

**Update of Measures of Spatial Deprivation
 Minutes of the Second Steering Group Meeting
 10am Monday 22nd June 2009
 Boardroom, McAuley House**

Present:

Name	Department / Organisation
Robert Beatty (Chair)	NISRA
David Marshall	NISRA
Gary Ewing (Secretary)	NISRA
Cathryn McBurney	NISRA
Malcolm Megaw (deputising for Keith Morrison)	DARD
Philip Spotswood	DCAL
Karen McCullough	DE
Martin Mayock	DHSSPS
Stephanie Harcourt	DRD
Tony McKibben	DSD
Frances McCandless	NICVA
Joe Frey	NIHE
Alan McClelland	OFMDFM
Ruth McAreavey	RDC
Daniel McSorley	SOLACE

Apologies were received from Keith Morrison (DARD), Martin Monaghan (DETI), Dave Rogers (DEL), Alex Boyle (DOE), Margaret Langhammer (DRD), Darren McKinstry (Equality Commission).

(i) Welcome and introduction

Robert Beatty welcomed all present and initiated round-the-table introductions.

(ii) Minutes and actions from previous meeting (3rd Feb 2009)

The minutes were agreed as an accurate reflection of the first Steering Group Meeting.

One action was outstanding – action point 4 – inform DFP committee. This was discussed later in the meeting.

(iii) Consultation document

Cathryn McBurney gave a presentation with an overview of the NIMDM 2005 and the update process thus far, before discussing the consultation document and process more fully.

General comments followed on the consultation and consultation process. Frances McCandless advised that a consultation box be added at the end of every domain chapter – even when changes have not been proposed. Martin Mayock asked about the production of small area population estimates. Cathryn McBurney clarified that they were being produced in parallel with the deprivation measures and that a separate document detailing the methodology behind their calculation would be published. Frances McCandless raised a general point about the NIMDM 2005 recommendations and how they were not priorities for other organisations, and asked that this was investigated.

Crime and Disorder:

Cathryn McBurney described the Crime and Disorder Domain 2005, the recommendations outlined in the report and the progress against the recommendations.

Two main points were discussed: (1) the underreporting of domestic violence and (2) the reporting of noise complaints to District Councils.

(1) Ruth McAreavey asked whether Women's Aid could provide data on domestic violence due to the under reporting to the PSNI. Cathryn McBurney explained that evidence from the NI Crime Survey suggests that the PSNI are the best source of data for this.

(2) Philip Spotswood advised that councils keep records of noise disturbances and Daniel McSorley offered to investigate this source of data.

Action Point 1: Daniel McSorley to investigate councils as an additional source of disturbance data.

Employment:

Cathryn McBurney described the Employment Domain 2005, the recommendations outlined in the report and the progress against the recommendations. No changes have been proposed from the 2005 domain.

The discussions that followed centred around (1) the lack of information on hidden unemployment and (2) the extent to which the results of the employment domain would be affected by the timing of the update i.e. during a recession.

(1) In particular Ruth McAreavey raised the issue of lack of childcare facilities being a barrier to employment and advised that this should be included as an indicator. It was suggested that this might fit better into the proximity to services.

(2) Robert Beatty explained that the timestamp will always be an issue in any update process but that the deprivation measures are a point-in-time measure. David Marshall added that all areas in NI are affected by the recession and as the measures are 'relative', the timing should not unduly influence the ranks.

Action Point 2: DMB to look into availability of childcare facilities data and its potential for use as an indicator of hidden unemployment.

Income:

Cathryn McBurney described the Income Domain 2005, the recommendations outlined in the report and the progress against the recommendations. The discussion that followed focussed on the inability to obtain Tax Credit data and the effect this will have on the domain.

David Marshall explained that HMRC no longer provide data for the tax credits indicators, most likely due to data protection issues. However this is not a problem for NI alone, and the Office for National Statistics is taking this forward this issue at a UK level. The Steering Group agreed that the lack of Tax Credit data was an important issue. Options for obtaining this data were discussed including that the Steering Group should write a letter to the Minister.

Ruth McAreavey enquired whether the Housing Benefit Indicator and is likely to capture those who receive Tax Credit data. It was agreed that DMB will investigate this further and if this is the case the consultation document should highlight this as a substitute.

Action Point 3: DMB to investigate the relationship between Tax Credits and Housing Benefit.

Living Environment:

Cathryn McBurney described the Living Environment Domain 2005, the recommendations outlined in the report and the progress against the recommendations. The discussion that followed focussed on (1) the quality of homelessness data and the proposal to remove communal establishments, (2) the removal of the overcrowding indicator based on the Census 2001 and (3) whether a fuel poverty indicator was needed in this domain.

(1) Joe Frey explained that conceptually it may be suitable to include communal establishments rather than remove from the dataset.

Action Point 4: DMB to talk to Joe Frey about how best to deal with communal establishments.

(2) Ruth McAreavey articulated that overcrowding is a very serious issue, especially for migrant and student populations and removing it from the

domain would suggest that it is no longer important. The group discussed that the 2001 Census data pre-dates significant portions of the migrant population in Northern Ireland and to use this data source would be misleading. It was agreed that a more detailed explanation would be included in the consultation document explaining the arguments for and against the use of the Census 2001 indicator.

Action Point 5: DMB to further explain issue around Census 2001 household overcrowding indicator in the consultation.

(3) Daniel McSorley highlighted that fuel poverty is a very significant deprivation issue and questioned whether fuel poverty is adequately considered in the consultation document. Robert Beatty replied that fuel poverty is likely to be captured in the current proposals through Decent Home Standard itself and through the income domain. Further research will be conducted and an explanation added to the consultation.

Action Point 6: DMB to investigate fuel poverty further.

Proximity to Services:

Cathryn McBurney described the Proximity to Services Domain 2005, the recommendations outlined in the report and the progress against the recommendations. (1) The 'Other Primary Health Care' indicator, (2) the composition of the 'General Services' indicator and (3) access to broadband formed the main part of the discussion.

(1) The combination of dentists, pharmacists and opticians into one indicator was questioned as it was generally felt that pharmacists were more important than opticians and dentists. Concerns were raised that the dentist indicator could be considered contentious with regards to NHS and private dentists and clarification was sought as to whether a person's ability to pay had any relevance. Martin Mayock stated that if it was not considered to be a factor then the indicator should theoretically relate to all dentists, both NHS and private, although there may be issues over availability of data in respect of private dentist locations. If it is a factor, then there is still an issue over whether all NHS-registered dentists should be included or only those who have actually accepted new NHS registrations in the recent past.

Action Point 7: DMB to clarify purpose of indicator and check data availability.

(2) Frances McCandless questioned the inclusion of health and beauty establishments in the General Services indicator. It was raised that for many elderly people their weekly visit to the hairdressers was their main social interaction for the week and so had merits as an indicator.

(3) Daniel McSorley raised the lack of an indicator relating to 'access to broadband services' and Ruth McAreavey added that access to a library was

also important. Daniel McSorley recalled that although libraries were not explicitly included in the previous measures, the service centre indicator was included to capture it and a broader range of services.

Action Point 8: DMB to contact DETI regarding measures of broadband access.

Education:

Cathryn McBurney described the Education, Skills and Training Domain 2005, the recommendations outlined in the report and the progress against the recommendations. The discussion that followed centred on (1) the proposed omission of the grammar school indicator in favour of the Key Stage 2 data and (2) the introduction of three sub-domains.

(1) There was discussion about the variation in admission rates at grammar schools and the change in the transfer test system and it was agreed that Key Stage 2 data were a more accurate measure of primary school educational attainment.

(2) The improvement in primary school level information and inability to update the adult qualification indicator from Census 2001 data was explained. The group was in general agreement that the proposed three domain approach (primary, post primary and working age adults) was acceptable.

Action Point 9: Steering Group to give views on changing from 2 sub-domains to 3 in education domain.

Health:

Cathryn McBurney described the Health Deprivation and Disability Domain 2005, the recommendations outlined in the report and the progress against the recommendations. The proposals to add an (1) Emergency Admissions indicator, (2) children's dental health indicator and low birth weight indicator were discussed.

(1) Martin Mayock explained that DHSSPS work on emergency indicators showed a small but nevertheless statistically significant 'proximity to hospital' bias existed. However by excluding hospital admissions resulting in a stay of 3 nights or less, the bias was eliminated. Daniel McSorley queried why the bias would disappear at this particular cut-off point and Martin Mayock suggested that it was in line with increasing severity of condition (if you assume, not unreasonably, that length of stay and severity of condition are related). Martin Mayock explained that the significance of the initial small bias diminished with each successive night's stay to the point where it ceased to be significant for stays of 4 days or more. Martin Mayock offered to share his analysis with Daniel McSorley.

Action Point 10: Steering Group to advise on whether an Emergency Admissions indicator relating to Emergency Admissions resulting in a stay of at least 4 days should be included?

(2) Karen McCullough pointed out that dentists no longer visit schools and so coverage would be less widespread than in the past. However, Martin Mayock stated that the reason for stopping the school visit scheme was because an evaluation showed it only had a small impact on children's dental health in deprived areas and that it had been since replaced by more cost-effective targeting schemes. It would not be correct therefore to conclude that coverage had necessarily been diminished. The removal of teeth for orthodontic treatment and whether this constituted deprivation was also discussed.

Action Point 11: Steering Group to advise on whether to include either low birth weight or children's dental extractions or both indicators.

(iv) Process following today's meeting

David Marshall outlined the process and proposed timeline for the publication of the consultation and consultation period. Steering Group members were asked to provide comments on the consultation document by 30th June.

Action Point 12: Steering Group to return all comments by 30th June 2009

Consultation:

Frances McCandless suggested holding a public event in Lisburn. Daniel McSorley also requested a public consultation meeting in Omagh. It was agreed that the public consultation should run from August 2009 to November 2009, with public meetings in September 2009.

Committees:

The DFP Committee will be informed when the consultation period has started and DMB will meet with the DFP Committee towards the end of the consultation period. Alan McClelland explained that the OFMdfM Committee may also be interested and that perhaps the DFP Committee could write to other Committees with an overview.

(v) Any other business

Next Steering Group Meeting to be held in November.

Summary of Actions

Action	Detail	Lead
1	Investigate availability of disturbances data from councils	Daniel McSorley
2	Investigate availability of data on childcare facilities	DMB
3	Investigate the relationship between Tax Credits/Housing Benefit in consultation	DMB
4	Discuss with Joe Frey how best to attribute communal homeless shelters	DMB
5	Explain pros and cons for excluding Census 2001 overcrowding indicator	DMB
6	Investigate how fuel poverty links with other deprivation indicators	DMB
7	Clarify if both private and NHS dentists are used	DMB
8	Contact DETI regarding a better measure of broadband access.	DMB
9	Return views on changing from 2 sub-domains to 3 in education, skills and training domain	Steering Group
10	Advise whether an Emergency Admissions indicator relating to Emergency Admissions resulting in a stay of at least 4 days should be included?	Steering Group
11	Return views on whether to include either low birth weight or children's dental extractions indicators or both indicators	Steering Group
12	Return all comments by 30 th June 2009	Steering Group