

Cabinet

A meeting of Cabinet was held on Thursday, 8th September, 2011.

Present: Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr David Coleman, Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr Ken Dixon, Cllr David Harrington, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy and Cllr David Rose

Officers: J. Danks, G. Cummings, L King, E. Chesworth (R); J. Humphreys, L. Hanley, S. McLurg, S. Willson (CESC); P. Dobson, R. McGuckin, R. Poundford, D. Kitching, R. Kench (DNS); D. Bond, M. Waggott and M. Henderson (LD)

Also in attendance: Cllr Philip Dennis and Cllr Terry Laing

Apologies: Cllr Steve Nelson and Cllr Michael Smith

CAB Declarations of Interest

42/11

Councillor Mrs McCoy declared a personal, non prejudicial interest in the item entitled Economic Climate update as she served on Stockton and District Advice and Information Service's board and she had nominated one of the traders in the Town Centre Businesses Awards

Councillor Cook declared a personal, non prejudicial interest in the item entitled Economic Climate update as he would be judging in the Town Centre Businesses Awards.

Councillor Coleman declared a personal, non prejudicial interest in the item entitled Appointments as he was a member of the RSPB, which was referred to in the report.

Councillor Cook declared a personal non prejudicial interest in the item entitled Review of 2011 Elections and Emerging Issues as he was employed within an MP's constituency office.

CAB Minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2011

43/11

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2011 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

CAB LA nominations

44/11

In accordance with the procedure for the appointment of school governors, approved at Minute 84 of the Cabinet (11th May 2000), Cabinet were requested to approve the nomination to school Governing Body as detailed within the report.

RESOLVED that appointment be made to the vacant Governorship subject to successful List 99 check and Personal Disclosure, as follows:-

Eggescliffe CE Primary School – Cllr Phillip Dennis

Pentland Primary School – Alison Dobson

Roseberry Primary School – R. Sandbach

St Frances of Assisi CE Primary School – Mr W. Feldon

St John the Evangelist RC VA Primary School – Caroline Chilvers

CAB 45/11 Procurement of a Design and Build Contractor and an ICT Provider to Deliver North Shore Health Academy and Other Batched Projects

It was explained that the Council had been approached by Partnerships for Schools (Pfs) as part of the Government's National Academies programme to provide developments for and on behalf of Academies sponsors, NHS Stockton and University of Teesside. The programme comprised of three projects; these were firstly North Shore Health Academy followed by Thornaby Academy and Freebrough Academy, the latter being in Redcar and Cleveland BC.

Funding allocations from DfE was £13.4m to North Shore Health Academy (NSHA), £5.5m to Thornaby and £2.8m to Freeborough. To develop NSHA it was intended to provide a new build Academy facility on the former Tilery Sports Centre site. The development of Thornaby Academy would be through a remodelling of the existing buildings occupied by that Academy.

Members were informed that Pfs had suggested that the projects sponsored by Teesside University (Thornaby and Freeborough) should be delivered as a batched project by this Council.

It was explained that the Myplace project would be located in the same building as North Shore Health Academy, this would provide many advantages to myplace and academy users and draw in a further £4.4 million to the project.

This procurement would be structured to enable the Authority to request the appointed Design & Build contractor to engage in additional 'follow on' contracts. The programme also required the procurement of an ICT Provider that would then have the opportunity to provide ICT hardware for each of the Academies.

RESOLVED that:-

1. delegated powers be given to the Head of Technical Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People to procure a Design & Build Framework Contractor for the construction of the batched Academy programme.
2. delegated powers be given to the Head of Technical Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People to procure an ICT Services framework provider that will supply the Academy facilities.

CAB 46/11 Family and Friends Care Policy

Members were reminded that one of the approved recommendations of the Efficiency, Improvement and Transformation (EIT) Review of Child Placements was that the authority needed to develop a Kinship Care Policy.

In March 2011 the Department for Education (DfE) published 'Family and Friends Care: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities' which set out the context of local policy requirements and required each local authority children's services to publish a policy on family and friends care by 30th September 2011.

It was explained that family and friends care related to a set of circumstances where children and young people who, because they were unable to live with their parents, were being brought up by members of their extended families, friends or other people who were connected with them. Since the publication of the DfE guidance the term 'kinship care', had been replaced by 'family and friends care'.

A draft Family and Friends Care Policy had been developed in line with the recommendations arising from the EIT review, and closely followed the requirements of the DfE statutory guidance. A copy of the Policy was presented to members as was a copy of the related Equality Impact Assessment (EIA).

It was noted that a copy of the Policy would be sent to every member of the Council. It was also suggested that a copy be sent to local Members of Parliament.

RESOLVED that:-

1. the Family and Friends Care Policy be adopted by the council, subject to any final modifications arising from the consultation process.
2. a protocol be developed with local housing providers, setting out arrangements to support family and friend carers.

**CAB
47/11**

Children's Social Care Workload Pressures

Cabinet considered a further report relating to workload pressures within Children's Social Care. Members were updated on those pressures and were provided with information up to the end of June 2011.

It was explained that the number of referrals had dropped from 277 in March to 190 in April and stood at 234 in June. Initial assessments and core assessments undertaken in June had been 249 and 124 respectively.

The overall number of children who were subject to a child protection plan stood at 264 which was the highest number since April 2010 (266).

The overall number of looked after children remained very high, but stable during the period, April (301), May (300) and June (301).

With regard to staffing issues it was explained that an external appointment had been made to the post of Targeted Team Manager. The Specialist Team Manager post remained vacant following 4 external advertisements, although the post continued to be covered by an agency manager. This post would not be readvertised pending the completion of the Efficiency, Improvement and Transformation review of children's social care.

In terms of social work posts it was noted that, as at the end of March 2011, there were 1.6 full time equivalent substantive vacancies.

There were no allocated child protection cases but there were 2 unallocated looked after children cases and 12 unallocated children in need cases. Unallocated cases were held by the appropriate team manager.

As a result of the increasing pressures and need to ensure cases were safely allocated and progressed in a timely manner, 5 additional supernumerary agency staff had been employed within the referral and assessment and specialist social work teams on a strictly time limited basis. These posts were subject to ongoing monitoring and review by Corporate Director and Head of Service.

Cabinet noted the budgetary pressures currently facing the service.

It was explained that a marketing officer was in post and the 'Put yourself in the Picture' marketing campaign was launched in May. There had been a marked increase in the numbers of people expressing an interest in becoming foster carers and adopters. Members recognised the importance of retaining and supporting the people who had expressed an interest.

Cabinet noted that, with regard to the two proposed new children's homes, it was anticipated that the Piper Knowle home would open in November 2011 and the Redcar Road home in January 2012.

RESOLVED that:-

1. the continued workload pressures within the social care system and the associated impact this was having on caseloads, performance and budget be noted.
2. further update reports be submitted to Cabinet, on a quarterly basis, in order to continue to monitor the impact of these workload pressures.

**CAB
48/11** **Economic Climate update report**

Cabinet considered a monthly update report providing members with an overview of the current economic climate, outlining the effects that this was having on Stockton Borough, and the mitigations already in place and those being developed.

Members noted some of the positive and negative developments since the last report. Details of the support on offer to people and businesses was also provided.

RESOLVED that the content of the report be noted and the work being undertaken be supported.

**CAB
49/11** **Equality Act 2010 - Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles**

Cabinet considered a report that provided details of the results of the consultation exercise carried out with the taxi trade and local disabled groups on

the issue as to whether the Council should maintain a list of “designated wheelchair accessible vehicles” under new powers contained in the Equality Act 2010.

It was explained that the Equality Act 2010 brought together a number of different pieces of legislation about discrimination, including disability discrimination. The new Act included many of the hackney carriage vehicles (HCV) and private hire vehicle (PHV) provisions which were included in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, but it also contained some important changes.

Sections 160 to 173 of the Equality Act 2010 related specifically to HCVs and PHVs and some of these provisions were brought into on force 1st October 2010.

Section 167 allowed licensing authorities to maintain a list of “designated vehicles”, that was, a list of wheelchair accessible HCVs and PHVs licensed in their area. The consequence of being on this list was that the driver had to undertake the duties to assist passengers who used wheelchairs.

Whilst this section was not to be commenced until a later unspecified date councils were being urged to start maintaining a list as soon as possible for the purpose of liaising with the trade and because drivers of those vehicles could apply for exemption 2010 from having to comply with this requirement with effect from 1 October.

Members were advised that when this section came into force, and the lists of designated vehicles had a statutory effect, it would be possible for the owner of a vehicle to appeal against a decision to include his/her vehicle on the list. The appeal would go to the magistrates’ court.

It was explained that if Cabinet approved the maintaining of a list then officers would seek permission from those to be placed on the list to add additional information regarding their contact details, so that prospective customers had the relevant information to hire their services.

Members noted the duties placed on drivers of designated wheelchair accessible HCVs and PHVs.

The duties were:

- To carry the passenger while in the wheelchair;
- Not to make any additional charge for doing so;
- If the passenger chose to sit in a passenger seat to carry the wheelchair;
- To take such steps as were necessary to ensure that the passenger was carried in safety and reasonable comfort; and
- To give the passenger such mobility assistance as was reasonably required.

Members noted circumstances that would exempt drivers from the duties and it was recommended that any driver wishing to apply for an exemption should be required to produce a report either from his own doctor or his consultant, when applicable, confirming that his medical condition or physical condition made it impossible or unreasonably difficult for him/her to comply with the duties and

that each application be determined on its individual merits.

Members noted the consultation that had taken place with the Taxi Trade local disability groups. This consultation showed a majority in favour of the Council maintaining a list. In addition the Licensing Committee gave its support to maintaining a list.

RESOLVED that:-

1. the Council maintain a list of designated vehicles under the provisions of the Act
2. applications for exemptions from drivers from the duties to offer assistance be considered by officers in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Licensing Committee.

CAB 50/11 Regulatory Services Enforcement Policy - Proposed Revisions

Cabinet considered a report relating to a review of the Council's Regulatory Services Enforcement Policy.

It was explained that Regulatory Services could be defined as those services that might, from time to time, institute criminal proceedings against individuals as a consequence of fulfilling the authority's statutory functions. Those included Trading Standards and Licensing, Environmental Health, Building Control, Waste Management, Car Parking functions etc. In April 2003 Cabinet approved a combined Regulatory Services Enforcement Policy for the authority (minute 1287) and this was revised in November 2006.

The Council was required, as part of the concordat, to publish its enforcement policy for its regulatory services, to monitor compliance with the policy and to keep it under review. The opportunity had been taken to review the policy in the light of both changing legislation/duties and current best practice. Consultation had taken place on the proposed revised policy by means of a public notice in a local newspaper and via the Trading Standards & Licensing website. No comments had been received on the proposed revised document.

The proposed revised Regulatory Services Enforcement Policy was provided to members.

RESOLVED that the proposed revised policy be approved.

CAB 51/11 Library and Information Service Asset Reconfiguration

Cabinet considered a report relating to the library service.

Cabinet was reminded that a comprehensive public library service was a Local Government statutory requirement.

The Library and Information Service assets within Stockton were:

- 11 Static Libraries
- Mobile Library Service with 2 vehicles (outlying districts, schools, residential care homes and individuals who are housebound or carers)
- 1 Neighbourhood Centre Library (Ragworth run by the Community Officers)
- 2 Prison Libraries (SLA with HMP OLIS contract)
- 1 Hospital service (using volunteers)
- 1 Bibliographical Service area (Thorndale Centre)

It was explained that Stockton Libraries were included as part of the Corporate Asset Review of Community Buildings. The core library offer was a book collection which was refreshed and relevant to the community it served. Thanks to technology, finding out what books and services were available, and gaining access to them was getting easier, and the means by which people get to the items they want are getting more varied and flexible. Many of the Library functions could be incorporated into other public service delivery points, and a small but growing number could be delivered remotely via the internet.

E-books, and digital audio books were a growing part of the public library service offer, adding to the range of services available on-line. However, the physical stock of books, the free internet access, and the help and expertise of professional librarians, made it essential that the Council maintain a network of library sites.

It was noted that libraries provided a focal point for communities, frequently offering meeting spaces, a rich and diverse range of activities, and confidential consultation areas for sensitive services such as health information work.

Stockton Council delivered a range of services through face to face contact. The more often the Council could combine those services on a single site the better the experience for the customer. Libraries could provide a base for the delivery of other services, or be integrated into other public service facilities.

Refurbishment of Thornaby Library included the incorporation of Customer Services on the same site. With very positive effects for both services. At the same time, Library Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) self issue systems were introduced. 100% of the book issues that could go through the system did so. RFID released staff to help customers and deliver a wider range of information services. The same technology could be used to automate other transactions. This transformational change at Thornaby had seen an increase of 210% in actual visits and an 82% increase in the number of items issued, with Children and Young people's issues up by over 300%.

Using the differentiated service rationale within the Corporate Asset Review, the Council would design the Town Centre Libraries to accommodate the enhanced range of Library services. As already demonstrated with Thornaby Town Centre Library, those larger sites with enhanced service provision were more economical to run and could be cost effectively opened for longer hours.

Town Centre Libraries would be complemented by a combination of smaller Community Libraries, mobile services, and services provided from within other Council buildings delivering other compatible services to the local community. Community based library provision would be differentiated and targeted directly to the service needs of the community in question (identified using highly sophisticated and detailed Library local area profiles).

The principle of a differentiated service would initially be applied in the Asset Review options analysis, but also over time, allowing for the long term development of the hub and spoke model.

In effect the Council would replicate a system which was commonplace in retail and commercial leisure sectors, where main sites were open longer hours and delivered the widest possible range of services, whilst smaller, staffed satellite points provided a targeted subset of the total range of services, designed through intelligent behaviour/needs analysis of the local customer base. This model also allowed for the local delivery point to become a conduit for mobile or 'provided to order' goods or services.

Members noted that the next stage would be to develop an action plan for differentiated Library Service Provision within the Community Asset Review and develop a linked consultation strategy.

RESOLVED that the principle of a differentiated Library Service based on Town Centre Libraries providing a wide range of services, and community libraries offering services targeted to the needs of local communities. the proposed revised policy be approved.

CAB
52/11 **Southern Cross Healthcare**

Cabinet considered a report relating to Southern Cross Healthcare.

It was explained that, in July 2011, Southern Cross Healthcare announced that it would cease providing care home services after October 2011 and suspended trading in the company's shares. This was a matter of the corporate governance requirements for the UK Listing Authority and did not have an impact on the day to day trading or operation of the care homes themselves. Until alternative operators were engaged, Southern Cross Healthcare would continue to trade as a company and work with landlords and local authorities to manage the process of transfer to other operators. The Care Quality Commission had agreed to make additional resources available to ensure that new providers were registered in a timely manner. New providers would also have to undertake the council's care home accreditation process.

Members noted that the Southern Cross Healthcare care homes operating in Stockton on Tees were:

- Wellburn House, Wellburn Road, Fairfield, TS19 7PP
- Allington House Marsh House Avenue, Billingham, TS23 3ET
- Hadrian Park, Marsh House Avenue, Billingham, TS23 3DF
- Stockton Lodge, Redhill Road, Roseworth, Stockton-on-Tees, TS19 9BY
- Piper Court, Sycamore Way, Stockton-on-Tees, TS19 8FR
- Victoria House, Bath Lane, Stockton -on-Tees, TS18 2DX
- Ayresome Court ,Green Lane, Yarm, Stockton-on-Tees, TS15 9EH
- Highfield Nursing Home, Harker Close, The Meadowings, Yarm, TS15 9XH

Cabinet was provided with details of the type of care home provision, the landlord of each care home, the new operator, occupancy and the current overall vacant capacity in Stockton care homes.

It was noted that discussions were continuing between the council, the Primary Care Trust (PCT), Southern Cross Healthcare, their landlords and prospective new care providers to ensure the care of residents was not disrupted. The Council had been given assurances that the care homes in Stockton were considered viable businesses. Letters had gone to all residents of Southern Cross Healthcare care homes in Stockton and council officers had worked with colleagues in other councils to ensure that residents placed out of area were included in the relevant communications. Information was also available on the council website. All Members had received communication by email and the Leader of the Council and the Lead Cabinet Member had received regular updates on progress. The Council and PCT communications departments had worked together to manage external communication. Council and PCT officers had collaborated regionally to identify and address potential risks to the continuity of service provision.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

**CAB
53/11** **Equality Impact Assessment**

Cabinet considered a report relating to arrangements for undertaking Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) and provided a revised framework to improve the way in which the Council evaluated the impact of policy, strategy and service development on the various communities it served.

Members noted the Local and National contexts of EIAs and the importance of ensuring that the Council had in place effective arrangements for assessing the impact of its activity on the local communities, particularly in respect of those groups with 'protected characteristics' within equality legislation.

In the light of the national and local contexts it was considered that a revised framework was required for assessing the impact of policy, strategy and service development on the various communities the Council served. The key elements of such a framework were provided:

- Consideration of equality impact assessment should be part of a broader assessment of impact on local communities, so that key decisions were informed by an understanding of how they were likely to impact on the communities the Council was serving, including those with specific needs within the scope of equalities legislation. There would be key linkages between this approach and the Council's revised Consultation and Community Engagement Strategies, to ensure that impact assessments were informed by appropriate consultation with relevant groups likely to be affected by any proposals.
- There should be more effective targeting of decisions on policies, strategies and service developments for which an assessment of impact was required. This could be done through review of items on the Forward Plan; consideration of all Value for Money Reviews through the EIT Sub-Board; monitoring of items through relevant management teams (e.g. for those decisions that were taken under delegated powers); and changes to the Delegated Decision Record Form and the template for Cabinet Reports.

- For items targeted in this way, impact assessments were likely to require a staged approach, for example:

- an outline indication of equality implications when included in the Forward Plan; or at the 'baselining' stage of VfM / EIT reviews;

- assessment of impact for all options considered prior to the final recommendation / decision making stage;

- clear arrangements for subsequent monitoring of the outcomes and impact of the new strategy, policy, service or initiative.

- The current EIA pro-forma should be replaced with a set of guidance and best practice exemplars.

- There should be a requirement that Cabinet reports, for those items identified as requiring an impact assessment, include a section on 'Assessment of Impact on Communities', in the main body of the report, to replace the current EIA section.

- Appropriate training, guidance and awareness raising sessions need to be in place to promote an 'equality awareness' culture throughout the organisation and to support implementation of the revised framework.

- There should be a more robust, and consistent, approach to monitoring the subsequent impact of new policy, strategy, and service developments on the communities the Council served. This approach could be linked into the arrangements for developing and monitoring Service Improvement Plans and Business Unit Plans.

Should the framework above be endorsed by Cabinet, a small task and finish group of officers would be established to develop an action plan for implementing the revised approach and for monitoring the subsequent impact of the revised arrangements.

RESOLVED that the revised framework for undertaking EIAs, as set out above and in paragraphs 15 to 21 of the report, be approved.

**CAB
54/11** **Appointments**

Cabinet considered a report relating to appointments to two outside bodies.

RESOLVED that Councillor Rose be appointed to Teesside Environmental Trust and Industry Nature Conservation Association.

**CAB
55/11** **Minutes of Various Bodies**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meetings of various bodies.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the following meetings be received/approved, as appropriate:-

Housing and Neighbourhood Partnership – 24 May 2011

Eastern Area Partnership – 31 May 2011
Western Area Partnership – 6 June 2011
Eastern Area Partnership – 21 June 2011
Safer Stockton Partnership – 5 July 2011
Housing and Neighbourhood Partnership – 19 July 2011

**CAB
56/11** **Medium Term Financial Plan Update - June 2011**

Consideration was given to the current financial position of the Council.

It was noted that with regard to Children, Education and Social Care services, a report submitted to Members in July 2011 outlined a range of pressures facing the service and indicated that the managed surplus would be required to fund these pressures. These pressures associated with looked after children were also being considered elsewhere on the agenda and the remaining managed surplus of £1.4m was now expected to be utilised in the current financial year:

- Additional placements of varying costs and duration in agency children's homes had increased the pressure on this area which was forecast to cost an additional £750,000.
- The number of children in independent foster care was resulting in pressures of £400,000. Members were aware that following the EIT review in this area, the Council were actively campaigning to recruit more in-house foster carers and were investing in two in-house children's homes. These changes had not yet impacted upon the position, but should assist with managing these pressures in the future.

There were also emerging pressures within Learning Disability which would be considered as part of the EIT review. Many of the budget areas and pressures associated with the service were extremely volatile and it was difficult to predict changes, and the position be monitored constantly throughout the year. Members were also aware from the budget report of the transfer of resources from the PCT to support social care. The Council had now received this resource of £2.2m and would be considering how it could be used to support services and the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

Cabinet was advised that there were a significant number of issues and developments which would impact on the Council as follows:

- Localisation of Business Rates: The Government had published proposals around localisation of business rates with eight technical papers having now been received.
- Council Tax Benefit: A consultation exercise was underway to devolve responsibility for all aspects of Council Tax Benefit to local authorities. This included a proposal to reduce budgets by 10%. If this was a universal reduction, Stockton would lose approximately £1.7m. Council's then would need to develop a local scheme to allocate benefits.
- Academy funding: There was a consultation on the methodology of funding Academies for 'Central' services. The option proposed was one using estimates of Academies nationally without any links to actual numbers of Academies in the

borough. This would have a detrimental impact on Stockton and officers had responded to the consultation accordingly.

- Various other consultation papers may have an impact on local government finance such as Public Health responsibilities transferring to Local Authorities, Dilnot review, Munro review, changes to Youth Justice Grant distribution etc. There were also proposals to transfer elements of the Social Fund Scheme to Local Authorities as part of changes to the Welfare Benefit system.

The above issues would be considered and reported as part of future MTFP review reports.

General fund balances were expected to remain at the level previously reported of £9.4m which was £1m above the 3% recommended target and given the current financial climate it was recommended that these resources be retained.

With regard to the Council's capital budget, the revised budget had increased by £6million to take account of variances caused by slippage in 2010/11. Since then a number of additional schemes, totalling £3.5m had been incorporated into the Council's Capital Programme and the Town Heritage Initiative scheme (£2.1m) had been reprofiled to reflect the current timescales of the scheme which would commence in 2011/12.

The additional schemes in 2011/12 included:

-Disabled facilities	£1m
-Winter maintenance	£0.44m
-Teesside Park egress	£0.44m
-Yarm Lane access	£0.53m

The schemes were to be financed by additional grants and contributions of £2.6m, revenue contributions of £0.3m which were already incorporated into the medium term financial plan and developer's contributions of £0.6m. The variance shown of £1.2m had arisen mainly within the schools capital budget where savings had been made on a number of schemes where favourable tenders had been received.

RESOLVED that the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and the current level of general fund balances be approved.

**CAB
57/11**

Review of 2011 Elections and Emerging Issues

Consideration was given to feedback from the elections held in 2011, along with emerging issues regarding legislation surrounding future elections.

The Elections in 2011 were unique in that a UK wide referendum was taking place at the same time as all other polls due on this date. Within this Borough, it was the first time that more than 2 combined elections were held on the same day as in previous years parish elections had been postponed. The report highlighted what went well, what could be done better and highlighted the complexity of providing for the Referendum in conjunction with the local and parish elections, and in particular the complexity of the procedures for postal vote opening and the count.

Following their conclusion, the Chief Counting Officer wrote to each counting officer on 18 May to thank them and their staff for all the effort and hard work they put into ensuring the elections and referendums were a success. Several messages of congratulations and thanks were also received from our local councillors, and colleagues who had supported the Elections.

Cabinet noted that in accordance with the Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act the Boundary Commission for England would soon be publishing initial proposals for new constituencies in England for a period of 12 weeks consultation; the details of which would be deposited from the 13th September in the Municipal Buildings and main libraries within the Borough.

Progress was also noted regarding the passage of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill with the first elections of Police and Crime Commissioners due to take place in 2012. An amendment to the legislation proposed an election date of the 15th November , rather than the date of the scheduled local government elections in May .

The implications of the Localism Bill with regard to electoral services was also noted, with the Bill expected to receive Royal Assent in late October or November this year. The new legislation would give residents the power to instigate local referendums on any local issue and the power to veto excessive council tax increases.

In order to meet its commitment to speed up the introduction of Individual Electoral Registration so that it was ready for implementation in 2014, the Government had also published draft legislation in June 2011. Once Parliament had reported on the draft proposals, the Government would formally respond to the Committee's report, making any necessary changes to the draft legislation with a view to laying a final Bill before Parliament in early 2012.

The Government wished to take steps to improve the accuracy and completeness of the electoral register and between June and December 2011, a number of local authorities would run pilots to test data matching schemes to see if the existing public authority databases could be used to improve the accuracy and completeness of the electoral register. The pilots would allow local authorities to compare their electoral register with other public databases to identify people missing from the register or entries on the register that are inaccurate or fraudulent. There were 22 pilot schemes which between them would use combinations of data from public authorities including the Department for Work and Pensions, the Department for Transport, the Department for Education, HM Revenue and Customs, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and the Ministry of Defence.

RECOMMENDED to Council that the report and specifically the impact that additional legislation will have over the following three years with regards to individual registration and Parliamentary Boundary changes, be noted.