

7 September 2010

Minutes



	<p>Members Present: Councillors Richard Lewis (Chairman), Lynne Allen, Raymond Graham, Carol Melvin, Robin Sansarpuri and Michael White.</p> <p>Apologies: Councillor Jazz Dhillon (Councillor Lynne Allen substituting)</p> <p>Officers: Kevin Byrne (Head of Policy, Deputy Chief Executive’s Office), Emma Marsh (Deputy Head of Communications, Deputy Chief Executive’s Office), Pam Nash (Strategic Information Officer, Deputy Chief Executive’s Office) and Khalid Ahmed (Democratic Services Manager).</p> <p>Witnesses: Amanda King (Area Manager for Office for National Statistics) and Nick O’Donnell (Head of Stakeholder Management for Office for National Statistics)</p>		
17.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>None.</p>		
18.	<p>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 JULY 2010</p> <p>Agreed as an accurate record.</p>		
19.	<p>EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</p> <p>It was agreed that all items of business were considered in public.</p>		
20.	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="295 1534 1228 2049"> <p>MAJOR REVIEW – CENSUS 2011 – TO LOOK AT HOW THIS COUNCIL CAN CONTRIBUTE TO IMPROVING THE POPULATION DATA FOR THE BOROUGH</p> <p>Members were provided with a report which gave background to the Census for 2011, together with the scoping report for the review.</p> <p>Nick O’Donnell, Head of Stakeholder Management and Amanda King, Area Manager for Office for National Statistics (ONS) attended the meeting and provided the review with the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Census population estimates were vital in helping to </td> <td data-bbox="1228 1534 1453 2049"> <p>Action By:</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>MAJOR REVIEW – CENSUS 2011 – TO LOOK AT HOW THIS COUNCIL CAN CONTRIBUTE TO IMPROVING THE POPULATION DATA FOR THE BOROUGH</p> <p>Members were provided with a report which gave background to the Census for 2011, together with the scoping report for the review.</p> <p>Nick O’Donnell, Head of Stakeholder Management and Amanda King, Area Manager for Office for National Statistics (ONS) attended the meeting and provided the review with the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Census population estimates were vital in helping to 	<p>Action By:</p>
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	<p>shape communities by underpinning policy making and Council funding allocation from central government and providing information to help plan and prioritise service delivery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2001 Census succeeded in achieving a 94% questionnaire return rate overall, although return rates in some areas had been as low as 63%. The target for 2011 was to achieve around 94% again with the minimum target being 80%. • A number of local authorities felt that their populations had been undercounted which had affected the amount of government funding received. • For the 2011 Census there would be a centralised system for tracking questionnaires. This would detect pockets of low returned questionnaires. • There would be a newly developed national address register which would support the delivery of questionnaires, completion, tracking and follow up for all households. • Questionnaires would be posted out and posted back, with questionnaire tracking making sure that the Census reached as many people as possible and ensured that addresses where questionnaires had not been returned were followed up by the Census field team. • The Census field team would be a flexible team which would carry out intensive follow up work which would target areas where there were low returns. • There would be an on-line questionnaire and help centre, and a telephone helpline providing advice and guidance in many languages. • The Census questionnaire would have to be completed in English and would be available in Braille if required. However there would be a translation in 56 languages of the Census questions. • A crucial factor in the success of the Census would be working closely with local councils in improving public awareness and addressing the accuracy of the register. • Local Councils had appointed Census Liaison Managers and assistants who would support the Census and be the single point of contact for the Census planning and activity. • An important role that the Council would have would be helping to get the Census message across to communities. Reference was made to communicating the message to children and Members were informed that work would take place with schools to enable children from ethnic backgrounds to communicate the message to their parents. • Information sharing would take place between ONS and local Councils to identify where there were demographic anomalies with returned questionnaires. However, it 	<p>Action By:</p>
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	<p>would be stressed that Census information would not be shared and was confidential.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field checks had already taken place on 15% of the country. • It was estimated that there would be 2.7million hours of field check activity. • With the help of local Councils, engagement would take place with those sectors of the population who were reluctant or found it difficult to take part in the process. • The local knowledge which Ward Councillors possessed would be an important resource. • Local Councils would assist in the recruitment of local field staff, identifying suitable candidates with appropriate experience, such as electoral canvassers and people who worked on the last Census. Field staff would be representative of the community areas they would be covering to encourage participation. • The safety of field staff would not be compromised and staff would be reminded not to put themselves in danger when on people's doorsteps. • Reference was made to the difficulty in engaging with people who were lease holders and who sub-let their properties and the additional issue of properties with houses built in back gardens. The clear message which would need to be communicated was that Census information was confidential and would not be shared with other organisations • The national advertising campaign would re-enforce the message that Census information was confidential and could not be accessed by other public authorities. • Included in the advertising campaign would be the message that the penalty for failure to fill in the Census questionnaire would be a £1,000 fine. In 2001 up to 500 people were prosecuted for not filling in Census questionnaires. • Reference was made to the many uses of Census data and the increased amount of genealogy research which now took place. • As Census data underpinned the planning and funding of Council services and healthcare, the Census was subject to a comprehensive quality assurance strategy. This would ensure that a number of key checks would take place to compare Census population figures with information from other sources. • 6 weeks after Census day on 27 March 2011, a doorstep survey would take place on around 4% of the population. <p>Members were informed that this Council's Communications Strategy for the Census was drafted, having worked closed with ONS. An article had been published in Hillingdon People</p>	<p>Action By:</p>
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	<p>but the main publicity push would be at the beginning of next year. There would be events, presentations, poster campaigns and the Council's website would promote the Census.</p> <p>Reference was made to a meeting which was taking place with community groups, interfaith networks and residents associations etc on 29 September 2010 and it was asked that all Members of the Council also be invited to this. It was also agreed that a representative from a community group be invited to this review's next meeting.</p> <p>Members were informed a Councillor's Census toolkit had been produced which would provide Members with information to help them engage with their constituents on the Census. This would be sent to Members.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked witnesses for the information provided.</p> <p>Members asked that for the next meeting of the review evidence be received from the Primary Care Trust on the implications of undercounting population data on health services, from an officer from Finance on the loss of government grant caused by undercounting the population of the Borough, and from an enforcement officer on the issue of homes in back gardens. In addition Members felt it would be useful to contact other local authorities to look at the communications and engagement methods they would be using for the Census.</p> <p>Reference was made to contacting local authorities such as Kent County Council and other Port authorities to look at how they would be dealing with the issue of refugees, in relation to the Census.</p> <p>Resolved –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the information provided from the witnesses form part of the evidence for the review. 2. That approval be given to the actions outlined above. 	<p>Action By:</p> <p>Khalid Ahmed / Pam Nash</p> <p>Emma Marsh</p> <p>Khalid Ahmed</p> <p>Khalid Ahmed</p>
<p>21.</p>	<p>WORK PROGRAMME 2010/11</p> <p>The report was noted.</p>	
<p>22.</p>	<p>CABINET FORWARD PLAN</p> <p>The report was noted.</p>	
	<p>Meeting closed at 8.45pm Next meeting: 13 October 2010 at 7.30pm.</p>	

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Khalid Ahmed on 01895 250833. Circulation of these minutes are to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.