongoing analysis and advice from colleagues in DSD. Joe Reynolds stated that there will be a different type of Programme for Government (PfG) with more focus on the detailed recording of impacts, and that it was no reason to delay the Deprivation Update. Brian Green added that waiting until the complete implementation of the Welfare Reform programme would mean a significant delay to the Deprivation Update.

### **(iii) Governance- Steering Group TORs**

Brian Green presented the terms of reference to the group and asked for any views.

Michelle Crawford questioned what will happen where there are data gaps or new datasets available, and whether this should be considered by the Steering Group or the Domain Expert Groups. There could be a resource implication if new datasets are processed within Government Departments solely for the purposes of this work. David Marshall noted that this should be born in mind by the Steering Group, who have to take such matters under advice from the Domain Expert Groups.

Tom Reid advised that there may be data available in relation to accessibility to public transport, and provided Stephen Wood as the lead contact.

**Action: Jos Ijpelaar to invite Stephen Wood to the Access to Services group and to circulate membership of Steering Group and Domain Expert Groups**

Paul Caskie asked whose role it would be to look at the urban-rural bias, as well as the interactions between indicators and domains. Brian Green informed the group that each Domain Expert Group will look at urban-rural bias issues for those indicators associated with their respective domain, with support from the urban-rural Domain Expert Group which will be tasked with independently reviewing this particular aspect for all of the domains.

Glyn Capper asked whether there could be additional costs associated with the update. Brian Green responded that the project team will require input from the Domain Expert Groups in order to consider the current indicators and available data but that he expected no additional costs, unless the current Geography consultation concluded that a new statistical geography should be created. He added that this was recognised by the Statistics Co-ordinating Group when they commissioned NISRA to undertake the update.

Simon Hookham queried if the group was a 'steering group' or an 'advisory group'. In particular he questioned what would happen in the event of the Steering Group failing to come to an agreement and whether such an outcome would stop the process from moving forward. David Marshall said that he hoped it would **not** reach the stage where the Steering Group disagreed. However, if the group was unable to reach consensus then a majority decision would be taken. In the case where there was no clear majority, the case would be escalated to the Statistics Co-ordinating Group. It was agreed this should be added to the terms of reference.

David Marshall noted that the Steering Group should also discuss how best to engage with local Councils. It was agreed that this should be added to the Terms of Reference.

**Action: Brian Green to amend the Terms of Reference as per the discussion**

A discussion followed about the extent of any changes in the new deprivation work. Brian Green clarified that NISRA has been commissioned to undertake an update of the 2010 MDM, but not a full methodological review which the commissioning Statistics Co-ordinating Group recognised would require more time and cost significantly more money. He advised that he did not envisage a major departure from the current suite of indicators and domains and that the plan would be to use updated or improved data sources rather than seeking to incorporate data that are still under development.

Michelle Crawford asked what would happen if the frequency or quality of the new data is worse than current data. Brian Green stated that this will be considered in conjunction with the various Domain Expert Groups who will be best placed to advise. Joe Reynolds asked if the costs of any new data requirements will be borne by the data supplier or coming out of the MDM budget. Brian Green advised this would have to be borne by data providers as there was currently no provision within the current MDM funding agreed by SCG for such work.

**(iv) Business Case for Deprivation Update**

Brian Green gave a presentation outlining the business case for updating the deprivation.

**(v) High level work plan**

Jos Ijpelaar advised the group of the planned timeline for the update.

**(vi) Risk Strategy/ Risk Register**

Brian Green presented the risk register. David Marshall invited questions or comments from the group on the business case, work plan and risk register.

Michelle Crawford raised the issue of resource implications in terms of the supply of data and engagement of staff in Departments with this project. Brian Green responded that he recognised the risks which were reflected in the risk register. He re-iterated that this commitment was essential to the project and was recognised by the Statistics Co-ordinating Group when they commissioned NISRA to undertake the update. He stressed that every effort would be made by the project team to minimise both the number of Domain Expert Group meetings and the input required from Departments. Stephen Donnelly outlined that NISRA has a 'Concordat' with Departments to which it seconded statisticians, stating that as part of their role they should serve the public interest through, for example, supporting the deprivation update.

David Marshall noted that a communications strategy will be built into the project, as he foresees political engagement and with the new Local Government Districts. Michelle Crawford added that the voluntary & community sector should also be included for detailed engagement.

**Action: Jos IJpelaar to draft a Communications Strategy for discussion at the next meeting**

Aidan Campbell suggested that the Republic of Ireland Deprivation model is considered as there may be approaches and issues raised by the Model used that could inform this work. Brian Green advised that while the team will look at the ROI approach and the constituent indicators, there are notable differences to the Noble methodology. He re-iterated that NISRA had been commissioned to undertake an update of the current MDM to challenging deadlines and not a full scale review.

#### **(vii) Output Geography consultation**

After a short introduction by Brian Green, Jos IJpelaar explained to the group that there was a consultation process in place regarding the output geography that should be used for the updated deprivation measure. The group was advised that the consultation was launched on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2016 and will run for 12 weeks to 4<sup>th</sup> May 2016.

**(viii) AOB**

Aidan Campbell suggested that how the data are presented is considered. He suggested that instead of using the rank or the top 10% NISRA should follow the Republic of Ireland approach and present how the areas compare to the average and group areas depending on the degree of difference from the mean. It was agreed that this would be considered as part of the dissemination process.

**(ix) Date of next meeting**

David Marshall proposed to arrange the second meeting of the Steering Group before the summer holidays (June 2016). At that point, the geography consultation will have finished and all Domain Expert Groups will have met at least once.

**Action: Jos Ijpelaar to organise the second meeting of the Steering Group**

**NISRA**

**March 2016**