

Screening/Scoping Pro Forma

Section	Electoral Services	Officer responsible for the screening/scoping	Lynda Murlewski Electoral Services Manager		
Name of Policy to be assessed	Electoral Registration	Date of Assessment	23/10/08	Is this a proposed new or existing policy/procedure/practice?	Existing
1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy/procedure/practice?	<p>To comply with all statutory deadlines and requirements for the publication of the revised version of the Electoral Register on 1st December and all monthly amendments under rolling registration from 1st January to 1st September each year.</p> <p>To produce both full and edited registers regarding the above plus a list of Overseas voters.</p>				
2. Are there any associated or specific objectives of the policy/procedure/practice? Please explain.	<p>To ensure that the Electoral Registers are as accurate as possible on publication, by giving everyone in the Borough clear information and ample opportunity to register if they are eligible to do so.</p>				
3. Who is intended to benefit from this policy and in what way?	<p>All eligible residents in the Guildford Borough Council area i.e. British, Commonwealth, Irish and all European Union citizens. Also eligible Service and Overseas electors and electors with Declarations of Local Connection - all in terms of their voting rights.</p> <p>All recipients of the full electoral registers – political parties (national and local parties), credit reference agencies, court service, Electoral Commission, Boundary Commission, British Library, Members (own wards only), Parish Councils.</p> <p>All recipients of the edited electoral registers (which are sold) – anyone who wants them.</p>				
4. What outcomes are wanted from this policy/procedures/practice?	<p>Complete an accurate local government and parliamentary electoral registers.</p>				
5. What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?	<p>Electors interest in democracy or apathy with the political process.</p> <p>Electors interest in keeping their credit referencies up to date.</p>				

	<p>A wish to avoid jury service.</p> <p>An incorrect assumption that if you are paying Council Tax then you are automatically on the electoral register.</p> <p>A wish to remain 'hidden' from the Council or refusal to disclose details in terms of not supplying any personal data.</p> <p>Electors unwilling or unable to complete forms or register 'no changes' by internet or telephone.</p>
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6. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy?	All eligible electors, political parties, Members, parish councils, Electoral Commission, Boundary Commission, credit reference agencies, court service.		7. Who implements the policy, and who is responsible for the policy?	Central government implement the policy under statute (Acts and Regulations) and the council's Electoral Registration Officer is responsible for implementation.
8. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact on racial groups?		N	Only where there could be a language barrier in understanding the paperwork.	
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Where appropriate, other councils use multi lingual leaflets to assist people with registration, however there is no perceived need for this given the demographics of the population of Guildford.			
9. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to gender?		N	Any member of a household can sign an annual canvass form. During rolling registration each member of the household is responsible for individually signing their own section of the form.	
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	This is mainly presumed evidence and because we receive forms signed by both men and women. It is up to each household to elect which person in the household signs the canvass form and in our experience it is normally the person who is better at paperwork.			
10. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to disability?	Y		Legislation requires that a signature is obtained and therefore paperwork is unavoidable. Could cause problems for those with learning difficulties although canvassers are on hand to help during the annual canvass.	
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Those with difficulties with forms tend to leave this annual task to the last minute and we receive more phone calls asking for help later on in the canvass process.			
11. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to sexual orientation?		N		
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	None but cannot see how this would be a problem.			
12. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u>	Y		Possible difficulty with older people having to complete forms or register 'no	

<p>have a differential impact due to their age?</p>			<p>changes' on the telephone or internet. Under-registration of young people due to parents forgetting to register them or general apathy in wanting to register to vote.</p>
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>Some phone calls to the office requesting assistance (a Helpline number is provided to the public). Occasionally young voters turn up at the polling station to find they are not on the register. Also aware that our young voter (rising 18) figures are low compared to the demographics of the area.</p>		
<p>13. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to their religious belief?</p>		<p>N</p>	
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>No evidence to suggest this might be a problem.</p>		
<p>14. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to them having dependants/caring responsibilities?</p>		<p>N</p>	
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>Annual canvass forms can be completed and signed by a member of the household, friend, neighbour or anyone who is willing to verify that the information given is correct.</p>		
<p>15. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to them have an offending past?</p>		<p>N</p>	
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>Only those currently convicted of offences and in prison are unable to go onto the electoral registers.</p>		
<p>16. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to them being</p>		<p>N</p>	

Transgender or transsexual?			
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?		No evidence but cannot see that this would be a problem.	
17. Could the differential impact identified in 8-16 amount to there being the potential for adverse impact in this policy/procedure/practice?	Y	<p>The main area of impact is on those who find it difficult to understand and/or complete paperwork due to age or learning difficulties. However, the policy is a statutory one and we are therefore obliged to carry it out according to current legislation. The annual canvass form is prescribed in law or to like effect and we try to make it as clear as possible. Additionally an explanatory leaflet is included (non-statutory).</p> <p>A Helpline telephone number is provided and re-registration is possible by telephone or internet if there are no changes to an annual canvass form. A team of 30 canvassers are on hand to help all those with such difficulties in a period of 3 weeks from mid October to the beginning of November and appointments for home visits can be made at any time during the year.</p>	
18. Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? Or any other reason?	N	The above adverse impact is as a result of Government legislation in the need to complete forms in order to register to vote.	
<p>Business improvement</p> <p>19. Is there any concern that there are unmet needs in relation to any of the above groups?</p>	N	<p>A longer period in which to complete the door to door canvassing would be ideal but impossible due to the tight timing of the annual canvass.</p> <p>Individual registration of electors throughout the year would be better but requires major changes in legislation.</p>	
20. Does differential impact or unmet need cut across the equality strands (e.g. elder BME	N	Age and disability could be a joint problem.	

groups)?								
21. If yes, should the full EIA be conducted jointly with another service area/contractor/partner/agency?	N	Not applicable						
22. Is there a missed opportunity to improve your business in relation to any of the policies, procedures or practices to promote racial, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief equality?		Part of the service plan target is to encourage 'hard to reach' groups to register to vote. The most difficult part of this is identifying those groups and the limited time and resources we have in spending time with them. Those we have in mind to target are groups within the council's Access Group and schools/colleges but the latter is particularly time consuming and has not resulted in any measurable level of registration. Current resource is 3 full time equivalent posts in the section looking after the annual registration of 101,000 electors plus the management of all elections.						
		<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td data-bbox="764 902 1793 954"></td> <td data-bbox="1793 902 1913 954"></td> <td data-bbox="1913 902 2049 954" style="text-align: center;">No</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3" data-bbox="764 954 2049 1211" style="height: 100px;"></td> </tr> </table>			No			
		No						
24. If No, are there any changes required to the policy to improve it around the equality agenda?		We need to ensure we are fully staffed in order to be able to devote time to issues around the equalities agenda as listed in 22. above						

Signed
(completing officer)

Date **October 2008**

Signed
(Head of Section) **Date**

Countersigned
(HR representative)

Date **November 2008.**