

AGENDA ITEM
REPORT TO CABINET
21ST JANUARY 2021
REPORT OF
CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM

CABINET DECISION

Leader – Councillor Robert Cook

CENSUS 2021

SUMMARY

The census is a unique survey of all people and households in England and Wales that happens every 10 years. The census collects in-depth information about us and the society we live in. It informs us of our current and future needs and helps local authorities plan public services.

Cabinet are invited to note the work undertaken by the Census Liaison Manager (CLM) and census officer group, working with the Office for National Statistics (ONS), to support plans and preparation ahead of the next census day 21 March 2021. Cabinet are also asked to approve the local authority partnership plan (LAPP) which forms the blueprint for census activity and delegate approval for any further minor amendments to the plan to the Assistant Director of Administration, Democratic & Electoral Services in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

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REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION

To approve the local authority partnership plan (LAPP) which forms the blueprint for census activity.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet approve the Local Area Partnership Plan (LAPP) and delegates approval for any further minor amendments to the plan to the Assistant Director of Administration, Democratic & Electoral Services in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

Detail

1. The census is a unique survey of all people and households in England and Wales that happens every 10 years. The census collects in-depth information about us and the society we live in. It informs us of our current and future needs and helps local authorities plan public services.
2. The Census Liaison Manager (CLM) and census officer group have been working with the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to support plans and preparation ahead of the next census day 21 March 2021. The work has begun with our Census Engagement Manager (CEM) to develop our local authority partnership plan (LAPP) which will be the blueprint for census activity.
3. Important to note that the Census 2021 will ask questions on three new topics. These are:
 - previous service in the UK Armed Forces
 - gender identity
 - sexual orientation
4. The Census 2021 will be delivered via a “digital-first” approach with 90% of households receiving a census invitation pack in the post and encouraged to complete the census online. The remaining 10% of households will receive a paper version of the questionnaire where ONS have identified residents are more likely to need them.
5. Whilst Census 2021 will be primarily online, ONS will also offer a range of support services including:
 - comprehensive guidance and support in many languages and formats
 - assistance in local Census Support Centres with trained staff and online access
 - a contact centre to give help over the phone, and through webchat, email, social media and text message
 - field staff visiting households that have not yet responded
 - accessible questionnaires, for example, in large print
 - the option to request paper questionnaires
6. To measure success the ONS have set an overall response rate target of 94% with a minimum 80% response rate in each local authority area. They are aiming for 70% of respondents to complete their census return without field officer intervention/support and of those responding their aim is for 75% to complete their survey online.
7. We commenced work in December with our ONS Census Engagement Manager to develop and agree the LAPP together with a bespoke action plan for our Council. We have updated our Local Area Profile and shared this with ONS as requested; this will be used to identify and prioritise actions the CEM will need to take to ensure a successful local census. CEMs will also be responsible for promoting the census in

our area and engaging with communities to build trust and awareness. Their goal will be to encourage and support census completion, and they will need information from us along the way to ensure their activities are successful. Our local authority partnership plan (LAPP) has been developed accordingly and will evolve as a 'living document' crucial to delivering the census and is attached at **Appendix 1** for approval covering the nine strands of partnership activity as follows:

Preparation

1. Develop an address index to ensure the fullest coverage.
2. Provide local information to identify and target local challenges.
3. Identify and share local community contacts.
4. Help us to recruit field staff.

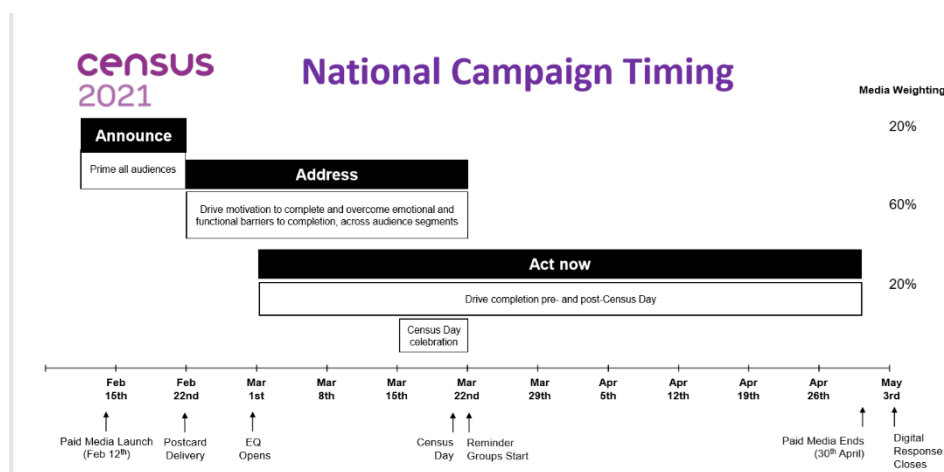
Response

5. Provide practical support to the field operation.
6. Support online completions and our Assisted Digital service.
7. Support local publicity and media relations activity.

Outputs

8. Provide local data to support quality assurance.
9. Maximise use of census information in local authorities, and support the use of census information by local communities.

Census 2021 Timeline



Advertising and Social Media Campaign

8. ONS will run a wide-reaching marketing campaign commencing on the 12 February which will raise awareness of the census, motivate people to complete the census and build trust in the ONS. The campaign will include targeted and universal messaging via adverts in newspapers, on television, radio and social media, as well as posters on buses and billboards. ONS will also work with partners like schools and businesses to help spread the word and encourage support. The campaign messaging will change as we move through the census period, starting with awareness raising, encouraging completion and finally reminding those who are yet

to complete, paid for media will end on the 30 April. Locally, we will support the national campaign using the ONS toolkit that includes general census messages, as well as social media posts designed to reach specific communities in our area.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9. Support compliance with the requirements of the 1920 Census Act. Resource implications are to be met from existing resources.

RISK ASSESSMENT

10. Development and implementation of a 2021 LAPP and action plan will mitigate against any perceived risks.

CONSULTATION

11. The implementation of the arrangements will be consulted upon with the relevant Cabinet Member, followed by all Members, and any minor future amendments to the LAPP will be undertaken in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

Assistant Director Administration Democratic and Electoral Services Census Liaison Manager

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Background Papers: None

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors: None

Property Implications: None

