

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO PSOC

1.	Meeting:	Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee
2.	Date:	14th January 2011
3.	Title:	Planning for the 2011 Census
4.	Directorate:	Chief Executive's

5. Summary

The next UK Census will take place on 27th March 2011. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is working in partnership with local authorities to benefit from their knowledge of local areas. Rotherham MBC can help ONS to achieve the highest possible coverage in Borough which will improve the accuracy of local statistics and maximise Government funding determined by census data.

The 2011 Census will offer online completion for the first time, as well as postal response. ONS has begun recruiting staff who will work on the Census with local agencies and communities to maximise response from those who have difficulty in completing the form, or who otherwise do not respond.

Rotherham MBC and partner agencies are supporting the Census Area Manager to make use of local knowledge, experience and additional sources of data to ensure the success of the 2011 Census.

6. Recommendations

PSOC is asked to:

- a) **Note the importance of the 2011 Census to local intelligence and funding, and contribution which the Council and partners can make to its success locally.**
- b) **Note the key role which the Council and local partners can play in promoting the Census, maximising coverage and thereby ensuring the accuracy of data for planning and funding purposes.**
- c) **Note that Cabinet agreed that Rotherham MBC work with ONS and local partners as set out in the Draft Census Partnership Plan, summarised in sections 7.5 and 7.6 of this report.**

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 Background

There has been a national Census in England and Wales every 10 years since 1801, with the exception of 1941. The Census is the only national survey of the entire population and unlike other surveys is compulsory under the 1920 Census Act.

The Census is required to provide consistent detailed information about the population at national, regional, local authority and small area level. Census data is used widely at all levels of government to allocate resources, plan investment and services, guide policy development and benchmark equalities. The Census also provides a reliable baseline for population estimates for the years between each Census and for future projections.

The Census provides extensive data down to very small areas of 125 households (Output Areas), giving details about age structure, family structures, socio-economic characteristics and denominators for calculating rates from other statistics.

7.2 Maximising Response

The Census is unique in being a survey of the entire national population or as near as possible to this target. ONS have learned from the mistakes made in the 2001 Census and are determined to ensure that they do not recur in 2011, particularly the under count of inner city populations, the oldest age groups and some BME groups.

Growing challenges facing ONS are the increased mobility & migration of the population, rising numbers aged over 85 (often living alone), complexity of family structures & living arrangements, new communication channels, gated communities and growing mistrust of authority. Response rates to other surveys have been falling and younger people are least willing to comply.

ONS will estimate the non-response to the Census using a post-Census survey to identify the characteristics of those missed. This will then be used to increase the population represented in the data, if required, through a process called imputation.

7.3 Census Content & Topics

Population & Usual Residence

The Census will count usual residents and residents of second homes if occupied for at least 30 days a year. Address of place of study is required for students. Migrants will be counted but not classed as usually resident unless resident for over six months. The Census will take account of civil partnerships as well as marriage. There will be a number of additional or modified questions in 2011 compared to the 2001 Census, which will provide more detailed and relevant information as follows:

Housing

- The number of **bedrooms** will be asked for the first time ever to provide a better measure for overcrowding and under-occupancy.
- The type of central heating will be asked for the first time, useful for planning energy efficiency measures.

National Identity

National identity will be asked for the first time with the following options:

- English
- Scottish
- Welsh
- Northern Irish
- British
- Other

Ethnicity

Ethnicity will be asked as in 2001 with some changes in group description as follows:

- White English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British
- Gypsy & Irish Traveller (grouped under White)
- Arab (useful for Yemenis) (grouped under Other Ethnic Group)
- Mixed / multiple ethnic groups (not Mixed or Dual Heritage)
- Black / African / Caribbean / Black British
- Chinese will be grouped under Asian / Asian British

Language

English language proficiency (spoken) will be asked for the first time.

Health

There will be five categories of General Health instead of three.

Long term illness will be updated to the **DDA** definition, asking:

- “Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?”

The question on carers will be asked again (after successful lobbying).

Migration

Address one year ago will be asked. Those born outside the UK will be asked what month & year they arrived. People will be asked what passport(s) they hold and intended length of stay if they intend to return to their home country.

2011 Census Data

Data from the 2011 Census will provide the richest source of national and local statistical data ever published in the UK. As with the 2001 Census, the data will be made available free of charge through the ONS online service Neighbourhood Statistics and other means. The first wave of data from the 2011 Census will be made available to users in September 2012 with further releases in 2013.

Individual Census returns will be retained in confidence for a hundred years after which they will form a resource for historians and research into ancestry.

7.4 Census Operation

The UK Census will involve approximately 60 million people in 24 million households and in Rotherham will involve an estimated 256,000 people in 112,000 households. Census forms will be posted to all known residential addresses from 7th March 2011 and people can either fill them in and post back or complete online.

Where there is no response, Census Collectors will be sent to knock on the relevant doors from 6th April to encourage people or help them if they have difficulty. ONS is employing 35,000 temporary staff to conduct the Census, mainly to collect forms from households. Over a hundred temporary staff are to be employed in Rotherham, many in collection roles suitable for those employed for the annual Electoral Canvass.

A Census Area Manager (CAM), Michael Whetton, has been appointed to manage Census operations in Rotherham and Doncaster through a team of Census Co-ordinators currently being recruited.

A Census Rehearsal involving 135,000 households took place in 2009 to test the Census fieldwork. The lessons learned have helped to refine the process and clarify the types of contribution which local authorities and other organisations can make.

7.5 Contribution by Rotherham MBC

In 2009, every local authority was asked to nominate two officers to liaise with ONS about the 2011 Census.

Matt Gladstone was nominated as the **Census Liaison Manager (CLM)** to lead the Council's contribution and ensure that assistance is provided as required.

Miles Crompton was nominated as the **Assistant Census Liaison Manager (ACLM)** to work directly with the Census Area Manager (ONS) to plan for and manage the Census, and work with local officers and partners who can also provide assistance.

A number of other officers whose expertise is likely to be needed (media, electoral, LLPG, community involvement, equality & diversity, housing, mapping) have been identified and in some cases already been involved.

A Draft Census Local Partnership Plan for Rotherham has been developed by the ACLM and CAM to set out the contributions which the ONS, Council and local partners will make, which has been approved by the CLM. The Draft Plan is based on an ONS template which has been customised with information to create a Rotherham Census Partnership Plan. The Plan will deliver communications with the public in general and engagement with the main 'Hard to Count' groups. The communication activity will encourage participation the Census and offer assistance with Census completion where required. Further work will be undertaken to complete the Draft Plan over the next few months. Areas where the Council can contribute are:

Address Register

- The Local Land & Property Gazetteer (LLPG) Custodian (Pat Creswell) has already helped to ensure the accuracy of the 2011 address list.
- EDS (Planning) has Identified new housing sites likely to be completed or part completed by March 2011.
- Address verification & location for field operations has been completed.

Enumeration and Intelligence

- Identify target areas for collection where response rates are known to be low from the Electoral Canvass (Electoral Services)
- Identify areas better suited to hand delivery of forms
- Supply information on neighbourhood characteristics which may affect response rates e.g. BME communities and community languages (ACLM)
- Identify any difficult locations where lone collectors may be in danger

Community Engagement

- Assist in developing a strategy for community liaison (ACLM)
- Briefings for Elected Members (Scrutiny)
- Develop a community contact list of organisations & individuals (ACLM)
- Identify and assist in engagement with 'hard to reach' groups such as new BME communities, homeless, very elderly (ACLM)

Recruitment and Logistics

- Promote field staff job opportunities and encourage/identify potential applicants (via Vacancies Website and Electoral Services)
- Investigate the possibility of offering office/training accommodation and/or storage space for local supplies of materials and equipment (ACLM)

Communications and Publicity

- Identify potential local media (CX Comms)
- Reserve space in Rotherham News & other Council publications (CX Comms)
- Publicise and encourage completion on Council website
- Advise/assist the public with queries and direct them to online help resources

Elected Members can be good ambassadors for the Census and their involvement will be vital. It is proposed that this report be considered at PSOC and Members briefed well in advance of Census Day.

7.6 Contribution from Rotherham Partner Organisations

Communication and engagement with local communities can be greatly enhanced by working with local organisations to reach target groups in the population. Key contacts outside the Council have been identified which can assist with engaging with those people or groups at highest risk of being missed in the Census or who will need assistance in completing the form. Priority groups in Rotherham are older people aged 80+, the Roma community, Black African communities (esp. French speaking) and the Pakistani / Kashmiri community. The CAM has already held initial meetings with the following local organisations:

- Rotherham 2010
- Age Concern Rotherham
- Rotherham Citizen Advice Bureau (CAB)
- Rotherfed
- Rotherham Ethnic Minority Alliance (REMA)
- Roma Khamoro Project (Unity Centre)
- GROW Project

The Census operation will be a partnership between ONS, RMBC and the above listed organisations. RMBC and REMA are already seeking to raise awareness amongst BME communities through Rotherham Ethnic Communities Network, the Mosque Liaison Group and Eastern Air on BBC Radio Sheffield.

Community completion events will be planned to take place in March and April 2011 at community centres, mosques, churches and similar venues where local volunteers can assist, particularly where there are language difficulties. However, it is important to note that completed Census forms can only be handed in to Census (ONS) staff, not RMBC or other staff and that a Census Co-ordinator should therefore be in attendance at any community event to receive the forms.

Organising and liaising with a large temporary workforce presents some difficulties for the ONS Census Manager. Arrangements are being made with SY Fire & Rescue to use community rooms at three local fire stations for Census staff meetings. In addition meeting rooms in Council or other partner organisations may be needed.

8. Finance

The 2011 Census will cost the Government £480 million but there will be no direct cost to Rotherham MBC. During 2010 and 2011 there will be in-kind contributions through officer time to support preparation for and implementation of the Census.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The risks involved with the Census largely relate to response rate and how accurately the data represents the actual population which are the responsibility of ONS. There is a risk to Rotherham MBC from an under-count of population because a large amount of Revenue Support Grant is based on Census data. It is therefore in the interests of the Council to assist in maximising Census coverage locally.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The Census is used to inform policy development through profiling, social trends and needs assessments. It is important to update those which are currently based on the 2001 Census as they are becoming increasingly unreliable as a source of information for current and future decisions. Performance measures depend on the Census to provide denominators for population and to re-base population estimates. Without accurate population denominators, many population linked indicators such as health, employment and crime rates cannot be calculated.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

2011 Census White Paper, December 2008

2011 Census Order, December 2009

2011 Census Regulations, March 2010

ONS Consultation with Regional Chief Executives, May 2009

Draft Rotherham Census Local Partnership Plan, September 2010

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