

## VOTER ID PILOT REVIEW

### Executive Summary

On the 3 May 2018 Woking took part in a pilot to trial voter ID in polling stations. All electors who voted in the elections were required to bring one of a specified list of photographic ID.

The attached report at Appendix 1 sets out the work undertaken as part of the preparations for the elections, including the media campaign to promote the pilot. The Elections and Electoral Registration Review Panel considered the report at their meeting on 5 July 2018 and a copy of the minutes is attached at Appendix 2.

The electorate's response to the pilot was very positive, with over 99% of voters bringing the correct ID the first time when they attended the polling station. Photo ID driving licences were the most popular form of ID shown, with passports and Surrey Senior bus passes also being popular. There was positive feedback from the running of polling stations, where in most cases there was limited impact on the usual voting process. 63 Local Elector Cards were issued, 43 of which were used on polling day.

Additionally, as a result of the comprehensive communications campaign to promote the pilot, and working in partnership with the York Road Project, ten applications to register to vote were received from homeless members of the community, a group who have historically been underrepresented on the electoral register. Furthermore, these electors also completed applications for Local Elector Cards, a form of photographic ID which will enable them to access services in future. The Electoral Registration Officer has indicated that Local Elector Cards will continue to be issued to electors on request, to assist in particular those electors who do not have access to another form of photographic ID.

Looking to the future, the Cabinet Office has indicated that, based on the data from each Returning Officer, they would like to have further pilots in 2019, to refine the systems tested in 2018, to provide additional evidence and experience for national roll out. As such, the Cabinet Office has invited expressions of interest from local authorities wishing to pilot voter ID in May 2019. This is without prejudice to the Electoral Commission's evaluation which will be published in July this year.

In view of the positive outcome of the pilot locally on 3 May 2018, the Returning Officer is keen to participate in the next set of pilots. Officers have identified areas where improvements to processes could be made to build on the pilot success, and further areas were highlighted by members of the Elections and Electoral Registration Review Panel.

The key changes proposed are:

#### Administrative amendments

- Revising the Local Elector Card (LEC) application form, including the attestation form.
- Enabling applications for LECs to be completed online, with a facility for uploading copies of photos and documents.
- Further training for staff across the Council on the application process for Local Elector Card
- Strengthening the communications plan in the following areas
  - Targeting women in the 50-60 age category
  - Targeting electors with lower levels of literacy

- Targeting local employers with large percentage of low-medium income employees, to support registration/local elector card applications

### Amendments to Pilot Order

- Blue Badges to be added to the list of photographic ID
- Rail season ticket photocard to be removed from the list of photographic ID
- Further IDs for inclusion to be reviewed (e.g. taxi licence, student card, military pass)
- Supporting documentation requirements for the Local Elector Card to be reviewed.

With these improvements incorporated into pilot process, the existing scheme trialled in 2018 would be strengthened, and Council approval is sought to participate in further pilots in 2019.

### **Recommendations**

The Council is requested to:

#### **RESOLVE That**

- (i) **outcome of the 2018 voter ID pilot be noted; and**
- (ii) **the Council participate in the Voter ID pilot in May 2019.**

The Council has the authority to determine the recommendations set out above.
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**Background Papers:** None.

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