

NEWS RELEASE



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21 May 2018

FINAL REPORT RELEASED FOR VOTER ID TRIAL

****EMBARGOED UNTIL 6PM ON MONDAY 21 MAY 2018****

Full data from the Voter ID trial in Woking will be released by Woking Borough Council today, Monday 21 May, at 6pm.

On Thursday 3 May 2018, Woking, along with four other local authorities in England, participated in the Cabinet Office's voter identification trial. Each individual scheme was drawn up by the local authority, working collaboratively with the Cabinet Office, Electoral Commission and the Association of Electoral Administrators and the scheme for Woking was agreed by the Council at its meeting in September 2017.

Voters across the Borough were required to show one of a number of approved forms of photographic identification before they were issued with their ballot paper at the polling station. Where electors did not have one of the approved forms of identification, there was the option to obtain a free Local Elector Card and 57 of these cards were issued during the trial.

Figures demonstrate that out of 18,851 voters who attended the polling station, 99.73% of electors provided the right form of photographic ID. 51 people (0.27%) brought the wrong ID or attended with no ID and were not issued with a ballot paper.

The report indicates that overall turnout to the election was unaffected by the trial, comparing favourably to previous elections at 37.75% compared to 37.71% in 2017 and 35.81% in 2012 (when the last Borough only election was held), with minor local ward level variances.

Ray Morgan, Woking Borough Council's Returning Officer, expressed his satisfaction with the trial: "Given that 99.73% of voters brought a correct form of ID and engaged positively with the pilot and only 0.27% did not, I think we can call this trial a great success.

“I would like to thank Woking’s electorate for their cooperation and understanding throughout the trial. I would also like to acknowledge the hard work of all members of polling station staff and Council officers in the lead up to the election, and on the day, to make the new process such a success.

“Following our experiences in the polling stations on 3 May, I see no reason why bringing ID to vote cannot be embedded in our democratic process and have already expressed my desire to the Cabinet Office that Woking continues to participate in any future trials.

“Like all pilot projects, the main purpose of the Voter ID trial was to stress-test the idea for viability and, as was wholly expected, there were some minor administrative issues encountered which we will need to address.

“As well as the Cabinet Office and Electoral Commission’s formal evaluation, Officers will engage, as normal, with Members and Political Parties, through the Council’s Elections and Electoral Registration Review Panel, to explore what improvements could be made in future years.”

A full breakdown of the data can be found at www.woking.gov.uk/voterID.

ENDS

For further information, contact Woking Borough Council's Marketing Communications Officer, Debbie Hickman, on 01483 743047 or email debbie.hickman@woking.gov.uk

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