

28<sup>th</sup> November 2018

# Outcome of the User Consultation on the Benefit Statistics Summary Publication

## 1 Background

Analytical Services Unit within the Department for Communities sought to review the format, frequency and range of outputs published in the Benefit Statistics Summary publication.

A [consultation document](#) was published on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2018 and users were invited to provide feedback on the publication to inform this process.

Details of the consultation were included on the Benefit Statistics Summary webpage and on the front page of the Benefit Statistics Summary publication released on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2018. An email was also sent to known Department for Communities customers informing them of the consultation and requesting their feedback. In addition, a link to the online consultation form was included in all emails sent from the Analytical Services Unit email account.

The closing date for responses to the consultation was 24<sup>th</sup> October 2018.



## 2 Responses Received

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Over the consultation period, Analytical Services Unit received eight responses. Five of these were from named users and three were submitted anonymously.

Users were able to respond to this consultation by completing the online form (at the following link: <http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/U2UE1/>) or by completing the paper consultation form and posting back to Analytical Services Unit.

## 3 Summary of Responses

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Of the responses received, the majority were content with the frequency of release (quarterly) of the publication, while two respondents mentioned they would prefer a monthly publication. The majority of respondents were also content with the current dissemination process. In terms of the information included in the Benefit Statistics Summary, users were generally happy with the background section and the commentary around the data; although some users indicated a preference for additional data being made available to them. This included a request for further Section 75 breakdowns and for Benefit data to be added to the OpenDataNI portal. No one stated that they were unhappy with the way Analytical Services Unit engages with users, which was backed up by the majority of respondents not wishing to join a feedback group. The majority of respondents asked to be added to a mailing list notifying them of future releases and updates relating to the Benefit Statistics Summary.

## 4 Analytical Services Unit Response

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The eight responses that were received were all largely positive, indicating that those users who took the time to respond are generally content with the Benefit Statistics Summary in its current format. The fact that a low number of responses were received to the consultation could also support the view that users are currently content with this output.

Analytical Services Unit within the last year have already revamped the layout and design of the publication and, given that this would appear to have been well received, there are no current plans

to make further changes to the Benefit Statistics Summary bulletin at this point. However Analytical Services Unit will endeavour to use the latest statistical software to improve the visual content within future publications, including adding data to the OpenDataNI portal.

Analytical Services Unit are not in a position to readily publish benefits statistics broken down by further Section 75 categories as the data is unavailable and not collected at the point of benefit application. Analytical Services Unit currently publish information in the Benefit Statistics Summary relating to age and gender.

The mailing (email) list for the Benefit Statistics Summary has been updated to include those respondents who asked to be added.

## 5 Contact

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Should you have any queries or require any further information on this consultation please contact:

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