

MINUTES OF THE POPULATION PROJECTIONS WORKING GROUP: 26 September 2006

Present:

Esta Clark	GROS (Chair)
Jenny Boag	Falkirk Council
Richard Belding	Aberdeenshire Council
Jan Freeke	Glasgow City Council
Alistair Harvey	City of Edinburgh Council
Chris Carr	Argyll & Bute Council
Fred Nimmo	NHS Grampian
Richard Pereira	Office for National Statistics
Cameron Thomas	Highland Council
Allan Lambie	South Lanarkshire Council
Stuart Booker	Fife Council
Lesley Mann	North Lanarkshire Council
David Hurst	Scottish Executive
Cecilia Macintyre	GROS
Esther Roughsedge	GROS
Eileen Crichton	GROS
Bryan Cunningham	GROS (Secretary)

1. Introductions

1.1 Apologies were received from Jack Winchester (Aberdeen City Council), Luned Jones (Welsh Assembly Government), Jillian Evans (NHS Grampian) represented by Fred Nimmo and Ed Turnbull (GROS).

1.2 The chair, Esta Clark welcomed everyone to the second Population Projections Working Group (PPWG) meeting. She noted that a few apologies had been received and asked everyone to introduce themselves for the new faces.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – PPWG (06) 04

2.1 The previous meeting's minutes were approved by group members.

3. Action Points from the Previous Meeting – PPWG (06) 05

3.1 Esta Clark presented this item and noted that all the action points were complete. Members had no comments on the paper.

4. Final Remit and Current Membership – PPWG (06) 06

2.1 Cecilia Macintyre presented this item. She informed members that Marina Hughes would replace Gayle Mackie on the group and consideration was still being given as to whether any academics would want to join the group. Cecilia asked members if they had

any comments on the final remit. Richard Pereira asked if it was an aim to be consistent with other constituent countries of the United Kingdom, and if so, was this covered in the remit. Cecilia explained that GROS was aware of this issue and it was to be discussed at the National Population Projections committee meeting at the beginning of October. She added that the priority was for GROS to address the issues identified previously with regard to the sub-national population projections, but that this group would use developments in other countries. Jenny Boag added that this was an important factor and that other countries are doing their own thing.

2.2 Members had no further comments on the paper.

5. Economic Factors – Oral Update

5.1 Cecilia Macintyre presented this item. She informed the group that the Analytical Services Group (ASG) were interested in the work of the group. She added that Duncan Macniven, Registrar General for Scotland, had written to them following the first PPWG meeting seeking their views on economic factors and the way forward. Cecilia Macintyre noted that the ASG in the SE are responsible for estimates and forecasts of economic factors. Cecilia added that incorporating economic factors was not something that GROS could do alone and that ASG expertise was needed. Richard Pereira suggested that it would be worth finding out whether similar work was being undertaken in England and would look into it and send Cecilia Macintyre details if so. Cecilia added that the work of this internal sub-group would be fed back to PPWG in due course.

Action: Richard Pereira (ONS)

6. Work Plan Update – PPWG (06) 07

6.1 Esta Clark presented this item. She updated members on progress and stressed that resources were limited i.e. only 3 members of GROS staff are working on this at present. She also highlighted that a new assistant statistician, Sharon Meighan, will be joining the branch on 2 October 2006 and she will be assisting with this work. She informed members that GROS were currently evaluating POPGROUP for use in population & housing projections. Jenny Boag highlighted the household types in this software were limited. Esther Roughsedge explained that the software can be used as long as you remember what your definition of household types are.

6.2 Cecilia Macintyre informed members that a meeting was taking place in November with local authority Heads of Planning and she would brief members about any outcomes from this meeting.

6.3 Jan Freeke said that he was concerned about the lack of progress on the mortality/fertility scaling factors work as detailed in the work plan, and that mortality was of more interest especially for Glasgow. Jenny Boag added that she was interested in this piece of work and would like GROS to look at it.

6.4 Richard Pereira highlighted that in England mortality scaling factors are by age group, whereas in Scotland this is not done. Jenny Boag explained that there might be problems with smaller populations i.e. Clackmannanshire, Orkney, Shetland etc, whereas it might work for larger areas i.e. Fife, Glasgow etc. Fred Nimmo commented that it might work for deprivation categories. Jenny Boag added that it may be possible to group areas

by age bands for the smaller populations (similar to the adjustments carried out for the original 1991 mid-year estimate), for use in the production of scaling factors. Jan Freeke suggested using age groups like under 60's, 60-74 and over 75. Cecilia Macintyre suggested that GROS could look at 5 to 10 years worth of data and do some analysis. Esta Clark added that GROS would have to find the resources to take this work forward and will contact ONS, WAG & NISRA for their views on scaling factors to be used in population projections. The group agreed that there was more priority for work on mortality, rather than fertility rates.

Action: Esta Clark (GROS)

7. Local Authority use of GROS Projections – PPWG (06) 08

7.1 Alistair Harvey introduced the paper. He informed members that the questionnaire was sent out to all Local Authorities (LA) to seek the views of the wider user base as to the uses made of the data. The questionnaire also asked where improvements could be made to the content of published material. He added that about half of LAs responded and that there was an interest, especially when planning the building of schools, for projections 30 years ahead.

7.2 Fred Nimmo asked if confidence intervals would be introduced in population projections. Esta Clark replied that this is not currently possible because of the method used. She added that if GROS go the variant projections route then this would give an indication of likely accuracy.

7.3 Jan Freeke asked why population projections are published at a different time to household projections. He added he would like these published together in the future and asked why this is not done at present. Esther Roughsedge agreed with him and explained that because of the quality assurance process and the involvement of HARG members in this process there is a gap in publication dates. Esta Clark added that GROS would think about the timing of the population & household projections and get back to members with an update for the next meeting.

7.4 Esta Clark asked Fred Nimmo if he had a distribution list that could be used to send a similar questionnaire to NHS Boards. Fred said no and that ISD might be able to help.

Action: Esta Clark (GROS)

8. Accuracy of the Sub-National Population Projections for Scotland – PPWG (06) 09

8.1 Esta Clark introduced the paper. She ran through the main points from the analysis. David Hurst thanked colleagues in GROS for their work on the accuracy of projections for allocation of funds. It agreed with what they are doing at present, using population projection for 0-15 & 65+ and 16-64 from the mid-year estimate. He asked if the underlying data could be sent to him.

Action: Esta Clark (GROS)

8.2 Jenny Boag pointed out that the paper showed nothing startling that she did not already know and that it had been a pleasure to read it. She stressed the importance of a correct base population. Jan Freeke asked if there were any lessons learned from the

findings in the paper. Esta Clark replied not really, since the results from all councils are very different.

8.3 Esta Clark then asked Richard Belding to summarise to the group his presentation to the British Society of Population Studies (BSPS) on the differences between projections and forecasts for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. Richard's BSPS presentation is available on the BSPS website through the following link:

http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/BSPS/ppt/2006_Belding_estimates.ppt

9. Comparisons between the NHSCR and CHI – Presentation

9.1 Cecilia Macintyre presented the presentation she had also given to the BSPS conference the previous week. She informed members that a copy of her presentation will appear on the GROS website in due course, as well as the BSPS website:

http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/BSPS/ppt/2006_Macintyre_migration.ppt

10. Literature Review – PPWG (06) 10

10.1 Esta Clark presented the item saying it was mainly for information. Esta asked members if they thought that anything was missing from the review to email her with details.

11. Any Other Business

11.1 None.

12. Date of next meeting

12.1 Esta Clark suggested that the next meeting should take place in January 2007. This was agreed by members. The secretary will consult members about a date in due course.