

# Report

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Report to:	<b>Equal Opportunities Forum</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>8 December 2009</b>
Report by:	<b>Executive Director (Corporate Resources)</b>

Subject:	<b>Review and Relaunch of Better Government for Older People</b>
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## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ advise the Forum of the review and relaunch of the Better Government for Older People project

## 2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Forum is asked to approve the following recommendations:-

- (1) that the contents of the report be noted.

## 3. Background

3.1. In May 2008, the Minister for Pensions Reform announced that John Elbourne, an independent consultant, had been asked to “examine the current arrangements for the engagement of older people and the ability of those arrangements to inform policy and actions of Government at all levels”. This included a review of the Better Government for Older People Initiative.

## 4. The Review

4.1. Consultation took place with both employees and older people across the UK who were involved in the programme to ascertain what achievements had been made. The findings (the Elbourne report) were published in November 2008. The report included the following key recommendations:-

- ◆ to establish a UK Advisory Forum for Older People, chaired by the lead government Minister for older people, and supported by regional forums
- ◆ that the UK Advisory Forum be supported by government officials
- ◆ that a high profile role for government offices in developing engagement with older people be established
- ◆ to establish regional forums to support local authorities to develop their own local engagement strategies; as outlined in the Audit Commission report, ‘Don’t Stop Me Now’
- ◆ that existing older people’s forums, including Older People’s Advisory Groups (OPAG’s) should be supported and built upon
- ◆ that Better Government for Older People (BGOP) should continue to be funded by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) at current levels until end of March 2009
- ◆ that the DWP should support these proposals from their mainstream funding for older people’s engagement

## **5. Response**

- 5.1. The Government's response was published in February 2009 confirming the new framework for Government engagement with older people. The framework will consist of the following elements.

### **UK Advisory Forum on Ageing**

This new body will give older people a direct line to Government to comment on new policy ideas, services, legislation and what areas they feel the Government needs to address. The Forum will be co-chaired by the Minister for Pensions and the Ageing Society, Angela Eagle MP and the Minister of State for Care Services, Phil Hope MP. It will have a clear focus on helping to improve the well-being of older people and addressing the opportunities and challenges of an ageing society.

### **Local and regional forums**

Government will encourage the development of local and regional communication channels to:-

- ◆ identify common themes that need to be brought to the attention of national government
- ◆ provide direction and leadership on local and regional issues affecting older people
- ◆ help to spread good practice locally

The Government will take action to put in place regional co-ordinators to strengthen the network of local authority forums and to champion older people.

### **Government offices**

Government offices will have an enhanced role to extend and strengthen engagement with older people at a local and regional level, and help embed issues affecting older people in regional planning and strategy development.

### **Regional Ministers**

The Regional Minister will have a key leadership role, especially in providing links to national government.

### **Devolved administrations**

The UK Government will continue to work closely with the devolved administrations, while recognising that each have their own national arrangements for engaging with older people. We would welcome their membership at official level of the UK Advisory Forum on Ageing and will work with the administrations to ensure that all UK citizens have the opportunity to influence and input into policy decisions. DWP officials will also support the devolved administrations and the English regions through a small central team in order to help spread good practice, support existing work programmes, and co-ordinate strategies.

## **6. Better Government for Older People – South Lanarkshire**

- 6.1. BGOP members in South Lanarkshire considered the government's response to the review of BGOP UK.
- 6.2. An external evaluation of the South Lanarkshire BGOP project took place in 2009. As a result of this evaluation a new strategic plan for the project has been developed and the creation of a new identity to take effect from 4 December 2009. The project will be renamed Seniors Together. The title will have a strapline of "in South Lanarkshire" which will run underneath the name on all publicity and letterheads.

The new project will make links with the new regional advisory groups when they are set up.

## **7. Employee Implications**

7.1. None.

## **8. Financial Implications**

8.1. Costs will be met from existing budgets.

## **9. Other Implications**

9.1. None.

## **10. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements**

10.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to existing policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.

10.2. Consultation on the proposals contained in this report has been carried out with BGOP members, NHS Lanarkshire partners and members of various older people's clubs and societies within South Lanarkshire.

**Robert McIlwain**  
**Executive Director (Corporate Resources)**

26 November 2009

### **Link(s) to Council Objectives**

- ◆ People focused
- ◆ Working with and respecting others

### **Previous References**

Equal Opportunities Forum - 3 October 2006

### **List of Background Papers**

- ◆ Review of Older Peoples engagement with government - John Elbourne
- ◆ Empowering Engagement: a stronger voice for older people
- ◆ Evaluation of BGOP in South Lanarkshire

### **Contact for Further Information**

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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