

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: TUESDAY, 26 MARCH 2013
title: INDIVIDUAL ELECTORAL REGISTRATION
submitted by: MARSHAL SCOTT – CHIEF EXECUTIVE
principal author: DIANE RICE – HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To inform Members about changes which will be made to the Electoral Registration system when Individual Electoral Registration (IER) is introduced in July 2014.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Council Ambitions - }
- Community Objectives - } Ensuring Members are informed about changes to the electoral registration process contributes to the Council's objective of being a well managed Council.
- Corporate Priorities - }
- Other Considerations - }

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The current system of registration is based on each household responding to the annual canvass by a single return per household.

2.2 The main changes arising from IER are that:

- Electors must register individually from 2014.
- The information provided as part of their application must be verified before it is added to the register.
- Electors will have to provide more information than at present. In addition to their name and address they will have to provide their national insurance number and date of birth.

2.3 Verification is by crosschecking the Council's records with the Department of Work and Pensions records.

3 ISSUES

3.1 As part of the transition to IER, some changes will be made to the current electoral registration system, for example testing will take place of the verification of the electoral register with the Department of Work and Pensions' records. The annual canvass in Autumn of 2013 will be delayed and will now take place from October until February 2014 ie later than has been the case in previous years.

3.2 In addition, there are transitional arrangements to manage the change to IER, these will commence in July 2014 to enable the first full IER register to be published on the 1 December 2014.

3.3 For the first two years after the introduction of IER there will be generous arrangements put in place to allow electors who do not meet the requirements of individual electoral registration to remain on the register.

- 3.4 However, transition will be complete by January 2016 and thereafter registration will require full compliance with the new process.
- 3.5 The introduction of IER will have implications for Council staffing and the Council's procedures, these will include:
- the difficulties of carrying out the canvass during the Winter period;
 - the overlap requiring staff to be trained to carry out IER whilst dealing with a different format for the canvass which will include the trial validation and data matching tests;
 - changes to the Council's computer systems to reflect the new requirements of IER;
 - it is anticipated that in 2014 it will be necessary to recruit additional staff.
- 3.6 The Cabinet Office have indicated that funding will be provided to cover the additional costs incurred by Local Authorities over and above the cost of the present method of electoral registration.
- 3.7 Further information will be provided to Members as the process develops.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| • Resources – | } | |
| • Technical, Environmental and Legal – | } | |
| • Political – | } | No formal conclusions as process not yet fully known |
| • Reputation – | } | |
| • Equality and Diversity – | } | |

5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

5.1 Note the transition from the current electoral registration system to IER and changes to the annual canvass arrangements for 2013.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. None.

For further information please ask for Diane Rice, extension 414418.