



Glasgow City Council

**Wellbeing, Equalities, Communities, Culture and
Engagement City Policy Committee**

Item 6

5th March 2026

Report by The City Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer

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AUTOMATIC VOTER REGISTRATION

Purpose of Report:

To update the Committee on progress in developing proposals for Automatic Voter Registration (AVR).

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Committee notes:

- (a) the Report;
- (b) the Electoral Registration Officer's recommendation to design a joint AVR pilot with other interested EROs in Scotland;
- (c) that this work will commence after the Scottish Parliamentary Election 2026; and
- (d) that a further progress report would be presented to the Committee before the end of the 2026 calendar year.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes No consulted: Yes No

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 On 14 August 2025 the Committee agreed that Officers should bring forward recommendations following review of the Welsh AVR Pilots by the Electoral Commission, due to report by December 2025.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The commission published their evaluation report on 17 December 2025 and the report can be found here <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/research-reports-and-data/electoral-registration-research/automatic-registration-pilots-evaluation>
- 2.2 The evaluation report was discussed on 14 January 2026 by Scottish Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) at their Electoral Registration Committee (ERC) meeting. The Electoral Commission in Scotland also attend the Electoral Registration Committee.
- 2.3 On 12 February 2026, the UK Government introduced a Representation of the People Bill 2026 which is usefully summarised here [Representation of the People Bill: Policy summaries - GOV.UK](#). Under the banner of Improving Registration the bill sets out similar registration pilot provisions, and also worthy of note; an intention to end the presumption that a person's registration should be made publicly available to data purchasers unless they remove their consent (opt out), The ERO considers this a necessary step in ensuring public confidence in automated or "direct" registration mechanisms.

3.0 ERO Comments on the evaluation report

- 3.1 The evaluation generated a long and productive debate among ERC members, and a number of potential issues and opportunities were discussed.
- 3.2 Concerns around current data quality of supplementary datasets and different levels of data maturity within local authorities, national datasets, and third parties such as the university sector were discussed.
- 3.3 Maintaining register accuracy and ensuring continued public confidence was a key consideration.
- 3.4 The committee felt that a national approach to AVR was preferred and only in utilising UK-wide national datasets could maximum benefit be realised but did support the creation of a joint Scottish pilot that might then encompass different registration areas and may provide for stronger learning and outcomes.
- 3.5 It was agreed that any pilot must hold the confidence of electors, EROs and other key stakeholders. The Electoral Commission offered assistance in accordance with their normal supporting role to EROs.

4.0 Actions and next steps

- 4.1 The Glasgow ERO has been considering how to progress the Council motion to bring forward a pilot in Glasgow and recommends that the design of the pilot should be undertaken as part of a joint pilot with other interested EROs in Scotland.

- 4.2 At the present time ERO resources are focused on delivering the 2026 Scottish Parliamentary Election on 7 May 2026 and it is therefore proposed that work on the pilot commences after this is concluded.
- 4.3 The ERO will return to the committee with a report outlining the key joint pilot design outcomes before the end of the 2026 calendar year.

5 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial: Work undertaken will require to be within existing resources.

Legal: No impact

Personnel: No impact

Procurement: No impact

Council Strategic Plan: Grand Challenge 4, Mission 2 - Run an open, well-governed council in partnership with all our communities

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2025-29? Please specify. No impact

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report? No impact

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage. No impact

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify: No impact

What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal? No impact

Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target? No impact

Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:

Are there any potential data protection impacts as a result of this report No

If Yes, please confirm that a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been carried out

6 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee notes:

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- (d) that a further progress report would be presented to the Committee before the end of the 2026 calendar year.