

OPEN AGENDA

Copy No:

No: 81/2020

Memorandum for Executive Council

SUBJECT St Helena Population and Housing Census 2021 – Form of Census Schedule

Memorandum by the Chief Secretary

- ADVICE SOUGHT**
1. **Council is asked to advise:**
 - (a) **Whether, in accordance with section 2(1) of the Census Ordinance, 1986, HE the Governor should appoint 7 February 2021 as the night for the taking of a Census of the inhabitants of St Helena ‘the census night’; and**
 - (b) **Whether the six attached Forms (Annex A – Annex F) of Census Schedule for use in the 2021 St Helena Population and Housing Census, should be approved, in accordance with Section 4(1) of the Census Ordinance, 1986.**
- BACKGROUND & CONSIDERATIONS**
2. The last Population and Housing Census on St Helena took place with a Census night of Sunday 7th February 2016, prior to the completion of the airport. The intention then was to complete a further Census in five years time in 2021, after completion of the airport.
 3. Six forms/questionnaires are presented for approval for use in the St Helena Population and Housing Census, 2021 (the Census):
 - a) **Form A** – Household Questionnaire, the main form. To be administered to all households on St Helena. (Annex A)
 - b) **Form B** – Resident Households Temporarily Overseas, to capture St Helenian Resident Households who are temporarily overseas for less than six months (typically on holiday, or away for medical treatment). The travel restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic may mean that this questionnaire will not be needed since the number of complete households away temporarily may be small. (Annex B)
 - c) **Form C** – Communal Establishments, to be used for residential communal establishments such as the CCC and the Prison. (Annex C)
 - d) **Form D** – Unoccupied Dwelling Questionnaire, to be used by enumerators and Census staff to record information on vacant dwellings. (Annex D)

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- e) **Form E1** – Personal questionnaire, essentially schedule 2 of Form A. To be used as an ‘overflow’ form if households have more than five usual residents. Can also be used for individuals in households who wish to provide information privately. (Annex E)
- f) **Form E2** – Visitors, essentially schedule 3 of Form A. To be used as an ‘overflow’ form if households have more than five visitors on Census Night. (Annex F)

4. These forms/questionnaires are based on the Forms used for the 2016 Census, and have been prepared following consultation with the general public, SHG officials and Elected Members. The phrasing and content of questions are harmonised with UN standards and recommendations where practical. The household questionnaire (Form A) was piloted in June 2020. Feedback from the pilot exercise was incorporated into the final questionnaire design.

5. Forms A and B may be available for online completion, which will be voluntary. The online forms would have the same content as hard copies.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6. If the forms/questionnaires are approved there are no financial implications save for printing costs. Funding provision has been made for this in the Corporate Support, Policy and Planning recurrent budget for 2020/21.

ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

7. The Census will provide valuable data to support the economic development of St Helena. There are no direct economic implications of approval of the questionnaires. The Government Economist has provided input into the development of the Census questionnaires. Figures particularly pertaining to the use of communications (computers and telephones) will be useful in tracking the impact of the Fibre Optic Cable investment, (in 2016 and 2020 – pre-cable – and then 2024 – post-cable) which can be reported as an EDF11 milestone.

CONSISTENCY WITH INVESTMENT POLICY PRINCIPLES

8. The 2021 Census supports all five principles of the Investment Policy through the provision of timely, accurate data on the population and housing stock of St Helena. A thorough and extensive consultation during the development of the Census questionnaires has provided all stakeholders with the opportunity to ensure that the 2021 Census will meet current information needs and address appropriate data gaps.

PUBLIC/SOCIAL IMPACT

9. The Census itself should have a positive public/social impact. The data collected will be used to inform the decision making process.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

10. The environmental impact of the Census operation will be

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minimal.

PREVIOUS CONSULTATION/ COMMITTEE INPUT

11. The need for the Census and general discussion about the format of the questionnaires was discussed with Elected Members at an informal meeting of Legislative Council on 19 June 2020 and with the SHG administration Core Leadership Group on 1 July 2020.

PUBLIC REACTION

12. Public reaction is expected to be positive. Public reaction during the consultation and pilot phases was encouraging and positive - this should be reflected in the February Census.

PUBLICITY

13. Council's decision will be covered in the radio briefing following the meeting.

14. A communications plan will be developed in the lead-up to the Census which will include refresher press releases reminding the public of Census night and what will be expected of them. There will also be radio interviews where people can raise any questions or queries they may have with the Census team.

SUPPORT TO STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

15. The 2021 Census will support all strategic objectives through the provision of timely, accurate information on the population and housing stock of St Helena. This data will enable effective decision making, planning and monitoring of progress and development.

LINK TO SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN GOALS

16. Approval of the forms/questionnaires has no direct link to the SEDP goals. However, a good understanding of the size and characteristics of the population of St Helena is fundamental to achieving the goals of the Sustainable Economic Development Plan. In particular, the Census provides the key source of data for assessing the future demand for public infrastructure, such as schools, health facilities, electricity and water services (Goal 7: Improve Infrastructure) and is the only source of data to understand the composition of the economically active population (Goal 8: Develop, Maintain and Attract a Skilled Workforce)

IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY/ LEGISLATION

17. This is not applicable for this Memorandum.

SO'B

OPEN/CLOSED AGENDA ITEM

18. For discussion in the Open session.

Corporate Support
Corporate Services

16th November 2020

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