

Date: Monday 18 April 2016

Time: 10.00am – 12.15pm

Location: Boardroom, 4th Floor McAuley House

Present	Mr Robert Beatty (Chair)	Census Office – NISRA
	Ms Rachel Shannon	NICVA
	Mr Richard Ramsey	Ulster Bank
	Dr Tony Dignan	Economic Research and Evaluation
	Mr Joe Frey	Northern Ireland Housing Executive
	Prof Adele Marshall	CenSSOR – Queen’s University Belfast
In attendance	Mr Brian Green	Demographic Statistics – NISRA
	Mr Richard Elliott	Demographic Statistics – NISRA
	Mrs Máire Brolly	Census Office – NISRA
Secretary	Ms Bronagh Cunningham	Census Office – NISRA
Apologies	Mr John Power	Northern Ireland Assembly
	Mr Colin McIlheney	PriceWaterhouseCoopers
	Dr Dermot O’Reilly	Queen’s University, Belfast
	Dr Ian Shuttleworth	Queen’s University, Belfast
	Mrs Jocelyn McCarley	Electoral Office for Northern Ireland
	Mr Darren McKinstry	Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
	Prof David Martin	University of Southampton

1. Agenda

The agenda for the meeting is available from: <http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/dsag/18-04-2016/agenda.pdf>

2. Agenda item 1: Welcome and NISRA re-organisation

Mr Beatty welcomed members to the meeting, thanked those present for their attendance and recorded apologies for those unable to attend. Mr Beatty recorded his thanks to Dr Caven, who had retired as Chief Executive of NISRA and Registrar General for Northern Ireland since the last meeting, for all his work in Census and Demography over the years.

Points arising from this agenda item:

None.

3. Agenda item 2: Membership and Terms of Reference

The 'Demographic Statistics Advisory Group Terms of Reference' is available from:

<http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/dsag/terms-of-reference.pdf>

Mr Beatty reflected on the history of the Census Advisory Group, with the change to include other demographic aspects to the Advisory Group's Terms of Reference coming from recommendations made by the UKSA. Mr Beatty asked the Advisory Group if they were content with the revised Terms of Reference, Advisory Group members indicated the changes were acceptable. Mr Green asked the Advisory Group their thoughts on expanding membership to representatives from other organisations, including councils and the University of Ulster. Advisory Group members welcomed this decision.

Points arising from this agenda item:

Ms Shannon indicated NICVA would be happy to provide information on voluntary groups working in specific areas. Mr Beatty added that there would be dedicated community liaison work taking place prior to the 2021 Census to cater for such groups.

4. Agenda item 3: Minutes and actions from previous CAG meeting

The minutes from the previous Census Advisory Group meeting are available from:

<http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/census/2011/cag/minutes/25-02-2015.pdf>

The minutes from the previous meeting were accepted.

Mr Beatty also confirmed that all actions were closed.

Points arising from this agenda item:

None.

5. Agenda item 4: 2021 Census Design

The '2021 Census Design Document for Northern Ireland' is available from: [DOCUMENT TO FOLLOW]

Mr Beatty updated members on the progress of the 2011 Census outputs and publications, including the recent publication of Key Statistics for Settlements and District Electoral Areas (2014). 2011 Census data is also available for researchers through the Northern Ireland Longitudinal Study and the Administrative Data Research Centre.

Mr Beatty thanked members for the contribution over the whole 2011 Census cycle; their input played an important part in the success of the 2011 Census.

Mr Beatty updated members on the overview of the 2021 Census, which will be predominantly online. He presented the 2021 Census Design Document for Northern Ireland to the Advisory Group; among some of the discussion points Mr Beatty highlighted the greater role of administrative data in the 2021 Census and the joint work with LPS to improve the quality of the POINTER database and ultimately lead to a high quality Address Register for 2021. Mr Beatty added that administrative data would also play a role in following up non-responses during the 2021 Census, by helping focus the follow-up work on addresses with 'poor quality' administrative data.

Mr Beatty added that Census Office are looking at the work of international census colleagues in the build up to their censuses including initial contact, mobile devices, volumes of responses and potential impact to online system. While the thoughts behind how we could use these initiatives are in their early stages, these are things we would refine during testing in 2017 and the 2019 Rehearsal.

Points arising from this agenda item:

Mrs Brolly added that, for the 2021 Census, administrative data had the potential to make improvements to a number of areas, including:

- address register
- enumerator intelligence
- hard to count measures
- supplement census returns
- targeted follow-up
- quality assurance

Mr Beatty noted that, in the coming years, projects published through the Administrative Data Research Centre (ADRC) and Northern Ireland Longitudinal Study (NILS) will play a role in showing administrative data owners the benefits of sharing their data.

The Group discussed the potential cost of running a census in 2021; Mr Beatty indicated that the business case was still being developed.

Mr Ramsey asked how a predominately online census was going to deal with people who don't use the internet, because they are not proficient in its use or their location has poor internet connection. Mr Beatty indicated that Census Office are considering running a number of completion events during the census. While locations have yet to be determined, Census Office would be looking to use places such as libraries, Citizens Advice Bureaus etc.

Ms Shannon asked if the Field Force could be used to help people complete their questionnaires by using tablets. Mr Beatty stated this was something Census Office were actively looking at.

Mr Ramsey noted that the general public should be made aware of the cost savings associated with completing their Census return early in the process (thus avoiding follow-up costs) and indeed completing it online.

Ms Shannon noted the impact of branding would be very important, Mrs Brolly and Mr Beatty acknowledged the point and advised the Group this was currently being looked at.

6. Agenda item 5: Update on the 2021 Census Topic Consultation and testing plans in 2017 (verbal update)

Mr Beatty updated the Group on the 2021 Census Topic Consultation in ONS and NRS, and on the progress made in Northern Ireland, including early testing plans.

Points arising from this agenda item:

The Group discussed, in more detail, some of the aspects of question testing for 2021 Census.

7. Agenda item 6: Assumptions on sub-national population projections (verbal update)

Mr Elliott provided the Group with an overview of the sub-national population projections, including proposals for the mortality, fertility and migration assumptions for sub-national population projections. Mr Elliott and Mr Green invited the Group to consider these proposals and respond to the note that was issued to the Group by 21 April 2016.

Points arising from this agenda item:

Mr Ramsey asked if the outcome of the EU referendum could have an impact on the migration aspect of the sub-national population projections. Mr Green stated that population projections are based on demographic trends alone; users can overlay their own external factors should they wish however they are not included in the projections. He added that the assumptions would of course be revisited for subsequent projections (which are typically undertaken every two years) when more about the impact of the referendum would be known. Any resulting change to the methodology would of course be discussed at the UK level.

8. Agenda item 7: UKSA assessment update

The 'UKSA assessment update' is available from: <http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/dsag/18-04-2016/uksa-assessment-update.pdf>

Mr Elliott updated the Group on the progress made by Demographic Statistics in implementing the six specific requirements, and six suggestions, included in the UKSA's report on the assessment of compliance on the code of practice relating to Population Estimates and Projections for Northern Ireland.

Points arising from this agenda item:

None.

9. Agenda item 8: Geography update

The 'Geography update' is available from: <http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/dsag/18-04-2016/geography-update.pdf>

Mr Green provided the Group with an update on work carried out by the geography team, including the:

- release of an updated Central Postcode Directory (CPD) in December 2015
- publication of refreshed technical and supporting documents

Mr Green highlighted the future work plans for the team, including the impact of the review of Parliamentary Constituencies in Northern Ireland and an Urban-Rural classification for statistical geographies.

Points arising from this agenda item:

The Group discussed the approach that may be taken to classify an area as urban or rural.

10. Agenda item 9: Multiple Deprivation update

The 'Multiple Deprivation update' is available from: <http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/dsag/18-04-2016/multiple-deprivation-update.pdf>

Mr Green updated the Group on the work being carried out to update the Multiple Deprivation Measures in Northern Ireland. He advised the Group that a Steering Group was now in place and that a consultation on the geography to be used in the update was currently ongoing.

Points arising from this agenda item:

The Group discussed some of the aspects of the use of the current measures.

Mr Green encouraged the Group to feed into the consultation exercise to consider the geographical levels at which the updated measures will be published.

11. Agenda item 10: Any other business

No items were put forward.

Mr Beatty thanked members for their attendance and noted that both the challenge and the support roles that the group had provided over the years was very much appreciated.

The meeting closed the meeting at 12.00pm.