

Census Advisory Group (CAG)
Minutes of meeting held in McAuley House
Monday 21 December 2009

<u>Present:</u>	Mr R Beatty	Census Office, NISRA - Chair
	Dr D Marshall	Demography Branch, NISRA
	Mr B Green	Census Office, NISRA
	Mrs M Brolly	Demography Branch, NISRA
	Mr J Frey	Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE)
	Mr S Bloomer	NI Council for Voluntary Action
	Mr J Power	NI Assembly
	Mr N Rogers	Independent
	Mr T Dignan	Economic Research and Evaluation
	Prof B Osborne	University of Ulster
	Dr I Shuttleworth	School of Geosciences, QUB
	Ms J McCarley	Electoral Office NI
	Prof D Martin (audio link)	University of Southampton
	Dr A Marshall	Centre for Statistical Science and Operational Research, QUB
	Mrs L Marshall	Secretary
<u>Apologies:</u>	Mr D McKinstry	Equality Commission for NI
	Mr C McIlheney	Price Waterhouse Cooper
	Dr Dermot O'Reilly	School of Epidemiology & Public Health, QUB

1. Welcome and Introductions

Mr Beatty commenced proceedings by welcoming everyone to the meeting. Introductions were made for the benefit of new members. Mr Beatty expressed his thanks for the contribution outgoing members had made over the past number of years.

2. Minutes from Previous CAG meeting (14 May & 30 June 2009)

[Minutes for 14 May 2009](#)

Minutes for 30 June 2009

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed without exception. Mr Beatty advised that the population projections had been published in November, with a sub-NI projections meeting planned in February/March.

3. Actions from previous meeting (14 May 2009)

Actions from 14 May 2009 meeting

Mr Beatty advised that all actions from the previous meeting had either been completed or were to be covered by this meeting's agenda.

4. Census rehearsal feedback

PAPER: 2009 Census Rehearsal Evaluation Plan

http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/Census/2009%20Rehearsal/H4_09.PDF

Mr Green gave the embedded presentation on the Census Rehearsal.

Mr Power enquired as to how the Northern Ireland Rehearsal experience compared to that of England & Wales and Scotland. Mr Beatty confirmed that response rates were of the same magnitude, although slightly lower in Northern Ireland. He advised however that England & Wales had conducted an extensive publicity campaign, whereas there had been no publicity at all in Northern Ireland. He also reported that the experience in England & Wales had varied significantly between Rehearsal areas (for example the rate in Anglesey had been good, whereas parts of London and Birmingham had been poor).

Mr Beatty confirmed that the internet response rate had been disappointing, and acknowledged the need to promote this as a key message during the publicity for 2011. Mr Frey advised that the internet response rates achieved during the Rehearsal were broadly comparable with those experienced in the housing sector.

CAG members advised of their experiences with internet completion of the Rehearsal questionnaire. Dr Shuttleworth that he had had some problems with numerical values and multiples, and suggested that pre-population could have been better. Other members advised that it had been very accessible and easy to use, other than some problems with the length of addresses. Mr Beatty advised that the online completion had originally been designed as a direct replica of the paper version, and that this would need to be considered for 2011. He added that there would be joint work on this with ONS in the new year.

5. Address Register update (verbal)

Dr Shuttleworth asked if publicity messages would be different in Fermanagh. Mr Green confirmed that this would need to be the case, as well as the distribution of a different information leaflet, and different training and work patterns for field staff etc. He added that this would be considered in further detail.

Mr Green advised that, other than some authentication issues surrounding postcodes, there was no reason why internet completion should not be feasible for rural Fermanagh. He confirmed that the unique internet access code would be randomly generated, rather than geographically.

Prof Martin observed that gaps in the address register tended to be characteristic rather than geographical (for example, shops with maisonettes, corner addresses etc), and the challenge would be in identifying these characteristics. Mr Beatty advised that enumerators would be trained to check the address register was accurate in this regard.

Mr Rogers highlighted the importance of an accurate address register in improving census coverage, and pledged his support for any improvements.

6. Outputs consultation

PAPER: 2011 Census Outputs Consultation Letter

Mr Green advised of NISRA's intention to hold roadshows on Outputs in the new year, and would be requesting the views of CAG members and other key contacts ahead of this. He referred to the embedded paper.

Mr Green confirmed that the Output and Super Output Areas would nest within the new electoral wards. Mr Beatty advised that the Parliamentary Boundary Commissioner was likely to amend his boundaries accordingly, so that, in due course, parliamentary constituencies would be amended to become exact aggregates of wards.

A discussion arose on datacubes and the array of figures that would be made available. Mr Green welcomed Mr Dignan's views on the matter as an experienced user. Mr Beatty invited members to have phone conversations with NISRA to discuss in further detail, as well as submitting written comments.

Mr Green asked that members consider the proposals and respond by mid January. He advised that ONS had already begun its Outputs consultation.

ACTION: CAG MEMBERS

7. Legislation update (verbal)

Mr Beatty advised that the Order for England & Wales had now gone through the legislative process, and undertook to send a link to the Westminster debates with the minutes of the meeting. He added that the Conservatives had voted against the Order on the basis that it was too intrusive and too expensive.

ACTION: MRS MARSHALL

The Regulations would be next to go through the legislative process. He advised that the Welsh Assembly Government had been given the right to pass the Regulations for Wales.

Mr Beatty advised that Scotland were behind England & Wales in the process, but were on schedule.

Mr Beatty advised that the Northern Ireland Order was with the Executive for approval.

Prof Osborne observed that foundation degrees had not been included in the question on education qualifications, and advised that this could exclude many people, as they were a progressive route to a bachelor degree. Mr Green agreed to consider.

ACTION: MR GREEN

8. Demography

PAPER: Update to NI Deprivation Measure (NIMDM)

Dr D Marshall and Mrs Brolly provided an update.

Population and vital statistics

Dr D Marshall advised that a seminar on administrative data was planned for January.

Small area population statistics

Dr D Marshall acknowledged that population estimates for small areas was a known gap in demographic outputs, and that Mr Dignan was now working with Demography and Methodology Branch on this.

Deprivation

Dr D Marshall referred to the embedded paper. He advised that the multiple deprivation measures, which were last published in 2005, were being updated and were in the process of being finalised according to the same principles as previously. He added that there would be a fundamental review after the 2011 Census.

2011 Geography

Mrs Brolly advised that when RPA was implemented, the demand for information on old and new geographies would need to be managed. She referred to the potential use of road polygons over postcodes as small area building blocks, with look up tables provided and advised that the same design principle would be applied in the creation of the 2011 output areas. She advised that a grid square product would be the best way to compare small geographical areas over time. Mr Green advised that Dr O'Reilly had suggested that a grid square product may not be sufficient for some health indicators for 2001-2011.

Mrs Brolly advised that there would be a new GIS platform, which would create small geographical units in an automated way.

Mr Beatty assured that CAG members would be consulted on the detail. Members pledged their general support in principle. Mr Beatty advised that hard copy proposals would be ready by summer 2010.

9. AOB

Mr Beatty advised that the UK Statistics Authority had decided to assess the Census in each part of the UK. This would be done in three parts: Consultation and planning; fieldwork operations; and outputs. Evidence for the first assessment has now been submitted. Initial feedback is expected in January, with a report in March. Mr Beatty advised that, as part of this evidence, CAG member names and contacts had been provided.

10. Close

Mr Beatty thanked members for all their work throughout the year, and wished all a very enjoyable holiday.

NISRA

January 2010