



Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board

Report to: Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board

Meeting on: 17 August 2018

Subject: Annual Canvass / Electoral Registration Update

Author: Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer

1.0 Introduction

This report is to provide members with information on the Annual Canvass for 2018, and an update on the tendering for both an Electoral Management System and the Print and Scan Services.

2.0 Annual Canvass

2.1 Issue of Household Enquiry Forms (HEF's)

Household Enquiry Forms (HEF) were posted to all properties in the Valuation Joint Board area on Wednesday 27 June. These forms invite those at each property to complete and return the HEF either online, by telephone, text or post. Any changes notified will result in the issue of an Invitation to Register (ITR). An ITR can be completed online using the Governments Digital Service, by post or over the telephone.

On Friday 27 July 1st Reminders were posted to all properties who failed to return the main HEF. The table below contains a summary of the main and reminder mailings.

Council Area	Main HEF Issue	HEF 1 st Reminder Issue	%
Renfrewshire	84,163	41,635	50%
East Renfrewshire	38,327	16,918	44%
Inverclyde	37,964	18,561	49%
Total	160,454	77,114	48%

As a result of new legislation allowing an elector to tick the box on their ITR to indicate that they are the only person living at their address, there was no requirement to issue HEF's to the following properties. This provided a saving of over £5000 in printing costs, postage costs and follow up door knocks costs to properties who failed to return their HEF.

Council Area	Sole Occupier	%
Renfrewshire	2,133	2.5%
East Renfrewshire	536	1.4%
Inverclyde	943	2.5%
Total	3,612	2.3%

2.2 Door-to-Door Canvass:

If there is no response to the initial or first reminder HEF a canvasser will visit the property during September to November in an attempt to obtain a completed HEF at the door. We have employed a number of additional canvassers in an effort to door knock all those households who have not responded before the cut-off date for publication of the Register on the 1st December.

2.3 Local Secondary Checks:

Under the legislation in force, local data held by Councils and other bodies including Council Tax Billing records and lists of social/private tenancies cannot be used for this canvass. This continues to add to the complexity and cost of the canvass, however there are ongoing discussions with government around making changes to the canvass procedures. These changes are looking to make the process more efficient both in terms of cost and engagement with electors. I will report to the Board on any progress made on bringing these changes into force at the earliest opportunity.

3.0 Polling District Review

The Returning Officers have been asked for receipt of any Polling District changes by early November where possible however, they have confirmed that this will all depend on their consultation process and Committee dates. Completing the review in time for publication of the revised register on 1 December 2018 means that any changes can be reflected in it, and that no subsequent alterations to the structure of an already published register will need to be made, thus avoiding the potential need to publish a further revised register. If the register does require to be republished it will involve a full redistribution to all parties entitled to receive the register both on publication and on request which leads to a very time-consuming exercise. Hopefully, we will be fortunate and RO's will be able to deliver changes to us in time for 1st December publication.

4.0 Procurement

Invitation to tender on behalf of the Board by Renfrewshire Council's Procurement Team (CPU) for an Electoral Management System (EMS) will be issued as soon as the tender document has been completed.

The tender for the provision of all Print and Scan Services will now be issued later in the year due to the work associated with revision of the Tender Template as a result of GDPR. In the meantime, the CPU will prepare a Negotiated Contract with the current provider Adare for the period 16 September 2018 – 1 December 2018.

5.0 The Next Year

There are no scheduled elections for next year at present. However, we need to be prepared should a snap election or by election be called at short notice.

General Conclusions

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff for their continuing hard work and diligence in dealing efficiently with the management of the Annual Canvass and associated tasks.

Recommendations

- i. The Board notes the contents of this report.

Kate A Crawford - 17 August 2018

For further information please contact Kate Crawford on 0141-618-5903
Or via e-mail at kate.crawford@renfrewshire-vjb.gov.uk