



DRAFT

Future Years Forum Committee Minutes

1st December 2014

Present: Shelagh Marshall (Chair), John Welham, George Wood, Mary Laurenson, Paul Russell, Richard Palmer, Danny Brown, Hilary Thompson, Neil Martin, Betty Armstrong, Jean Elliot, Anne Forbes, Laura Oldsworth and Jenny Dobson (Big Lottery), Lionel Pyra, Normanton Senior Citizens Association, Russell Taylor (DWP)

Apologies: Mashud Haque, Mary Robinson, Katie Smith, Irene Mace, Jill Ainsworth

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and accepted apologies listed above. She introduced Daniel Wood from Parliamentary Outreach

2. How we can engage with the Select Committees of the House of Lord and House of Commons

Daniel explained to the meeting how they can best engage with the different elements of the House of Commons:

- Use Members of Parliament and their surgeries
- Look at MPs websites and phone their office
- Use social media and follow MPs who are interested in the same issues as you. Use Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.
- Retweet MP tweets; congratulate and praise things they have done that support your issues.

Daniel explained that the House of Lords comprises of 92 hereditary peers, 25 Church of England bishops; the Archbishops of Durham, York, Westminster and Canterbury and the remainder are life peers such as Dame Tania Grey Thompson who was made a life peer for her sporting achievements and her promotion of disability and sports.

Daniel explained that members of the House of Lords tend to concentrate on issues they are interested in. He suggested Future Years members should identify Lords that have a similar interest and brief them with our views. He suggested that parliamentary briefings should be very clear with what we want to happen immediately and in the longer term.

Select Committees: Daniel explained that Select Committees of the House of Commons are cross party committees of MP from across the house and back bench i.e. not ministers or shadow ministers, and are representative of the proportion of parties in the house. He added that House of Commons select committees examine and scrutinise government departments. Danny pointed out that this is reflected in local authorities, which have their departments scrutinised by scrutiny panels.

Daniel reported that Select Committees in the House of Lords are based on five themes and have no defined political composition. He added that there are ad hoc committees, currently there is one on digital skills, childcare and extradition.

Shelagh asked for details of the Digital Select Committee, Daniel agreed to send the contact details of the Committee Clerk. **ACTION: D. Wood**

He explained that Select Committees do have a pattern of public inquiry: they make an announcement or press release and call for evidence. He pointed out that the Health Select Committee currently has a call for evidence on end of life care (with a deadline of December 2015). He added that evidence needs to address the terms of reference but only needs to cover what is comfortable to the individual.

Daniel suggested that Committee clerks are useful contacts, they can give extensions and may help your evidence stand out. Their contact details can be found on the parliament website under each select committee.

Following the receipt of evidence then the Select Committee will produce a report giving their conclusions and recommendations. Daniel pointed out that the average for recommendations being adopted is 40%.

Daniel was questioned when the report from the end of life inquiry would be published, and he estimated this would be the end of March.

To ensure Future Years can link into the select committees, Daniel recommended signing up for email alerts and calls for evidence. **ACTION: J. Volpe**

All Party Parliamentary Groups: Daniel explained that these are less formal groupings of 20 parliamentarians (ten from the Government, ten from the other side) on a whole range of issues from ageing to beer. The contact details for parliamentary groups can

also be found on the parliament website, he added that you can register your interest in an issue. He explained that if you wanted to ask for an inquiry then you would need good UK lobbying; national interest; be topical and have a wide range of views on the issue.

Shelagh questioned Daniel on the movement for a Minister for Older People. Daniel pointed out that this would add another layer of bureaucracy into the system and MPs would have to be convinced why they should do that.

Shelagh thanked Daniel for his informative presentation.

3. Dementia Friends Training

Richard Palmer lead the group in Dementia Friends training. He explained to the group that Dementia Friends was a social campaign started by the Alzheimer's Society which gained support from the Cabinet Office and NHS England. He added the aim is to work towards a dementia friendly society.

Richard lead the group through a series of workshops which helped everyone gain a greater understanding of what it is like to live with dementia (please see attached notes).

Richard encouraged everyone to leave the meeting and sign up as a Dementia Friend on the website by taking a pledge.

4. Concessionary Fares: A national debate

Shelagh informed the meeting that she is using the name 'Happy and Independent' for the debate. She has gained the agreement of Age UK, the Campaign to End Loneliness and the nine regions to send out the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was distributed for comment, which were as follows:

Q2: mixed a difficult to understand

Q4: should we have a box for work? Also need a box for volunteering

Q5: should just have 'who provides transport'

Q6: also need a box for private sector.

Q7 and Q9: too similar and need explanation.

Q12: the age ranges are not consistent.

There needs to be a clear explanation on what concessionary fares are.

ACTION: M. Laurenson to make the changes.

Shelagh added that we will need hard copies of the questionnaire and we need to decide where they will come back to. It will also be put on Survey Monkey and sent out after Christmas. Shelagh suggested having two months to gather evidence. **ACTION: J. Volpe and M. Laurenson**

Jenny questioned how the questionnaire would be promoted. It was suggested we could promote it through VCS organisations; the NCVO, Age UK's Signpost; the Age Action Alliance Monday News; Government News Alerts; AGenda and Later Life.

5. Isolation Workshop

The meeting were informed that another influencing and loneliness workshop is being planned for the East Riding. It was suggested we should hold one in Bridlington. Shelagh agreed to ask about a room with her contact at the local authority: **ACTION: S. Marshall.**

It was agreed we should organise 4 this year, perhaps holding the next one in Sheffield and invite South Yorkshire Housing Association to speak about their successful lottery bid. **ACTION: J. Volpe / Operational Group**

6. Sub Regional Reports

Sub-regional representatives reported on activities in their region as per the attached report. Shelagh added that in North Yorkshire she had arranged an evensong event for Older People's Day.

George added that in York the bus companies are considering using hospital appointment letters alongside the bus pass to allow concessionary fares. He agreed to report back on the outcome: **ACTION: G. Wood**

Paul reported that a lot of people attended their older people's day, but on a more negative note Anchor has pulled out of nursing support in two of their homes in the Bradford District. He speculated some older people would have to move.

7. UKAFA Update

It was noted that the pension scheme was explained at the last meeting, which was very detailed so we would wait for the minutes. Russell agreed to send through 'Your State Pension Explained'. **ACTION: R. Taylor**

Paul also agreed to send through the NPC commentary. **ACTION: P. Russell**

It was noted that current pensioners are not affected and the new scheme will not be fully mobilised until 2050 and beyond. The issue of pension credit and lack of applications was discussed. It was suggested we could promote the Age UK fact sheets.

It was noted that the East Midlands has done a good piece of work on Money Matters which is based on the idea that there is a lot of advice (they have worked with Age UK, MAS; the Equity Release) and is not internet reliant. **ACTION: J. Volpe to find out if we could get a copy.**

John explained that Local Government Association is taking part in an 'Involving Older People' project and needs 5 / 6 local people to have a short phone call on their views about Local Government and feed into a major project being undertaken by the Local Government Association on the implications for local authorities of an ageing demography. John asked for interested parties to talk to him after the meeting: **ACTION: J. Welham**

8. Finance Report

Joanne presented the finance report to the meeting and estimated we currently have about £7K left of this year's allocation.

Joanne was reminded that the DWP need a quarterly update by the end of next week. **ACTION: J. Volpe**

9. Agenda for the Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting would have a focus on housing. John added that he has invited Wendy Cox from Care and Repair and Barbara Bailey and a volunteer from the Silverlinks project in Leeds. It was noted that a representative from Homes and Communities may also be able to speak at the meeting.

10. Dates of the Next Meeting

Alternating the dates of the meeting from Monday to another day of the week was discussed but declined. It was agreed to hold the meetings on the first Monday of March, June and December and the second Monday of September. **ACTION: J. Volpe to issue the dates.**

11. Any Other Business

The Committee were informed that Simon Wilkinson will be the future link to the DWP and this could be Russell's last meeting. Russell was thanked for his contribution and constant support to Future Years.