

ODS WELCOMES QUICKER REVIEW OF RETIREMENT AGE

Change management consultancy Organisation Development Services (ODS) has welcomed the government's announcement that it is to bring forward a review of the compulsory retirement age.

Abolishing the retirement age was a key recommendation of *Everybody's Future: A Framework for Ageing in the North West* – a far-reaching strategy authored by ODS in partnership with leading public sector and business representatives in the region.

Launched in April 2009, the strategy is the first time that a UK region has coordinated a comprehensive policy approach to the rapidly ageing population – addressing not just the economy but also housing, transport, and health & wellbeing.

Speaking at the launch of the strategy, Steven Broomhead, Chief Executive of the Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA) said he wanted the document to “blaze a trail for the rest of the UK.”

Just three months later, Minister Angela Eagle has announced that a government review of the compulsory retirement age – originally planned for 2011 – will be brought forward to 2010.

The move has been interpreted as signalling an imminent end to compulsory retirement at the age of 65.

“This announcement demonstrates that the North West is indeed blazing a trail for the rest of the country,” said Su Fowler-Johnson, a senior consultant at ODS, who led the Ageing Framework project for client 5050vision.

“Abolishing the retirement age was one of the key recommendations of the North West strategy, because it will retain vital skills and talents in the workforce, supporting economic growth.”

Everybody's Future has already been recognised as a flagship national project; both the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department of Health see the framework as an example of good practice.

NHS Employers – the organisation representing NHS Trusts in England on workforce issues – has also requested permission to use the strategy as part of its own work around age discrimination in public services.