

Disability and Carers Benefits Expert Advisory Group (DACBEAG)

REVIEW

Interim Report, October 2018

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to summarise the main findings from the first stage of the review of the Disability and Carers Benefits Expert Advisory Group (DACBEAG). This report will form the basis for the final report that is due by the end of November.

Background

Establishment of the Group

DACBEAG was established in April 2017, based on a 2016 SNP Manifesto commitment to establish a 'Disability Benefits Assessment Commission' to provide recommendations and guidance on how often assessments should be, what conditions should be given an automatic or lifetime award, and eligibility criteria. Ministers subsequently decided that the remit of the group should be expanded to cover all disability and carer benefit related issues. Thus DACBEAG aims to advise Scottish Ministers on specific policy options for the following benefits:

- Disability Living Allowance
- Personal Independence Payment
- Attendance Allowance
- Severe Disablement Allowance
- Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit
- Carers Allowance

The purpose of the Disability and Carers Benefits Expert Advisory Group is to provide recommendations and advice to Scottish Ministers, by request and proactively, on the policy and practice options being developed on disability and carers benefits. This includes options for the benefits when powers over them are transferred to the Scottish Parliament, and options that would be implemented after the safe and secure transfer of the benefits. The Group's deadline for final recommendations is the end of this Parliamentary term.

Purpose and remit of the Group

To achieve this purpose, the remit of the Group is to:

- Provide advice to Ministers on the benefits which are in scope, i.e. those that seek to help to meet some of the additional costs of a disability, those that provide financial support for people injured or affected by "prescribed diseases" in the course of their work, and carers' benefits. Currently these are:

- Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
- Attendance Allowance (AA)
- Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA)
- Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (IIDB)
- Carers Allowance (CA)
- Specifically advise on key areas for reform, including, but not limited to:
 - reform of the assessment of disability and carer benefits (from application to final decision and including data and evidence)
 - award periods, automatic awards and lifetime awards
 - eligibility criteria for disability and carer benefits
 - appeals
 - accessibility
 - take up of benefits
 - Agency delivery and operation
- Use evidence from a number of sources to provide recommendations and guidance to Scottish Ministers on specific policy options being developed by the Scottish Government on the benefits within scope, including options for the existing benefits when powers over them are transferred to the Scottish Parliament, and options that would be developed and implemented after the safe and secure transfer of the benefits.
- Develop a Group workplan and order of priority for the development of advice and recommendations, taking into account the Scottish Government's programme plan for Social Security.
- Fulfil their remit by engaging with separate workstreams as appropriate, including the Experience Panels, Collaboratives and existing reference groups. Work undertaken may make use of Scottish Government analysis in the first instance, and take a view on the extent to which independent analysis is commissioned.

Membership of the Group

The Group consist of 20 members who come from a range of organisations representing a wide range of interests and perspectives. The Group is chaired by Dr. Jim McCormick from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and Dr. Sally Witcher from Inclusion Scotland who acts as deputy chair.

Review of the Group

In establishing the EAG, it was agreed that the Group should be reviewed after 18 months and this is reflected in its terms of reference. This review was commissioned by the Cabinet Secretary for Older People and Equalities and is being conducted by the Social Security Analysis, Evaluation and Forecasting unit (SSAFE) in the Communities Analysis Division (CAD), Scottish Government.

The review consists of two stages. The first stage carried out in October 2018 was based on the analysis of responses to survey questionnaire sent to all DACBEAG members. This is discussed in more detail below.

The second stage of the review is carried out in November 2018 and it involves face-to-face and telephone interviews with selected DACBEAG members. Data from interviews will be used to revise and elaborate on the themes covered in this interim report. In addition, DACBEAG members and key stakeholders will have an opportunity to comment on this interim report and have their views included in the final report.

Research methods in Stage 1

This interim report is based on responses to an online survey questionnaire that was distributed to DACBEAG members on 1 October 2018 using Questback online survey software. The survey closed on 14 October 2018 having received 16 responses from DACBEAG members.

The survey was designed by researchers in the Social Security Analysis and Forecasting unit at the Scottish Government who also sought feedback in respect of the subject matters from the Chair, deputy Chair and DACBEAG members. The design of the survey questionnaire was also informed by the analysis of the correspondence between DACBEAG and the Scottish Government since the group was established.

The survey consisted of 29 questions. There were 23 multiple choice questions and 6 open questions. Responses to open questions were categorised by themes to allow for a systematic qualitative and quantitative analysis.

Although 16 members of DACBEAG responded to the survey, some questions (both open and multiple choice) were not answered by all respondents.

Outline

The report is divided into six main sections each of which discusses a different theme of relevance to the functioning of DACBEAG (the Group). These themes are:

- Purpose and remit
- Time scales
- Collaboration and participation within the Group
- General meetings and workstreams
- Relationship with the Scottish Government
- Other issues and suggestions for improvement

Each of these main sections is further divided into subsection that unpack the nuances and mixed views within the broader sections. These are briefly summarised in tables at the beginning of each of the main sections.

The report ends with a conclusion section that includes a short summary and implications of the research.

In addition, included in the annex is a summary of responses by each of the multiple choice question.

Key messages

1. This report is based only on responses to the survey questionnaire. Themes and issues raised in the survey and highlighted in this interim report will be explored in more depth in the final report using qualitative interviews with selected DACBEAG members.
2. Respondents of the survey questionnaire reported strong self-perceived understanding of the purpose and remit of the Group and generally believed that the Group had been effective in realising this purpose, that it was able to produce in-depth and detailed analysis, and that it had made a demonstrable impact.
3. Constraints of time appeared as the single most frequently mentioned obstacle for the Group as a whole and for individual members within it.
4. Respondents felt that the Group works harmoniously but they also expressed concerns around:
 - not knowing other Group members sufficiently well;
 - reconciling diverse positions and perspectives of Group members;
 - attendance and unequal contribution to Group meetings and workstreams;
 - own ability to contribute and devote time to the Group.
5. Respondents felt that Group meetings had been productive and well chaired. However, it was noted that agendas were packed and it was suggested that the duration of the meetings could be extended or meetings could be more frequent. At the same time, the practical difficulties (see paragraph 3 above) of implementing these solutions were acknowledged.
6. Although the relationship with the Scottish Government was perceived positively by most respondents and indeed was the third most frequently mentioned enabler of Group's effectiveness, there were also some critical views on issues such as clarity of steer and expectations, information sharing, and resources.
7. A range of suggestions for improving the way the Group works were made by respondents. For example, it was suggested that the Group could become more skilled at developing more specific and technical/operational advice as opposed to high level advice. Related to this, it was proposed that there could be two strands within the group: one working on the more specific and technical issues social security policy delivery and the other one looking at long-term, strategic and transformative aspects of social security reform.

1. Purpose and remit

Section summary	
<p>Overall, respondents reported strong self-perceived understanding of the purpose and remit of the Group and generally believed that the Group had been effective in realising this purpose, that it was able to produce in-depth and detailed analysis, and that it had made a demonstrable impact. The most commonly mentioned enablers and inhibitors of the Group's effectiveness that spontaneously emerged in answers to open questions are listed in the table below:</p>	
Enablers	Inhibitors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committed, experienced, proactive, diverse members • Effective chair and deputy chair • Effective relationship with the Scottish Government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constraints of time • Intra-group cooperation • Attendance issues • Limited resources of the Secretariat

The first question presented respondents with the purpose and remit of the Group stated in full and asked them to assess their understanding of this. Respondents reported a strong self-perceived understanding of the stated purpose and remit of the Group. Out of 16 people who responded this question, 8 respondents said that they very strongly understood the stated purpose of the Group and 7 respondents said that they understood it strongly. Only one respondent expressed a weak understanding of the stated purpose of the Group.

Most respondents believed that the Group had been effective in realising its stated purpose: 10 (out of 16) respondents agreed with the statement that the Group had been effective and further 3 respondents said that it had been very effective. Only 3 respondents were unsure about the effectiveness but no respondent disagreed with the statement that the Group has been effective.

Similarly, there were 9 respondents (out of 15 who answered this question) who agreed with the statement that the group had been able to produce in-depth and detailed analysis and recommendations and 4 who strongly agreed. Only 2 respondents were unsure about this and none disagreed.

Most respondents believed that the Group had had a demonstrable impact: 12 respondents (out of 16 who responded to this question) agreed with such statement and one strongly agreed. Three respondents were unsure but no respondent disagreed with a view that the Group had had a demonstrable impact.

Answers to open questions shed more light on what the Group members thought were the strengths of the Group that enabled it to be effective and make an impact. Below are the three most frequently mentioned themes that emerged spontaneously in answers to an open question that directly asked about enabling factors:

- Group members: committed, experienced, knowledgeable, proactive, and diverse members;
- Leadership: effective chair and deputy chair;
- Stakeholder engagement: good relationship and communication with the Scottish Government.

On the flip side, the following themes appeared most commonly as factors that may have inhibited the Group to be more effective and fit for purpose:

- Constraints of time
- Intra-group cooperation
- Attendance issues
- Limited resources of the Secretariat

The discussion to follow unpacks these and other themes that emerged in the survey to draw a more nuanced picture of the functioning of the Group to date.

2. *Time scales*

Section summary

Constraints of time set by tight timescales for producing reports, rapid speed of social security reforms in Scotland, and commitments in day jobs of the Group members were the most frequently mentioned challenge to the Group collectively and to its members individually.

Before anything else, it is important to note that a lack of sufficient time emerged as the single most frequently recurring theme in responses about constraints to the effectiveness of the Group and members within it. This theme runs through all other themes covered in this report – collaboration and participation in the Group; meetings and workshops; relationship with the Scottish Government – and sets limits to what the Group members think is achievable and what improvements they see as realistic.

Time constraints manifested themselves in responses to open questions in three forms that are discussed below.

2.1 Tight timeframes set by the stakeholders and the pace of social security reforms in Scotland

Respondents frequently referred to tight deadlines that the Group has to work to. There were views that tight deadlines may be unavoidable as they are dictated by the pace at which the policy landscape is changing. But there were also views that information from stakeholders reached the Group too late which meant that the Group started working on some issues later than desirable (see section 4.2).

2.2 Lack of time due to other commitments of team members

Many members seemed well aware that their own contribution to the Group was not optimal. They explained it in terms of constraints set by their day jobs. Below are just a few illustrative quotes from different respondents:

'I am acutely aware that I have not been able to contribute to the group in the way I would have wished due to time limitation.'

'It's a volunteer group and everyone is busy with their day jobs'

'Time I think continues to be an issue both for individual group members and for the group as a whole.'

'Time is the only factor!'

Therefore, the discussion below should be viewed with these constraints of time in mind.

3. Collaboration and participation within the Group

Section summary

Respondents felt that the group works harmoniously but they also expressed concerns around:

- not knowing other Group members sufficiently well
- reconciling different positions of Group members
- attendance and unequal contribution to Group meetings and workstreams
- own ability to contribute to and devote time to a Group

3.1 Intra-group collaboration

All respondents agreed that the Group works harmoniously. Among them, half agreed with this statement and the other half strongly agreed with it. However, these numbers may mask some of the underlying difficulties experienced by the Group.

For example, responses to open questions indicated that some members may not know each other well and that this may inhibit a fuller utilisation of expertise within the Group. It was suggested that the Group could have benefited from team building early on.

Moreover, some respondents noted that there were difficulties in reconciling different positions and that discussions have at times been curtailed during the general meetings resulting in some individuals withdrawing from making full contributions. Conversely, other respondents felt that there was a strong advocacy bias which may have negatively affected the Group's ability to develop an objective view of things and of what was affordable.

3.2 Member's participation and contribution

On the one hand, the great majority of respondents agreed (9 respondents) or strongly agreed (6 respondents) that Group members had been engaged and committed to the Group's affairs. Only one respondent was unsure about this and none disagreed. In addition, commitment and contribution by team members was one of the most frequently mentioned theme in a question about the enablers of the Group's achievements to date.

On the other hand, several qualitative responses suggested that there were some members who did not attend meetings regularly, did not send substitutes for meetings, and/or did not participate actively in discussions. Although some responses suggested that this was limited to a small handful of members, there were also views that this problem had a negative impact on the meetings and that it should be addressed.

In addition to the problem of attendance and participation in meetings, a point was made that there workload of the Group was distributed unequally among members due to a particular focus of workstreams:

'The Group is large and diverse (which is good) however there has been an aspect of uneven distribution of workload due to the purpose being centred on 3 or 4 areas of heavy workstream activity which has fallen to about one third of the Group and their representatives.'

3.3 Self-stated participation and commitment

The perception of commitment of Group members in general (as discussed above) broadly corresponded to self-perceived commitment to the Group affairs. 9 respondents agreed that they had been active participants in the Group's work and further 4 participants strongly agreed with this statement; 3 participants were unsure and none disagreed. Furthermore, all but one respondent said that they spent time working for the Group's work programme outside of the meetings.

Overall, respondent felt that the Group provided a good platform for them to make a contribution to the Group's purpose – 9 respondents agreed and 4 strongly agreed with such statement; 3 respondents were unsure but none disagreed.

One of the factors that may have inhibited individuals from making a greater contribution was a lack of time. This was the most commonly recurring theme in answers to an open which asked about what could enable members to make a greater contribution. Moreover, only 6 respondents agreed and 3 strongly agreed that the scale of demands on their time had been reasonable; 5 respondents were unsure about this and 2 disagreed.

Some respondents also felt that building better relationships with other members could enable them to make a stronger contribution. This resonates with the previously discussed problem of members not knowing each other particularly well (see section 3.1). Thirdly, some members referred to a suboptimal alignment between their professional interests/expertise and the focus of Group discussions.

3.4 Membership

Despite intra-group difficulties (including those related to unequal contribution and attendance), most respondents felt that the membership is fit for purpose. 11 respondents agreed that membership was fit for purpose; 2 were unsure and 2 other disagreed with this opinion while one person did not respond to this question. Nevertheless, some respondents did suggest that membership needs to be reviewed.

Respondents were also asked to reflect on their own membership in the Group. 10 respondents agreed and 1 strongly agreed that being a member was in line with their expectations. However, 3 disagreed and 2 were unsure about this. Notably, the number of people who disagreed and were unsure about this statement was somewhat higher than in responses to most other questions in the survey and the number of people who strongly agreed was lower. Thus, these responses may be seen as indicating a possible mismatch between expectations about membership and what it actually involves. The cause of this mismatch may lie in any of the issues already discussed in the preceding sections.

4. *General meetings and workstreams*

Section summary

Respondents felt that the Group meetings had been productive and well chaired. However, it was noted that agendas were packed and it was suggested that the duration of the meetings could be extended or that meetings could be more frequent. However, practical difficulties of implementing the latter option were acknowledged.

Most respondents felt that workstreams were effective. However, many felt that they could be more effective if improvements were made with regards to timeliness of information received by the Group and processes for signing off workstream outputs.

4.1 General meetings

6 out of 16 respondents strongly agreed and 7 agreed that the general meetings were productive; 3 respondents were unsure and none disagreed.

One of the factors contributing to the effectiveness of the general meetings may have been effective leadership by the chair and deputy chair. Indeed, 5 respondents strongly agreed and 10 other agreed that the general meetings were conducted in a way that enabled the Group to fulfil its remit. Only 1 respondent was unsure about this. In addition, positive references to chairing appeared frequently in the answers to open questions.

Although not shared by many respondents, there was also an opinion that direction from the chair may have at times inhibited the discussion on some topics. However, it cannot be excluded that this may have been due to the constraints of time available for meetings.

Indeed, several respondents suggested extending the duration of meetings indicating that agendas were packed as there was a huge workload to progress. Although 3 respondents strongly agreed and 8 agreed that the frequency of the general meetings was adequate, 3 respondents were unsure and 2 disagreed.

In addition to extending the duration of meetings, some interviewees proposed that the frequency of meetings could be increased but it was noted that it may be difficult due to day job commitments of members. An alternative solution that came out from the survey questionnaire was to organise ad-hoc meetings when necessary to help complete specific pieces of work.

4.2 Workstreams

Most respondents (11 respondents) said that they had experience of working in one of the workstreams within the Group; 5 respondents said that they had not had such experience.

In addition, 7 respondents agreed and 2 respondents strongly agreed that workstream(s) they worked in were able to produce in-depth and detailed analysis and recommendations. 1 respondent was unsure and 1 strongly disagreed.

There were many positive references to workstreams in answers to open questions. These were related to the commitment to workstreams shown by members as well as learning opportunities that workstreams presented to those who engaged in them.

However, it was also noted that effectiveness of some of the workstreams was limited by a lack of timely, clear and sufficient information. Some respondents argued that the consequence of this was that some workstreams started-up late and the momentum was lost.

Lastly, it was also suggested that the Group could have a better procedure for signing off workstream outputs.

5. *Relationship with the Scottish Government*

Section summary

Overall, the relationship with ministers and the Scottish Government more broadly was the third most frequently mentioned theme in the open question about the enablers of the Group's achievements to date. This relationship was described with adjectives such as 'good', 'effective', 'constructive', and 'honest'. In addition, the support by secretariat was frequently praised. However, there were also some critical views on issues around the steer and expectations, information sharing, and resources. It is worth to unpack each of these issues as they may form a basis for constructive discussions on how to better engage with stakeholders in the Scottish Government.

5.1 Steer and expectations from the Scottish Government

Most respondents agreed or strongly agreed (7 and 2 out of 16 respondents respectively) that expectations of the Scottish Government from the Group had been clear to them. However, 6 respondents were unsure about this statement and 1 respondent disagreed with it. This represents a somewhat higher rate of 'unsure' responses compared to other questions.

Similarly, although most respondents felt that requests for advice from the Scottish Government had been well aligned with the remit of the Group - 9 people said that they agreed with such statement and further 2 strongly agreed with it - there were 5 respondents who were not sure about such alignment.

A somewhat greater proportion of 'unsure' responses in answers to these two questions is reflected in mixed views expressed in answers to open questions. There were several respondents who expressed a view that the steer had not always been clear and that a clearer steer would be welcome. It was pointed out that the Group had interactions with different individuals within the Scottish government who had a differing levels of understanding regarding the role and remit of the Group. On the flipside, one respondent said that a lack of strictly defined steer gave the Group a fairly free hand to define its focus. Moreover, several respondents wrote that the steer, lines of communication, expectations, vision and brief from Ministers had been clear or reasonably clear.

5.2 Timeliness of information sharing

The first part of this report explained that time was widely perceived as a key constraint on the more functioning of the Group and that this constraint was partly driven by tight timescales for producing advice.

Half of the respondents (8) agreed that timescales for recommendations and advice set by the Scottish Government had been reasonable but none agreed strongly. A further 5 respondents were unsure about this and 3 disagreed. When thinking about workstreams specifically, 6 respondents (out of 11) agreed and 1 strongly agreed that the timescales for recommendations and advice set by the Scottish Government were reasonable; 3 respondents were unsure and 1 disagreed.

In their answers to open questions, several respondents pointed out that information from the Scottish Government came too late on some occasions and that this led to some workstreams starting up too late (see section 4.2). However, some respondents recognised that there was a largely unavoidable obstacle for officials to provide timely information that was caused by rapid pace of developments in social security reforms.

The perception of problems with the timeliness of information sharing may have been intensified to an extent by temporal circumstances that no longer apply. Some respondents mentioned that time pressure was particularly intensified during the process of legislation and implementation of the Social Security Bill.

5.3 Lack of information and feedback

Related to the above, there were respondents who felt that relevant information was not shared at all until decisions had been made. In line with this, there was a view that the Group was sometimes informed rather than consulted. In addition, few but some respondents raised a complaint that the Group had not received feedback on why some advice was not acted upon.

5.4 Supportive but under-resourced secretariat

All respondents felt that the Secretariat took forward decisions of the Group effectively. There was an equal split between those who agreed and those who strongly agreed with this statement (i.e. 8 responses for each category). In addition, there were a few positive comments about the secretariat in answers to open questions. It was frequently mentioned that secretariat was supportive and even vital to the Group but that it needed more resources even after the arrival of a new apprentice.

6. *Other issues and suggestions for improvement*

Open questions raised a number of other concerns that were brought up by members.

Specific, detailed advice

First of all, there was a view that the Group should become more skilled at developing more specific including technical/operation advice as opposed to high level advice. Related to this, it was proposed that there could be two strands within the group: one working on such more specific and technical issues of social security policy delivery and the other one looking at the long-term, strategic and transformative aspects of social security reform.

External expertise

Thirdly, it was suggested that the Group could draw more actively on external expertise, for example economic expertise.

Topic coverage

Thirdly, it was proposed that the Group could discuss a broader range of topics.

7. *Conclusions*

Overall, respondents reported strong self-perceived understanding of the purpose and remit of the Group and generally believed that the Group had been effective in realising this purpose, that it was able to produce in-depth and detailed analysis, and that it had made a demonstrable impact.

Respondents also felt that the group worked harmoniously but they expressed concerns around:

- not knowing other Group members sufficiently well
- difficulties in reconciling different positions
- attendance and unequal contribution to Group meetings and workstreams
- own ability to contribute to and devote time to a Group

Although they felt that the general meetings had been productive and well chaired, it was noted that agendas were packed and it was suggested that the duration of the meetings could be extended or that meetings could be more frequent. However, practical difficulties in implementing the latter option were acknowledged.

Although relationship with the Scottish Government was perceived in positive terms by most respondents and indeed was the third most frequently mentioned enabler to the Group effectiveness, there were also critical views on the issues around the steer and expectations, information sharing, and resources.

The key factor mediating the effectiveness of the Group within each of the areas above was time available to the Group (i.e. timescales for reporting) and to individual members within it.

ANNEX 1 – summary of answers to multiple choice questions

1. Before today, how strong would you say your understanding of this purpose and remit was?

Answer	No of respondents
Very strong	8
Strong	7
Not sure	0
Weak	1
Very weak	0
<i>N</i>	16

2. The Group has been effective in realising this purpose.

Strongly agree	3
Agree	10
Not sure	3
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0
<i>N</i>	16

3. The Group has had a demonstrable impact.

Strongly agree	1
Agree	12
Not sure	3
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0
<i>N</i>	16

4. Expectations of the Scottish Government from the group have been clear to me.

Strongly agree	2
Agree	7
Not sure	6
Disagree	1
Strongly disagree	0
<i>N</i>	16

5. Requests for advice from the Scottish Government have been well aligned with the remit of the Group.

Strongly agree	2
Agree	9
Not sure	5
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0
<i>N</i>	16

6. The group has been able to produce in-depth and detailed analysis and recommendations.

Strongly agree	4
Agree	9
Not sure	2
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0
<i>N</i>	15

7. Timescales for recommendations and advice set by the Scottish Government have been reasonable.

Strongly agree	0
Agree	8
Not sure	5
Disagree	3
Strongly disagree	0
<i>N</i>	16

8. The Secretariat takes forward decisions of the Group effectively.

Strongly agree	8
Agree	8
Not sure	0
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0
<i>N</i>	16

9. I have experience of working within one of the Group's workstreams.

Yes	11
No	5
<i>N</i>	16

10. Workstream(s) that I worked in were able to produce in-depth and detailed analysis and recommendations.

Strongly agree	2
Agree	7
Not sure	1
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	1
<i>N</i>	11

11. Thinking of my experience of working within workstreams, timescales for recommendations and advice set by the Scottish Government were reasonable.

Strongly agree	1
Agree	6
Not sure	3

Disagree	1
Strongly disagree	0
<i>N</i>	11

12. The Group works harmoniously.

Strongly agree	8
Agree	8
Not sure	0
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0
<i>N</i>	16

13. Group members have been engaged and committed to the Group's affairs.

Strongly agree	6
Agree	9
Not sure	1
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0
<i>N</i>	16

14. The general meetings of the Group were productive.

Strongly agree	6
Agree	7
Not sure	3
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0
<i>N</i>	16

15. The general meetings of the Group were conducted in a way that enabled us to fulfil our remit.

Strongly agree	5
Agree	10
Not sure	1
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0
<i>N</i>	16

16. Frequency of the general Group meetings was adequate.

Strongly agree	3
Agree	8
Not sure	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	0
<i>N</i>	16

17. Membership of the group is fit for purpose.

Strongly agree	3
Agree	8
Not sure	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	0
<i>N</i>	16

18. I have been an active participant in the Group's work.

Strongly agree	4
Agree	9
Not sure	3
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0
<i>N</i>	16

19. I spent time working on the Group's work programme outside of the meetings.

Yes	15
No	1
<i>N</i>	16

20. I have a clear understanding of my role in the Group.

Strongly agree	2
Agree	11
Not sure	3
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0
<i>N</i>	16

21. Being a member has been in line with my expectations.

Strongly agree	1
Agree	10
Not sure	2
Disagree	3
Strongly disagree	0
<i>N</i>	16

22. The scale of demands on my time has been reasonable.

Strongly agree	3
Agree	6
Not sure	5
Disagree	3
Strongly disagree	0
<i>N</i>	16