

# Review of UK Advisory Forum on Ageing.

Redefining Retirement Division



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

# Summary

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# Background to UKAFA

**“Empowering Engagement” suggested that national leadership for older people would be provided by a UK wide forum, chaired by the Minister of State for Pensions and the Minister of State for Care Services.**

**The Government’s response identified key actions which would improve older people’s engagement.**

- **Establishing the UK Advisory Forum on Ageing.**
- **Supporting the development of Regional Forums on Ageing in each English region**
- **Developing communication channels to support and encourage discussion and the sharing of best practice between all forums**



# Purpose of the Review

- **Measure the value that UKAFA adds to understanding the ageing society and the development of relevant policy; and**
- **Consider whether UKAFA strategically concentrates on the concerns of older people and the wider ageing agenda.**



# The Approach

- **UKAFA members, previous speakers, policy officials from DH, CLG and DWP, and other relevant stakeholders were invited to complete a questionnaire, and the results collated**
- **In depth follow-up interviews were conducted with UKAFA members based on the collated responses to the questionnaires**



# Findings

## What UKAFA does well.

- **Increases understanding of the policy process among members and their contacts**
- **Keeps organisations informed and responds over time to the issues that impact on older people**
- **Gives members the opportunity to influence Ministers and policy makers**
- **Terms of reference are fit for purpose**



# Findings

## What UKAFA needs to do better .

- **Produce tangible outcomes**
- **Demonstrate joined-up government through the involvement of other Departments**
- **Be more diverse and intergenerational**
- **Communicate more effectively both internally and externally**



# Recommendations - Tangible Outcomes

## Findings

### Setting the agenda –

- Regional groups and devolved nations should have standing items within UKAFA
- Members to work together between meetings
- Members to drive outcomes for UKAFA

## Recommendations

- Allocating a set part of the agenda to regional forums and devolved nations has been attempted previously, but met with limited success due to the low level of contributions.
- Suggest a trial period of a year to see if members can make this work





# Recommendations - Tangible Outcomes

## Finding

### Subject area lead -

- Members of UKAFA should take the lead on subject areas, e.g. housing, digital inclusion, loneliness and isolation

## Recommendation

- UKAFA members to consider how this might work including which areas individuals might want to lead on.



# Recommendations - Tangible Outcomes

## Findings

### Reporting back –

- **Facilitating the achievement of tangible outcomes by reporting back to UKAFA on how discussion has influenced policy/strategy**
- **Supporting representatives to feedback to their host organisations**

## Recommendations

- **Develop a reporting back process for officials and organisations engaging with UKAFA**
- **Produce a guide for members advising on how to engage with UKAFA and how to report back to their organisations**



# Recommendations - Membership

## Findings

### Expand membership -

- To best represent an ageing society UKAFA should be more diverse and intergenerational, including members that represent other age groups
- To better present joined-up government UKAFA should include representation from more government departments

## Recommendation

- Secretariat to develop proposals, for discussion at a future meeting, on expanding the membership of UKAFA whilst staying within practical limits



# Recommendations - Membership

## Finding

### Member profiles -

- **Sharing the interests, skills and experiences of individual members would encourage more cross organisational work and raise the profile of UKAFA**

## Recommendation

- **Secretariat to collect profiles of UKAFA members to share**



# Recommendations - Membership

## Findings

### Infrequent attendance -

- Some members have a less than 30% attendance record over the last three years
- Should there be a minimum attendance requirement to retain membership?

## Recommendations

- Members who have not attended UKAFA for two consecutive meetings should be asked whether they wish to remain a member. If no response, their place should be offered to an equivalent organisation.
- This approach to be included in the membership guide.



# Recommendations - Communications

## Findings

### Raising the profile -

- It is not easy to find clear information on the structure, membership, remit, purpose and scope of UKAFA

### Frequency of meetings -

- Opinion was divided on whether the frequency of meetings should increase

## Recommendation

- Develop a communications strategy for UKAFA.
- Consider the value of changing the current arrangements on the understanding that there is no additional funding.



# Recommendations - Communications

## Finding

### Secretariat –

- There is less resource available for the Secretariat.

## Recommendation

- Members to feedback on the services they most value from the Secretariat so work can be prioritised.



# Next steps

**Thoughts and questions?**

