

UK Advisory Forum on Ageing Terms of Reference

Background

1. The Government published Empowering Engagement: a stronger voice for older people on 3rd February 2009. This was in response to John Elbourne's independent report on older people's engagement with government, and set out plans including:
 - “developing a UK Advisory Forum on Ageing to advise on cross-Government policy development for older people with a particular focus on the implementation of the Government's updated Opportunity Age strategy;
 - establishing or developing Regional Forums on Ageing in each region;
 - setting up processes to ensure the views of older people at a local level are systematically captured to inform Government at all levels;
 - putting in place a structure so that local and regional forums feed into and inform the UK Advisory Forum on Ageing;
 - developing communications channels to support discussion between all forums and the sharing of notable practice.”
2. The UK Advisory Forum on Ageing (UKAFA) has a key role in this new framework. Empowering Engagement said that it should:
 - “provide advice and support for the implementation and development of the Government's strategy for older people and an ageing society. This should include:
 - Encouraging better preparation for later life - both through planning for the future financially and encouraging people to think much earlier about what they might want and need as they grow older so they can plan and prepare at a much earlier stage.
 - Helping people to live well in later life - by creating opportunities for people to remain active in society throughout their life. This might be continuing to work, through volunteering or remaining active in their community or within their family.
 - Reviewing progress on improving independence and wellbeing in later life.
 - Creating an age-friendly society - doing more to tackle stereotypes about old age, to change attitudes and to make sure that services are well designed and accessible to people of any age.
 - Providing stronger protection and support - by doing more to join up services, promote take-up of benefits and make sure that people can get support and help from those that they trust when and how they need it.”

Members of the Forum

3. UKAFA's membership will include 40 members and will consist of Ministers and representatives from devolved nations, older people and organisations of and for older people, local government organisations and English forums on ageing. Each member is asked to appoint a substitute for those meetings where they are

unable to attend in person. Notice of this substitution should be given to the secretariat ahead of the meeting.

Specific Activities

4. Review performance and identify common issues:
 - which will improve independence and well being of older people;
 - support creating a society for all ages; and
 - improve engagement of older people at all levels of government.
5. Share examples of good practice between the English forums on ageing and the devolved nations.
6. Evaluate current levels of engagement at local and community level.
7. Identify and promote approaches that give opportunity for engagement to more diverse groups including those whose voices are seldom heard.
8. Develop and test approaches to encouraging better preparation for later life; identifying and promoting opportunities that enable people to remain active in society throughout their life.
9. Review and support the progress of action towards more joined-up services for older people.

Outcomes

10. UKAFA outcomes should include:
 - agreed actions for members and any sub-groups on specific issues;
 - identification of actions to inform the work programmes of English forums on ageing; and
 - sharing and publication of good practice.

Frequency of meetings

11. Meetings will be scheduled on a quarterly basis.
12. Papers/Issues to be included as an agenda item for the meeting must be with the Secretariat, at least 5 working days prior to the meeting to allow distribution of papers to members one week ahead of the scheduled meeting date.
13. UKAFA meetings will be co-ordinated, supported and minuted by the UKAFA Secretariat in DWP. Notes of the meetings will be agreed with the Chair and will normally be issued within 30 working days of the Forum's meeting.
14. Meetings will normally be a minimum of 3 hours duration and held in central London.

Governance

15. Secretariat Support for UKAFA will be provided by DWP, this includes any financial support arrangements and logistical arrangements concerning UKAFA meetings. UKAFA will be reviewed in 2011.
16. UKAFA attendees will be reimbursed for reasonable expenditure incurred in travelling to meetings, or on specific UKAFA related business.
17. UKAFA discussions will be minuted and will be posted on the DWP website; this includes outcomes and action points arising from the discussions.