

**CORPORATE SERVICES & PARTNERSHIPS
POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE**

2010/11

REVIEW SCOPING REPORT

Proposed review title:

**Census 2011 – to look at how this Council can contribute to improving
the population data for the Borough**

Aim of the review

To make a positive contribution to improving local population estimates and to maximise the data which is gathered for the 2011 Census for the Borough. There are a number of implications of undercounting the population of the Borough and the review would focus on how the Council could promote the importance of residents of the Borough filling in the Census forms.

Proposed outcome

A report summarising the Committee's findings would be completed and presented to the Council's Cabinet. The report will explore proposals for the improvement of the gathering of data for the 2011 Census, the Council's engagement in preparations for the Census and opportunities for the generating of improved population counts for the Borough. Improved information on population figures will help the Council in terms of its strategic planning and service delivery and also ensure that the Council receives appropriate funding from Government based on accurate population statistics

Terms of reference

1. To look at the preparations and methods used for the 2011 Census and to support and add value through engagement with the area manager for the Office for National Statistics (ONS).
2. To look at measures which could be used to improve the accuracy of local population information to help the Council in its service planning.
3. To examine the role the Council has in promoting and encouraging residents of the Borough in conjunction with the ONS, to actively participate in the Census to ensure the best results for the Council and its residents.

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4. To look at the plans the Council has to communicate the purpose of the Census and to see how the Council can work with community groups to maximise the response to the Census questionnaire.
5. To look at the measures which will be used to capture data from those hard to reach groups within the Borough.
6. To examine the implications of undercounting the Borough's population in relation to the grant funding the Council received from Government.
7. To consider measures which could be used with the Council's Strategic Partners to ensure population figures are accurate.
8. To look at the methods other local authorities use to improve the accuracy of Census data
9. To make recommendations to Cabinet on what the Council can do in relation to the promotion of the Census to residents of the Borough to ensure the Census questionnaire is widely completed.

Reasons for the review

The Census is the definitive source of population and household information and takes place every 10 years. The ONS is responsible for carrying out the Census and the information provided forms essential information from national to neighbourhood level for government, business and the community.

The next Census will take place on 27 March 2011 and the population data obtained underpins the amount of funding each local authority receives from central government.

The last Census in 2001 saw response rates in local authority areas vary between 64% and 99%. Hillingdon achieved a response rate of 91.5%. In certain areas of London and among some population groups, significant numbers of people failed to complete the Census questionnaire. This has serious consequences for Councils, as population is one of the main factors in determining how much funding various public services including local authorities, primary care trusts and the Probation Service receive from government.

Hillingdon births have risen for several consecutive years with births in 2008 being exceptionally high at 4,126 children, which was several hundred more than the previous record high.

Demographic professionals at the Greater London Authority (GLA) have indicated a prolonged period of births at around the high 2008 level. This demographic pressure is exacerbated by unusual family movements within the Borough caused by the economic climate.

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In the present economic climate with local government having to cut budgets it is vital that the Council does as much as it can to ensure that population data from the Census is as accurate as possible to ensure the Council receives maximum funding from the Government.

Key issues

1. What preparations have ONS made to ensure that the Census for 2011 is as accurate as possible?
2. What are the forms of engagement which are used to collect Census and population data and what other measures could be used to improve engagement with residents?
3. How does the Council and the ONS engage with community groups to ensure those 'hard to reach' groups are made aware of the importance of the completion of Census questionnaires?
4. What can the Council and its partners do to promote the importance and purpose of the Census to ensure residents return Census questionnaires?
5. What promotional and publicity tools could the Council use to obtain maximum engagement with all residents within the Borough?
6. What is the financial cost to the Council of undercounting the Borough's population?
7. What are the rules in relation to temporary residents in the Borough i.e. students in the Borough's Higher Education establishments for purposes of the Census?
8. What corroboration takes place between other London Boroughs and other public sector organisations on sharing data relating to population?

Methodology

Witness sessions to potentially include:

Area Manager from Office for National Statistics (ONS)
Strategic Information Officer – LBH
Head of Communications - LBH
Officer from GLA
Representatives from community groups
Officer from another London Borough
Officer from London Councils

A review of the relevant literature and websites.

Written evidence from witnesses

Office for National Statistics – Information paper on The 2011 Census – A design for England and Wales

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/about>

Stakeholders and consultation plan

As many stakeholders as possible would be invited to give evidence to the Committee in person. In addition to those outlined above, further stakeholders could be invited to give written evidence to the review.

Connected work (recently completed, planned or ongoing)

The ONS in July 2010 released new population projections which replaced the 2006 based sub national projections which were published in June 2008.

The population projections were used by the previous Government in the local authority grant allocation process.

The projections are based on the assumption that recent trends in fertility, mortality and migration at local authority level will continue; they take no account of local development policy, economic factors, or the capacity of areas to accommodate population changes.

Projections are available for each year from 2008 to 2033 for all local authorities in England, with aggregates to counties, Government Office regions, and health areas. Data is available by gender and for five year age groups to 90+.

For London the key results are an increase in population of 1.520 million persons (19.8 per cent) between 2008 and 2033, reaching a population of 9.188 million. This is considerably higher than the highest recorded population in London: 8.6 million in 1939. London's projected growth of nearly 20% compares with an 18.0% increase for England.

It is projected that London's female population will grow more slowly than the male: 19.7% compared to 20%. This is mainly caused by the assumed continuation of the improvement in rates of male survival at older ages.

Implications for Hillingdon

All Borough populations are projected to grow between 2008 and 2033 however there is a great deal of variation. Brent has one of the lowest projected growths of 4% (10.1 thousand) with Hammersmith & Fulham only slightly higher at 6.4% (10.8 thousand).

Hillingdon's population is projected to grow by 23.0% (59.4 thousand). Ealing is mid way with a projected growth of 14.3% (44.5 thousand) while, Hounslow 24.3% (55.9 thousand) and Harrow 24.4% (55.0 thousand).

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Although the above figures are projections, the latest actual figures show that births rose again in Q4 2009. There is no sign of decline in London, although the rate of increase has slowed. Across London there is no clear pattern: in Enfield the birth rate is declining while in Ealing it is increasing.

Proposed timeframe & milestones

Meeting	Action	Comments
22 July 2010	Consideration of a draft scoping report	
7 September 2010	First Witness Session and approval of final scoping report	Witnesses to include Area Manager from ONS Strategic Information Officer and Head of Policy – LBH Deputy Head of Communications – LBH
13 October 2010	Second Witness Session and draft recommendations of the review	Witnesses to include: Finance Officer - LBH Representative(s) from community group(s) or feedback from a meeting which took place on 29 September PCT representative
11 November 2010	Third witness session	