

Voter ID - Labour Group Amendment – Full Council Thursday 30th November 2023

To be moved by Councillor Eden Kulig and seconded by Councillor Asif Hussein:

“The London Borough of Harrow recognises the importance of public trust in the security of the electoral process.

This Council notes:

- The ~~threats to the~~ democratic process must be ~~combated to~~ protect ~~the integrity of~~ **in** our democracy.
- That the independent electoral Commission has called for a resolution to issues relating to voter ID in the UK.
- The recent law change allows for the provision of free voter ID cards (Voter Authority Certificates) which are issued by local authorities. This means financial hardship will not be a barrier to a voter's ability to get an ID and cast their ballot. **The estimated costs to this proposal is £140m over 10 years and this funding could be allocated to helping voters through the current cost of living crisis.**
- **Information provided by The House of Commons Library based on police reports collated by the Electoral Commission concludes that there is no evidence of large-scale electoral fraud and none of the investigated cases in Harrow involved “personation” – using someone else’s vote by pretending to be them in the polling station.**
- **There were only four convictions resulting from the allegations of in-person voter fraud during the 2019 General Election across the entire of the UK.**
- **There is expected to be a substantial additional ongoing strain on staff and financial resources administering Voter ID changes which could be spent on increasing the turnout at elections.**
- **Analysis by the Electoral Commission earlier this year shows that awareness of Voter Authority Certificates was low.**

This Council believes:

- Considering how frequently residents now require ID in their day to-day lives, the new requirement for voters to have ID to vote is a reasonable approach to reducing **any** ~~the threat of~~ voter fraud. ~~and ensures that there are still not significant barriers to voting.~~
- ~~That the system for applying for voter ID for those without a valid voter ID is simple and has ensured that all can access the electoral process.~~
- **The introduction of mandatory Voter ID may undermine the democratic process and may make this process more difficult to exercise the right to vote and may , disproportionately affecting; ethnic minority, low income, transient and living in temporary accommodation, homeless, elderly, disabled and young people.**
- **The Government should be trying to increase engagement in democracy, not hinder it. The Government should be urgently acting to increase voter registration and turnout.**

This Council resolves:

- To fulfil its duty to properly inform residents about the latest change in voting requirements.
- To commit to continuing to use its communication channels to **encourage voter registration and** notify residents about the need for voter ID in next year's Mayoral, GLA and parliamentary elections.