

Terms of Reference for the Age NI Consultative Forum

1. Purpose/scope

“The purpose of the Consultative Forum (CF) is to identify the needs and concerns of older people (in relation to poverty, health, equality, social and other issues) and communicate these to Age NI. The Forum also engages with, advises and challenges Age NI on policy issues and on its strategic direction.

The work of the CF covers the whole of Northern Ireland and focuses on issues affecting people over the age of 50. It works collaboratively with, and in support of, Age NI.”

CF members engage with relevant external stakeholders on ageing and ageing issues in NI and elsewhere.

2. Membership

- Membership will be no more than 50 individuals
- Membership is drawn from older people from throughout Northern Ireland representing themselves as individuals, not representing the viewpoint of any group or organisation.
- Members are recruited by Age NI following the Age NI volunteer recruitment process. Names of proposed new members will be presented to the Chair and Vice Chair of the CF for agreement.
- The term of membership is three years. Members can resign at any stage, by contacting the Engagement Manager in writing. After three years, members can choose to remain on the CF for future terms.
- Membership will be reviewed annually
- If a member fails to attend three consecutive meetings a letter will be sent by the Chairperson asking if the member wishes to remain

within the CF. If no reply is forthcoming they will forfeit their membership.

3. Support

Age NI will provide secretariat and developmental support to the CF. This will include:

- Arranging meetings and related requirements
- Recording and distributing the minutes of meetings
- Reimbursement of travel expenses to members
- Co-ordination and facilitation of opportunities for involvement of members in Age NI and external events and activities.
- Recruitment of new members
- Management, development and co-ordination of peer facilitation initiative
- Development and co-ordination of additional training opportunities
- Liaison between CF members and Age NI (Board and Staff)
- Age NI will also provide developmental support to the Chair, Vice Chair and wider CF membership as required.

4. Frequency of meetings

Meetings will be held four times annually, and more often if required.

5. Decision making

No business shall be transacted at any meeting of the Consultative Forum unless a quorum is present when the meeting proceeds to business. One-third of the current membership of the Consultative Forum shall constitute a quorum.

The CF will seek to reach agreement by consensus, when decisions need to be made. On occasions where consensus may not be reached, decisions will be achieved by a simple majority. In the case of an equality of votes, the chairperson of the meeting shall be entitled to a casting vote.

6. Engagement in the work of Age NI

CF members will be invited to participate in the work of Age NI by giving their views, experience and knowledge of a range of issues related to the strategic direction of Age NI. This could take the form of focus groups, specific meetings, events and conferences, surveys, questionnaires, public or political events.

Members can also become involved through volunteering, and will be offered a wide range of volunteering opportunities in the course of their time with Age NI. Participation is entirely flexible, and at the discretion of each individual member.

All members are encouraged to become involved in the work of Age NI according to their interests, expertise and availability.

7. Payment of expenses

- Age NI will reimburse out of pocket expenditure incurred as a result of members involvement with the CF.
- Members should reclaim expenses using the Age NI expenses claim form, and receipts for expenses other than mileage must be attached to ensure payment.
- Members should aim to use the most economical form of transport available, and in the event where taxis need to be used, should seek approval from the Engagement Manager in advance.

8. Communication with each other and Age NI

CF members will communicate with each other:

By email, mail or phone contact. Full contact details for each CF member are gathered by the Engagement Manager. No details will be shared with any person or organisation without prior consent. Email communications relating

to CF business or internal Age NI business shall not be shared or circulated by any CF member.

CF members will communicate with Age NI:

- Through the Age NI Engagement Manager
- Through the CF Chair elected to the Board of Trustees; At each CF meeting members will have the opportunity to raise questions for the Board of Trustees via the CF Chair. Questions should be agreed by the CF at each meeting.
- By sharing reports of their meetings with Age NI;
- By occasional face to face meetings with the Age NI CEO, staff and/or Board of Trustees, as required.
- Through participation in the work of Age NI

Age NI to communicate with the CF:

- Through the Age NI Engagement Manager
- Through the CF Chair/Vice Chair
- Through regular email contact and updates
- By giving updates at CF meetings on the work of Age NI and progress against aims and objectives set out in the Strategic Plan.
- By giving feedback on how CF input has been used by Age NI.

9. Ground Rules

At all times, members of the CF will be committed to, and observe the values of Respect, Equality, Integrity, Honesty and Openness, in all their dealings with each other, Age NI and the wider public.

In meetings, members agree to:

- Work as one team.
- Honour time limits.
- Listen, and consider the opinions of others.

- Share responsibility for success (by speaking up if something is not working).
- Respect that the experience and understanding that each individual brings to the CF is highly valued and members are required to act only in the interests of the CF and not on behalf of any organisation or interest group.
- Understand that individual discussions should be regarded as confidential within the CF.
- Keep mobile phones off/on silent

In the event of a complaint or grievance regarding the conduct of any member of the CF, the matter should be made known in the first instance to the Engagement Manager, Age NI, who will refer the matter to the Complaints Panel.

Complaints Panel

Up to six members of the CF will have the opportunity to sit as part of the complaints panel at any given time.

There is a separate terms of reference for this panel