

**UK Census Committee (UKCC)**  
**Tuesday 27th June 2017**  
**13.30-15.30**

**The Conference Room | Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency | Colby House | Stranmillis Court | Belfast BT9 5RR**

**Attendees**

John Pullinger, National Statistician (Chair)
██████████, Acting Registrar General, NISRA
██████████, Registrar General and Keeper of the Records of Scotland
Iain Bell, Deputy National Statistician
██████████, Chief Statistician Scotland
██████████, Chief Statistician, Welsh Government
Ian Cope, Head of ONS Census
██████████, Census Director Scotland
██████████, Census Director NISRA
Ben Humberstone, Deputy Director ONS Census
██████████, Head of Census Operations NISRA
██████████, ONS Census Outputs (Secretariat)
<b>Video Link:</b>
Shaun Garvey, Census Transformation Programme Delivery Deputy Director
Andy Teaque, Deputy Director ONS Census
Garnett Compton, Head of 2021 Census Statistical Output & Design
Helena Rosiecka : Census Statistical Design – For Item 6
██████████, Southampton University – For Item 4

**Apologies - None**

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

John Pullinger welcomed those in Belfast and those present via video link from ONS Titchfield.

**2. Minutes -> from the previous meeting on 28th February 2017**

These were accepted without amendment. However, the Chair requested that authors of papers ensure these are supplied to UKCC members in sufficient time in advance of the meeting; papers for this meeting were **received unacceptably late on this occasion**.

**3. Actions -> [Notes Link](#) from the previous and earlier meetings.**

Action UKCC 16 (30) Gender and Sexual Identity : A timeline for managing legislation. This action closed as this is now taken forward by UKHWG.

Action UKCC 15 (36) remains open until arrangements are finalised between ONS and NRS

## **7. Gender Identity**

Garnett Compton introduced the paper. The UK Offices were at different stages in their research but shared common challenges in fully defining the user need, understanding the quality of the data that would be collected, and adopting the required legislative approach.

A set of options were put forward to the committee. Garnett advised that he foresaw no firm position being possible on the question before the White Paper was submitted and that was a significant impediment to its inclusion in the 2021 Census. There was also a concern about the availability of space on paper forms as the sexual identity question appeared to be a more definite candidate.

Garnett reported that his team were aware of international activities in this space and mentioned an ABS report, made that day, on the numbers identified in Australia through a write in response to a gender ID question. Some 1300 of 23 million people described themselves in a way that would be classified as Transgender and a further 2,500 in a way that might or could be so classified. These are very low numbers and present a challenge to reporting in statistical outputs for areas below the national level; for which there is a perceived demand.

It was also reported that analysis of user need was inhibited by fluid concepts in the community, making a question difficult to define, and this was reflected in discussions with UK stakeholders. Ian Cope emphasised the importance that the question should assist the community to self define their gender identity, and therefore a write in box was supported. There was, though, insufficient evidence to make a proposal in the White Paper.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Ian Cope recommended further analysis of the ordering of the question, some advice had already been given to ONS by Stonewall, as this will affect response.

[REDACTED]

Ian Cope questioned whether inclusion of the question could be justified if no data could be disseminated. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

John Pullinger summarised that Option 2b was the primary choice at this time as it gave the correct inference that the Census Offices were in favour of inclusion but could not commit without further quantitative testing. He sought a simple question that enabled self identification and was harmonised across the UK; he foresaw no significant impact on the binary sex counts. No Office needed to have an approach finalised by the time of the White Paper. Iain Bell recommended that the approaches should not get too fixed at this point as the Census could choose outmoded terminology in a fluid and rapidly changing landscape. The decision was to continue with further exploration without commitment and to communicate this position to users at the July Roadshows.

[REDACTED]