

Report of the Returning Officer**VOTER ID PILOT - MODEL**1. Purpose of report

To seek confirmation of the model to be adopted for the voter ID pilot in May 2019.

2. Background

At the meeting of the Governance, Audit and Standards Committee on 24 September 2018 the application to take part in the voter ID pilots next year was approved on the basis of photographic ID.

There are two forms of photographic ID:

- photographic only;
- mixed – where two pieces of documentary evidence can be presented if an elector does not have photographic ID.

Further information on the two models is given in appendix 1, including the ID which is likely to be acceptable.

An application was submitted for the mixed model as this requires photographic ID to be presented at the polling station but allows voters to use other forms of paper ID if they do not have photographic ID. It was considered that this approach was less likely to disenfranchise electors as they would not have to go through the process of applying for a local electoral card (which could particularly disadvantage elderly and disabled people) and potentially incur costs in doing so, for example, in providing a photograph. In addition, the demands on Electoral Services at an already busy time would be less as they would not have to produce the local ID cards.

A draft Equality Impact Assessment is attached at appendix 2.

Concern has been expressed however that the mixed model is not in line with the decision of the Governance, Audit and Standards Committee which was for the photographic ID only model.

Cabinet Office have been informed that the type of model which will be piloted in Broxtowe has been put on hold until a decision has been taken at this meeting. Preparations are continuing however in respect of the communications plan and in identifying the work which will need to be undertaken to run the pilot and the additional costs likely to be incurred.

3. Financial implications

The additional costs arising from running the pilot will be met by the Cabinet Office.

Recommendation

That Council is asked to CONSIDER whether the application for a mixed model pilot should be changed to a photographic only model.

Background papers: Nil

Photographic ID Model

Electors are required to provide a valid form of photographic ID from a pre-approved list. The draft list includes:

- (a) a passport issued by a Commonwealth country or a country within the European Economic Area;
- (b) a photocard driving licence (including a provisional licence) issued in the United Kingdom or by a Crown Dependency or by a member State of the European Union;
- (c) an electoral identity card issued under section 13C (electoral identity card: Northern Ireland) of the Representation of the People Act 1983;
- (d) a biometric immigration document issued in the United Kingdom in accordance with regulations made under section 5 of the UK Borders Act 2007;
- (e) an identity card issued in the European Economic Area which bears a photograph of the voter;
- (f) a PASS scheme card (national proof of age standards scheme);
- (g) a Ministry of Defence Identity Card;
- (h) a concessionary travel pass funded by HM Government;
- (i) an Oyster 60+ pass;
- (j) a photocard parking permit issued as part of the Blue Badge scheme.

If an elector is unable to present this ID, they would be refused a ballot paper and be unable to vote. However, electors without one of the approved forms of photographic ID would be able to apply to the Returning Officer for a local electoral card. The application must be in writing, be accompanied by the required documents and a photograph which is attested.

The documents referred to above are likely to be a combination of:

- (a) the applicant's birth certificate;
- (b) the applicant's marriage or civil partnership certificate;
- (c) the applicant's adoption certificate;
- (d) the applicant's firearms certificate granted under the Firearms Act 1968;
- (e) the record of a decision on bail made in respect of the applicant in accordance with section 5(1) of the Bail Act 1976;
- (f) the applicant's driving licence, which is not in the form of a photocard;
- (g) the applicant's photocard driving licence (including a provisional licence) issued other than in the United Kingdom or by a Crown Dependency, or by a Member State of the European Union; or
- (h) the applicant's student identity card, issued by a Further Education or Higher Education institution.
- (i) a mortgage statement dated within 12 months of the date of the application;
- (j) a bank or building society statement, or a letter from the bank or building society confirming the opening of an account, dated within 3 months of the date of the application;
- (k) a credit card statement dated within 3 months of the date of the application;
- (l) a pension statement dated within 12 months of the date of the application;
- (m) a council tax demand letter or statement dated within 12 months of the date of the application;
- (n) a utility bill dated within 3 months of the date of the application;

- (o) a Form P45 or Form P60 issued to the applicant within 12 months of the date of the application;
- (p) a statement of benefits or entitlement to benefits, such as a statement of child benefit within the meaning of section 141 of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992, or a letter confirming that the applicant is entitled to housing benefit, within the meaning of section 130 of that Act; or
- (q) any other financial statement dated within 12 months of the date of the application.

Applications would need to be submitted before 5pm on the day before the day of the poll and could be either in paper form or electronic.

Mixed Model

Electors are required to provide photographic ID as included above for the photographic only model, or a combination of two forms of non-photographic ID, from a pre-approved list, if they do not have photographic ID. The draft list of acceptable non-photographic ID includes:

- (a) a valid bank or building society debit card or credit card;
- (b) a mortgage statement dated within 12 months of the date of the poll;
- (c) a bank or building society statement, or a letter from the bank or building society confirming the opening of an account, dated within 3 months of the date of the poll;
- (d) a bank or building society cheque book or building society passbook;
- (e) a credit card statement dated within 3 months of the date of the poll;
- (f) a council tax demand letter or statement dated within 12 months of the date of the poll;
- (g) a utility bill dated within 3 months of the date of the poll;
- (h) a Form P45 or Form P60 issued dated within 12 months of the date of the poll;
- (i) a poll card for the election
- (j) a birth certificate;
- (k) a marriage certificate or civil partnership certificate;
- (l) an adoption certificate;
- (m) a firearms certificate granted under the Firearms Act 1968;
- (n) the record of a decision on bail made in respect of the voter in accordance with section 5(1) of the Bail Act 1976;
- (o) a driving licence (including a provisional licence) which is not in the form of a photocard;
- (p) a statement of benefits or entitlement to benefits, such as a statement of child benefit within the meaning of section 141 of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992, or a letter confirming that the applicant is entitled to housing benefit, within the meaning of section 130 of that Act;
- (q) a student loan statement issued by the Student Loan Company dated within 12 months of the date of the poll.

If an elector is unable to present this ID, they would be refused a ballot paper and be unable to vote. However, any electors who do not have photographic ID or could not provide two forms of non-photographic ID could apply to the Returning Officer for a certificate of identity. The application for the certificate must be in writing and be accompanied by an attestation confirming that the applicant is the person named in the application. Applications would need to be submitted before 5pm on the day before the day of the poll.

DRAFT EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

Directorate:	Interim Strategic Director	Lead officer responsible for EIA	Head of Administrative Services
Name of the policy or function to be assessed:		Voter ID pilot at the elections on 2 May 2019	
Names of the officers undertaking the assessment:		Sue Rodden	
Is this a new or an existing policy or function?		New	
<p>1. What are the aims and objectives of the policy or function?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To enhance public confidence in the way that the elections are run Broxtowe, and reduce any perception of/opportunity for electoral fraud To test if the requirement to produce ID at the polling station, provides a barrier to voting and has a negative impact on turnout To ensure that all eligible electors in Broxtowe entitled to vote at the Local Council elections on 2 May 2019, are aware that on polling day they will be required to take (the appropriate) ID to the polling station so that they can cast their vote To provide clear and accessible information so that anyone who wants to vote, understands what they need to do To encourage all eligible voters to take the ID to the polling station on polling day To minimise the potential of voters being turned away from the polling station for presenting an incorrect form of ID To work with our partners to ensure that any hard to reach groups in the Borough are contacted 			
<p>2. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy or function?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced public confidence in the way that the elections are run Reduced perception of/opportunity for electoral fraud Improved integrity of elections and 'openness and transparency' Enhanced profile in electoral environment 			
<p>3. Who is intended to benefit from the policy or function?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents of the Borough Staff (core electoral services and temporary staff including polling staff) Political parties Prospective candidates and agents 			

4. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy or function?

- Residents of the Borough
- Returning Officer
- Staff (Core electoral services and temporary staff including polling staff)
- Political Parties
- Prospective Candidates and Agents
- Disability groups
- Ethnic minority groups

5. What baseline quantitative data do you have about the policy or function relating to the different equality strands?

An evaluation of similar pilots carried out in 2018.

6. What baseline qualitative data do you have about the policy or function relating to the different equality strands?

An evaluation of similar pilots carried out in 2018.

7. What has stakeholder consultation, if carried out, revealed about the nature of the impact?

Consultation will be carried out with the Disability Forum and ethnic minority groups in the New Year. Feedback will also be sought through Community Action Teams and attendance at other community events.

8. From the evidence available does the policy or function affect or have the potential to affect different equality groups in different ways?

In assessing whether the policy or function adversely affects any particular group or presents an opportunity for promoting equality, consider the questions below in relation to each equality group:

- **Does the policy or function target or exclude a specific equality group or community? Does it affect some equality groups or communities differently? If yes, can this be justified?**

Inspection of photographic ID will require veils to be removed. This will affect female members of the Muslim faith only - see section 9.

- **Is the policy or function likely to be equally accessed by all equality groups or communities? If no, can this be justified?**

The requirements of the pilot will apply to all electors.

- **Are there barriers that might make access difficult or stop different equality groups or communities accessing the policy or function?**

See section 9.

- **Could the policy or function promote or contribute to equality and good relations between different groups? If so, how?**

- **What further evidence is needed to understand the impact on equality?**

The evaluation of the 2018 pilots did not suggest that any groups were disadvantaged because of the requirement to provide ID. However, any feedback from the consultation will be considered in running the pilot in Broxtowe.

- 9. On the basis of the analysis above what actions, if any, will you need to take in respect of each of the equality strands?**

Age:

From the list of accepted IDs, it is unlikely that there will be anyone in this protected characteristic unable to vote. However Electoral Services will assist any individuals, including by visiting them at home, to obtain local ID if they do not have the necessary photographic ID or advising on the documents which will be acceptable to enable them to vote at a polling station. An invitation will also be sent to all nursing homes in the borough for Electoral Services to speak to residents about the ID requirements.

Disability:

Before polling day, details of the pilot will be sent to all groups represented on the Disability Forum and an offer for Electoral Services to speak further with the Forum or individual groups, if required. Electoral Services will assist any individuals, including by visiting them at home, to obtain local ID if they do not have the necessary photographic ID or advising on the documents which will be acceptable to enable them to vote at a polling station.

Polling staff will be trained to assist any disabled voters who go to polling stations to vote.

An easy to understand process for voting in the pilot will be available on the Council's website to assist voters with learning difficulties.

Gender:

This characteristic has no bearing on the pilot being undertaken.

Gender Reassignment:

Whilst this characteristic has no bearing on the pilot being undertaken, the training for polling staff will include gender reassignment and the need for awareness and discretion if there appears to be a difference between the gender of the voter or the name which a voter gives and details on the register.

Marriage and Civil Partnership:

This characteristic has no bearing on the pilot being undertaken. However, advice is being sought from Cabinet Office on the acceptance of a birth certificate as document evidence where an elector has got married/changed their name by deed poll and their surname is different to that on the register. This document will be updated to reflect that advice. The requirement to provide a marriage certificate or other document where an elector has married/changed their name since the register was published will be included in publicity and included in polling staff training.

Pregnancy and Maternity:

This characteristic has no bearing on the pilot being undertaken.

Race:

This characteristic has no bearing on the pilot being undertaken.

Religion and Belief:

Female Muslims who wear a niqab will need to remove it for the purpose of checking their ID. A separate room or screened off part of the polling station will be available for this. Wherever possible a female will be appointed to each polling station so that ID checks can be carried out by a female if requested. Alternatively, a female from a nearby polling station, Polling Station Inspector or Electoral Services staff will go to the polling station to do this.

Sexual Orientation:

This characteristic has no bearing on the pilot being undertaken.

Head of Service:

I am satisfied with the results of this EIA. I undertake to review and monitor progress against the actions proposed in response to this impact assessment.

Signature of Head of Service:

Action Plan

Action to be taken	What outcome is wanted?	What milestones will be used?	Who is the Lead Responsible Officer?	What is the Target Date for Completion?
Communications campaign to begin in January 2019 to include information on	To ensure that all voters are aware of the requirements of the pilot and the assistance which is available to them before polling day and at polling stations.		Communications Manager	3 May 2019
Training for polling station staff to include equalities issues	To ensure that all polling staff are aware of the equalities issues which may arise as a result of the pilot and that they know how to respond appropriately.		Head of Administrative Services	On-going until polling day
Production of easy to read guide to voting in a pilot	To help voters with learning difficulties through the pilot process.		Head of Administrative Services	15 March 2019
Contact with disability groups in the borough	To publicise not only the requirements of the pilot, but to inform of the assistance which will be available before polling day and at polling stations.		Head of Administrative Services	February 2019

Action to be taken	What outcome is wanted?	What milestones will be used?	Who is the Lead Responsible Officer?	What is the Target Date for Completion?
Attendance at CAT meetings	To publicise not only the requirements of the pilot, but to inform of the assistance which will be available before polling day and at polling stations.		Head of Administrative Services	January-March 2019
Contact with nursing homes in the borough	To ensure that elderly residents have an opportunity to find out about and ask questions about the ID required.		Head of Administrative Services	January-March 2019