

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

15 February 2011

Subject: Census 2011 - Update

**Cabinet member: Councillor Keith Humphries
Public Health and Well Being**

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary

To report on the progress to date for the Census on 27 March 2011

Proposals

That Cabinet notes progress being made with arrangements for the forthcoming 2011 Census

Reason for Proposal

To keep Cabinet informed of arrangements and to ensure that Wiltshire gets a good count in March 2011

**Maggie Rae
Director of Public Health and Well Being**

Wiltshire Council

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Subject: Census 2011

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Key Decision: No

Purpose of Report

1. To update cabinet on progress being made in Wiltshire to prepare for the Census in 2011.

Background

2. The census will take place on Sunday 27 March 2011. Census questionnaires will start to arrive by post at all residential addresses from the 7 March and be open for completion until early April. Questionnaires will be complemented by the ability to register and fill out a version on line.
3. Special arrangements are in force to deal with the military, prisons and hospitals and other communal establishments.
4. Those addresses that do not respond will be contacted in person by staff specially recruited and trained by the ONS (Office for National Statistics) to ensure that a copy is returned. It is an offence under law to refuse to fill out a survey form although rather like laws relating to voting in elections this is rarely enforced.
5. The importance of a good count in Wiltshire is the main thrust of all our media messages so that Wiltshire people do not miss Government grant. Each person under counted potentially costs the council £500 in lost support grant each year over a ten-year period until the population is recounted with another census. Failing to count 1,000 people (visitors as well as residents) in Wiltshire would equate to a potential loss of £5 million over a ten year period. In 2001 Manchester failed to count up to 20,000 residents and visitors losing the council £100 million in grant over the period 2001-11.
6. As a result the authority made available a small budget to enable the Census Liaison Manager (Philip Morgan the councils Research Manager) to help ensure that any potential problem areas were dealt with.

Main Considerations for the Council

7. The Council have supplied the ONS with an up to date LLPG (address list) on time after a fantastic effort by the LLPG team based at Bradley Road. The move to one council had left the new authority with one of its constituent District register of addresses with major problems; this has now thankfully been over come.
8. The ONS have now appointed their area manager who will be organising the count. Our area manager is Paul Hackman who lives just over the border near Andover and who knows the county well.
9. Both the ONS area manager and the counties Census Liaison Manager have worked together on a Census Local Plan, which sets out in detail how the census will be undertaken and highlights those areas where special attention needs to be made. This shows particularly any potential areas or groups who may not be able to or who may not wish to, fill out the census form. This has been accepted and signed off by the ONS.
10. Recruitment for the 260 local collector roles in Wiltshire has now closed with recruitment in Wiltshire on track. We have encouraged our own staff to apply for what are mainly part time and time limited roles (through March and April) as they have detailed local knowledge.
11. Area Boards and community area managers have being supplied with a census pack and face to face meetings have being arranged with the ONS area Manager and or the Councils Census Liaison Manager attending as necessary. These are now almost complete. All Town and Parish councils were also provided with a census pack.
12. Previously our own members were sent a special census pack.
13. Work has been undertaken with Sandie Lewis our lead with Voluntary and Community Services who is assisting us in contacting those harder to reach groups as well as suggesting special collection arrangements for the actual day. The Census Liaison Manager will be able to use some of the census budget to make sure this happens including payments to interpreters and or group elders as necessary.
14. Census information has been provided to various local community groups including Wiltshire Churches Together, Age UK, Royal British Legion, Wiltshire & Swindon Users' Network, Citizen's Advice, etc. Contact has also been established with British Waterways at Devizes to ensure that the boating community on the Kennet & Avon canal are informed of the Census
15. The Police have appointed their own census liaison officer who is working with us to make sure that custody suites/ rough sleepers etc are included in the count.

16. The Census Liaison Manager is in contact with colleagues from the Library Service and Age Concern to talk about a Census Buddy arrangement for those elderly or vulnerable who may have difficulty filing out the forms.
17. We are also investigating briefing our own telephone staff on a range of FAQs and general support for the census if local people ring the council.
18. We are working with colleagues in Communications who are drawing up a plan for a concerted local campaign leading up to census day. We are running an article in the next Wiltshire magazine to raise awareness and there will be a large web presence closer to census day.
19. The Council has set aside use of a committee room in county hall for use by the ONS appointed Area Manager and senior area collectors to ensure that there is a close link with the council in the run up to the Census.
20. The Research Team have undertaken a detailed review of the counties population estimates so that a reliable check can be made against any subsequent census population result (figures will not be available from ONS until 2012) so that we are able to compare our estimates with that from the census.

Environmental and climate change considerations

21. There are no environmental or climate change implications.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

22. A good count for Wiltshire should improve our understanding of all elements of society. We are encouraging all residents and visitors in Wiltshire to register for the census.

Risk Assessment

23. We do not expect the count in Wiltshire to be noticeably worse than other similar areas in the country although there are some specific populations that we are concerned about and for which we are putting extra effort into namely:
 - a. The boating community along the Kennet and Avon canal
 - b. The traveller community
 - c. Recent Eastern European migrants in some Wiltshire towns
 - d. The military because they are a substantial element of our population
 - e. The elderly as we have an increasingly ageing population

Financial Implications

24. There are no financial implications this year 2010-11 although the councils main grant funding mechanism is heavily dependant on population figures and this will have a direct bearing on the councils funding in the future.
25. A poor census count will potentially impact severely on future grant settlements.

Legal Implications

26. There are no legal implications.

Conclusions

27. Cabinet are asked to note the contents of this report and the efforts being made to ensure that Wiltshire gets a good count in March 2011.

Maggie Rae
Director of Public Health and Well Being

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Background Papers

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report: none

Appendices

None