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| Notes from: | UK Advisory Forum on Ageing 23 May 2012 |
| Chair: | Elaine Squires, Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) |
| Ministers attending: | Steve Webb, Minister of State for Pensions Paul Burstow, Minister of State for Care Services |
| Members: | Claire Keatinge, Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland Sara Stone, Deputy Older People's Commissioner for Wales Barry Wilford, East Midlands Regional Forum Ron Douglas, East of England Regional Forum Ellen Lebethe, London Regional Forum Norman Jemison, North East Regional Forum Kevan Larkin, representing Pam Flynn, North West Regional Forum Ruth Rose, South East Regional Forum Brian Warwick, South West Regional Forum Keith Sherman, West Midlands Regional Forum Shelagh Marshall, Yorkshire & Humber Regional Forum Agnes McGroarty, Scottish Older People's Assembly Rob Blundell, Welsh Senate of Older People Emily Georghiou, representing Mervyn Kohler, Age UK (am only) Mervyn Kohler, Age UK (pm only) Alan Hatton-Yeo, Beth Johnson Foundation (BJF) Howard Lewis, UKOPAG representing ChangeAGENTS Network UK Limited Alan Beazley, Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion (ENEI) Raj Jogia, Kensington & Chelsea Forum for Older Residents Matthew Hibberd, representing Cllr David Rodgers OBE, Local Government Association (LGA) Prof. Stephen McNair, National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) Marion Wilson, representing Dot Gibson, National Pensioners Convention (NPC) Laura Bennett, SENSE |
| Observing: | Mike Larking, Department for Communities & Local Government (CLG) Evan Morris, Cheshire Fire Service Andrew Regan, Office of the Older People's Commissioner for Wales John Welham, Yorkshire & Humberside Regional Forum Dr Nori Graham, Age Action Alliance Sam Haskell, Department of Health (DH) Clare Talbot, Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) |
| Officials: | Lorraine Jackson, Department of Health (DH) Andrew Latto, Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) (am only) Keith Roberts, Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) (am only) |
| Apologies: | Paul Carnie, representing Junior Ministers Martina Anderson & Jonathan Bell, Office of the First Minister & Deputy First Minister (Northern Ireland) John Storey, Older People & Age Team, Equality Unit, Scottish Government Andrea Nicholas-Jones, Adult Social Services Policy Division, Welsh Assembly Alan Sidaway, Scottish Older People's Assembly Wendy Bourton, National Partnership Forum for Older People, Wales Dawn Warwick, Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) Steve McIntosh, Carers UK Gilly Crosby, Centre for Policy on Ageing (CPA) Baroness Sally Greengross, Equality & Human Rights Commission (EHRC) Chris Ball, The Age and Employment Network (TAEN) |
| Speakers: | Laura Ferguson, Campaign to End Loneliness James Holland, Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) |

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| Speakers: | Guy Robertson, Local Government Group Brian Keating, Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) Andrew Chaplin, Foundations |
| Secretariat: | Gwen Wolf, Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) Sheila Simpson, Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) |
| Meeting Support: | Margaret Russell, Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) David Bateman, Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) Helen Dimmock, Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) Simon Wilkinson, Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) Anna Bartlett, Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) – Material Deprivation Claire Frew, Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) – Material Deprivation Lucy Radford, Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) – Material Deprivation |

Welcome, Introductions and Update Elaine Squires DWP

Elaine welcomed everyone to the meeting and took the opportunity to introduce Kevan Larkin and Marion Wilson who were representing members unable to attend; and those individuals who were attending as observers.

Elaine also updated members on:

- Single Tier Pension – Reforms will be introduced early in the next Parliament and the new rules will apply to future pensioners only. Further detail will be provided in a White Paper in the Spring.
- State Pension Age – the Government has announced that the increase from 66 to 67 will happen between 2026 and 2028, this change will require the approval of Parliament. Details about the proposed increase to 67 have been published in an Impact Assessment (<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/ia-increasing-state-pension-age-to-67.pdf>). The Chancellor confirmed, in the budget, that further changes will reflect increases in life expectancy; more detailed proposals will be published at the time of the Office for Budget Responsibility's fiscal sustainability report in July 2012.
- Age Action Alliance – now over 200 members. Currently eight working groups, including one on Healthy Workplaces; three working groups are led by older people. Will be asking the Reference Group to develop guideklines on how older people should be involved in the work of the Alliance.
- UK Older People's Day – the theme for this year will be the Big Skills Share, celebrating the contribution of older people by sharing time, skills and experience across generations; and will focus on four areas; leisure and sport; home and family; work; and volunteering. Full of Life branded materials will continue to be available.

Tackling Loneliness and Isolation – What we are doing, and why it matters
Laura Ferguson, Campaign to End Loneliness
Lorraine Jackson, DH

Laura Ferguson from the Campaign to End Loneliness gave a presentation, on the work of the Campaign, supported by Lorraine Jackson from DH. This presentation was followed by table discussions to inform the session with Ministers later in the day.

A [copy of the presentation](#) is available with these notes; and key points from the table discussions are at Annex A.

Pensioner Material Deprivation
James Holland, DWP

James Holland from the Pensioner Welfare Division at DWP gave a presentation on Pensioner Material Deprivation, which was followed by table discussions.

A [copy of the presentation](#) is available with these notes; and the key points from the table discussions are at Annex B.

Members raised the issue of the Pension Credit automaticity study in discussion and asked for sight of the evaluation. This is available from:

Report Summary: <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/summ2011-2012/795and796summ.pdf>

Quantitative Evaluation: <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2011-2012/rrep796.pdf>

Qualitative Evaluation: <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2011-2012/rrep795.pdf>

Tackling Loneliness and Isolation
Minister for Pensions, Steve Webb
Minister of State for Care Services, Paul Burstow

Ministers were given a brief update from the morning discussions on tackling loneliness and isolation; highlighting the importance of:

- Influencing Health and Wellbeing Boards;
- Implementation of the Equality Act;
- Role of adult education in combating loneliness.

The Minister for Pensions agreed that adult education played an important role in supporting an active and inclusive later life, noting that his parents were actively involved with U3A. He also highlighted the importance of getting individuals involved in their community as they reach retirement, citing learning from both Ageing Well and Community Agents to demonstrate this.

The Minister advised members that one of the positive products from Ageing Well was the Combating Loneliness guide, available on the LGA website; and explained that he wanted to see this document used across the country and not just to be another document on a website.

The Minister told the meeting that he saw the Pensioner Material Deprivation Indicator as key to understanding the whole diversity of what it means to be an older person and miss out on what others would see as essential elements of life. It was important to recognise and keep in mind that ensuring the wellbeing of older people is about more than pensions.

The Minister of State for Care Services re-inforced his commitment to the work that the Department of Health is taking forward with the Campaign to End Loneliness; and made the point that this is a complex set of issues that can only be addressed through co-ordinated multi-agency working and, in some areas, community development. Research evidence on social isolation indicates that it can have health affects as adverse and dramatic as smoking. It is therefore a public health issue which requires a life course approach.

The Minister went on to explain that Health and Wellbeing Boards are made up of a number of different organisations, and those organisations have a responsibility to connect with their communities. Healthwatch is one such organisation and it is very clear in the legislation that it has a responsibility to be seeking out the views of all parts of the community. Equally the voluntary sector role is not just as an advocate for service delivery but must include a responsibility to ensure the diversity of the communities' needs are understood.

The Minister agreed the importance of the Equality duty, and that there must be no exemptions in Health and Social Care; objectivity not age must be the basis of health and care decisions. He added that it is important for NHS colleagues to understand the implications and that age cannot be used as a determinant of whether services

are offered.

In discussion with Ministers members raised a number of issues as:

- Discussions between NIACE and BIS on a career health check about the age of 50 where people can start thinking about their decisions around retirement; also talking in discussion with National Careers Service on this;
- What potential there might be for Pensioner Material Deprivation data to make a difference in local area;
- Wider opportunities for influencing Health and Wellbeing Boards;
- Reducing numbers of older people accessing care services as costs increase due to funding cuts;
- The lack of real progress in cross government working; and
- Government action in response to the report of the Dilnot Commission.

Both Ministers were very interested to hear about the idea of career health checks, commenting it would be a positive step in supporting people doing heavy manual jobs to remain in work for longer as part of the Government's extended working lives agenda.

The Minister for Pensions recognised that the Pensioner Material Deprivation data was not enough to give a local picture, although it might be possible over time to obtain regional data. However that data will highlight common threads that will show government where it is getting things right and where things need to be looked at across government. The Minister added that he would expect to be challenged when figures are published.

The Minister of State for Care Services reminded members that all local authorities need to have a health overview and scrutiny panel, which offers a good way of holding Health and Wellbeing Boards, and others, to account.

The Minister made the point that care services need to be considered in the wider context; the key issues being the outcomes and the quality of life being delivered, recent research from Scope and Demos has demonstrated that in some places they are delivering more for less.

Both Ministers agreed that cross government working will continue to be a challenge, and suggested that meetings like UKAFA are useful in highlighting the challenges and opportunities.

Finally the Minister of State for Care Services advised that the report of the Dilnot Commission could not be taken in isolation and needed to be addressed in the context of the wider picture of social care; the Minister went on to confirm that the Government would publish a White Paper.

Ageing Well – programme legacy
Guy Robertson, LGA
Brian Keating, DWP

Guy Robertson, Joint Head of Ageing Well programme at the LGA, and Brian Keating, DWP Ageing Well National Project Manager, gave a presentation on the Ageing Well programme legacy and led subsequent table discussions.

A [copy of the presentation](#) is available with these notes; and the key points from the table discussions are at Annex C.

Helping Older and Vulnerable People Live Independently
Andy Chaplin, Foundations

Andy Chaplin, Chief Executive of Foundations, the National Body for Home Improvement Agencies in England, gave a presentation on how the Home Improvement Agency and Handyperson sector is responding to current challenges facing vulnerable homeowners, looking at future opportunities and outlining recent developments in the area of Equity Release.

A [copy of this presentation](#) is available with these notes.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 12 September 2012; and will be held at EEF Broadway House Conference Centre, Broadway House, Tothill Street, London, SW1H 9NQ. The meeting will start at 10.45, with refreshments available from 10.30. This meeting is during parliamentary recess and Ministers will not be attending.

Annex A

Tackling Loneliness and Isolation – Table discussions

How can your work link with the work of Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWB):

- Discussions dominated by the perceived need to have older people's representation on HWB. Many felt it should be the case of 'Nothing about us without us'
- There should be a recommendation in the tackling loneliness toolkit that there should be an older person's representative on HWB.
- In Wales there have been Think Tanks set up to feed into the Wales Health Boards. Discussions with older people and their representatives ensure their views are factored into higher level strategies.
- It will be difficult to influence through the representation of a single person. Possibly it will be better to demonstrate strong participation and engagement through other mechanisms, for example Stoke-on-Trent has aspirations to become an age-friendly city.
- Maybe more important for older people to challenge HWB, and easier to do this if "on the outside". There is a role for older people on Scrutiny Boards.
- Campaign to End Loneliness are looking to bring people together in local areas to raise awareness among the press, at public meetings etc in order to put pressure on HWB.
- The RNIB have run some successful projects around HWB in a few pilot areas.
- Important to recognise the value of influencing HWB at the working level, for example by contributing to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA).
- Work to ensure that the voluntary sector representative on HWB recognises their wider role to represent service users rather than simply providers.
- Recognise and promote Healthwatch.
- North West has an older people's steering group that feeds in to the HWB.
- Call on all local authorities to have an older people's strategy to influence HWB.
- The Government must commit to a date for implementation of Equalities legislation.

What else is happening in your area to tackle loneliness:

- Shaping our Age - a three-year, Big Lottery funded project and unique partnership between WRVS, the Centre for Citizen Participation at Brunel University and the Centre for Social Action at De Montfort University.

The project aims to explore how older people define their well-being, and is developing participatory ways in which older people can help each other to achieve their well-being.

It will provide the tools and campaigning materials that could exert massive influence and transform how WRVS works with older people and the way we approach living well in old age

Shaping our Age will inform the entire sector of older people's services including national and local government, health authorities and other partners to enable older people in their well-being to help themselves and each other and many have already signed up to it.

Services being delivered include:

- Over 50s day clubs

- Telephone befriending service (to touchbase with older people)
 - Friendly faces (home visiting service)
 - Neighbour service
 - Silver singles club
 - Tea with Dorothy – specifically for LGBT communities
 - Hospital discharge service
 - Helping hands
 - A number of intergenerational projects funded by the Big Lottery
- Concerns that many of the services currently being delivered have or will have their funding cut in the near future due to the reductions in local authority budgets.
 - Problem of affordable/consistently available public transport.
 - Explore ways of joining up different services, e.g. Dial-a-Ride.
 - Need to work with a wider range of services/sectors, e.g. plumbers, electricians, to build links to lonely older people.
 - Promote the value of adult education in combating loneliness.
 - Social networking site for the over 60s called Drop By <http://www.dropby.co.uk/>
 - Lack a joined-up voice as there is no national strategy on ageing in England.

Annex B

Pensioner Material Deprivation – Table Discussions

Material deprivation and low income

- Some delegates felt that the low income and material deprivation indicators measure different things and so were not surprised that there was a small overlap between those who were both in low income and materially deprived.

Methodological issues

- There was a lot of interest in the nature of the Family Resources Survey, in which the material deprivation questions are asked, and questions about the methodology for the research:
 - How would we know if people were getting financial help or other help from friends and family?
 - How big is the research sample?
 - Is the research one to one or can other people be present at the interview?
 - What happens if the answer a person gives is very different to the circumstances the researcher observes?
 - How do the researchers interview older people who have sensory loss, dementia and other communication problems?
 - Some delegates believed the overlap between material deprivation and low income was low because the indicators applied to different populations - over 65s for material deprivation and all over state pension age for low income. (This is not the case, the overlap is calculated based on the number and percentage of people aged 65 and over who were in low income. In 2009/10 16 percent of people aged 65 and over (1.5 million) were in low income from a population of 9.6 million people aged 65 and over¹.)

Presenters agreed to provide more information about the methodology employed in the Family Resources Survey. The regular Households Below Average Income publication sets out results and background information.

http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/index.php?page=hbai_arc

Further information about the Family Resources Survey is available at

<http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/frs/index.php?page=index>

New results will be published in mid June and will be available in the same place.

The questions

- There were a number of suggestions for changes to the methods and questions used, which we agreed to feed into any future reviews planned for the indicator. These included:
 - Probing questions should be asked to follow up ‘yes’ answers as well as ‘no’. For example if a person says that go out socially at least once a

¹ Households Below Average Income report. May 2011. Page 240. Page 188.
http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/hbai/hbai2010/pdf_files/full_hbai11.pdf

- month there should be a supplementary question asking if they are happy with the number of times they go out socially to gauge the level of isolation.
- Instead of asking about having hair done regularly, a question around access to foot care (e.g. podiatrist / chiropodist) would be a much better indication of access to social care, as this could actually impact on someone being able to get out and about.
 - Rather than asking if a person has a warm waterproof coat a better question maybe whether he/she has appropriate clothing.
- Some further questions were suggested. These included:
- Who does your shopping?
 - Do you have contact with your neighbours or community?
 - Do you pay for social care?
 - Can you afford dental care?
 - Do you provide care for someone else?
 - Question about provision of public transport.
 - Questions about use of or access to technology. It was felt that access to technology was important to maintain links to friends and family and also to the provision of services (for example some GPs offer internet booking).
 - Questions about what a person might do in crisis situations, e.g.:
 - Do you have anyone to help in snowy and icy conditions?
 - Do you have anyone to inform if you are admitted to hospital?
 - What would happen if your main carer was admitted to hospital?
 - Questions about whether respondents are helping their children financially.

Breakdown of analysis

- Delegates would be interested in seeing results broken down further:
- gender breakdown for each of the questions on access to the items. Does the longer life expectancy of women, just mean that they will be materially deprived for longer?
 - ethnicity;
 - regions – and smaller breakdowns if possible. Even seemingly affluent areas have large pockets of deprivation. Could we work with regional public health observatories to get more regional data?
 - rural/urban - locality is important when thinking about the social aspect of material deprivation. Weighting should be applied to the rural/urban dimension.

Limitations of the indicator

- It is static – provides only a snapshot at a particular time.
- It can be difficult to obtain accurate answers from older people because of issues such as:
- wanting to keep certain things private;
 - some of the questions are subjective;
 - people may be too proud to say that they lack items;
 - communication and cognitive difficulties.
- It assumes that things aren't going to change. There could be more focus on how the individual would cope with crisis situations such as: ill health; death of a partner; relationship breakdown; family moving away; carer going into hospital; severe weather conditions.

- National indicator masks what is happening locally. For example, local authorities are closing centres for older people and so vulnerability is moving around local areas, displacing the problem.
- How useful will the indicator be in helping to target interventions? Will it be responsive enough to show the impact of interventions?

Activities that could have an impact on material deprivation

- Campaign to End Loneliness;
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation work on making friendly communities could help tackle loneliness and isolation;
- Local areas and groups could do more to help themselves, e.g. by gaining lottery funding to run enterprises aimed at providing support to older people;
- Increasing the basic State Pension would impact on material deprivation;
- Encourage people to live healthier lifestyles, firstly by ensuring that they are able to afford to heat their homes or to eat;
- Better financial education such as: how to live with less money, how to budget, preparing for the future;
- Paying Pension Credit automatically - if the people in the low income and materially deprived group are not taking up benefits;
- Data-sharing between organisations is important to target interventions;
- Promote use of Credit Unions to help with financial shocks.

How could the indicator be used?

- Need to make local authorities aware of the indicator – they could use it to better target services. The Regional Forum representatives would like to see local authorities asking the 15 material deprivation questions at the local level.
- Some of the organisations thought that the indicator could be useful in their policy work but that they would need more information about the study methodology.
- Should be part of the equality impact assessment for new Government policy.
- Material Deprivation is much broader than just DWP – other Departments need to take their share of the responsibility. There needs to be greater joined up thinking – particularly around how the decisions local authorities and private companies make have a direct impact on older people, for example, where supermarkets are built, out of town shopping centres, town planning and so on.

General concerns

- Do people remain poor all their lives? Does the high level of child poverty now suggest higher rates of pensioner poverty in the future?
- Importance of generational poverty – i.e. older people who are helping out their children, people whose parents were poor and who have been unable to build up assets.
- Need to understand how people are spending their money or whether they are not spending it.
- Need greater clarity around issue of care and paying for care.
- Government should be providing certainty of income.
- Deprivation could increase in current economic situation, for example:
 - some older people may no longer be able to afford to keep and run a car - resulting in greater isolation;
 - friends and family may no longer be able to help out older people.

Other research/resources to consider

- De Jong Gierveld loneliness scale provides a range of ways to ask about isolation.
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation inquiry 'That Little Bit of Help' was suggested as being helpful in looking at what could be changes to support older people to live independently.

Annex C

Ageing Well programme legacy – Table Discussions

What 2 or 3 things can UKAFA do to support the legacy of the Ageing Well Programme?

- Ask the question locally about levels of involvement by local council in the programme. Encourage involvement either in terms of existing participation or prompt councils to use lessons learnt and good practice when engaging with older people and issues relating to them.
- Promote the use of the Website and Knowledge Hub to share experiences of local initiatives and projects.
- Influence Councillors to become involved in the Ageing Well initiatives and put pressure on officers to use Ageing Well Principles.
- UKAFA members should make themselves familiar with what is on the website and can then promote it to their groups and organisations they work with.
- There's a role for members of the Age Action Alliance, perhaps using some of the resources and learning in the Working Groups, or generally in raising awareness and promoting the programme.

What else can be done to disseminate the findings and learning from the Ageing Well programme?

- Continued involvement with the English Forums on Ageing and feedback to UKAFA, for example Future East are keen to work on this.
- Work with local groups and forums on approaches to supporting digitally excluded representatives to understand the materials available and become ambassadors.
- Engage with the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) to encourage use of Ageing Well at a more local level.
- The Ageing Well information on the LGA website needs to be replicated on the equivalent sites for the devolved nations as the learning will be equally applicable.
- There was a feeling that a lot of toolkits have been developed and made available but that are not widely used.
- 'Communities of Interest' feature is not well used – there has not been very much discussion on that.
- Need to make websites more dynamic and interesting. There was a view that some organisations don't want the LGA website to host their toolkits as they think it is quite static.
- Use of Peer Review within and between Local Authorities and other organisations that have an interest in issues affecting older people.