

Cabinet Office’s Executive Summary

Executive Summary

During local elections in 2018, electoral administrators from eight Local Authorities (LAs), working alongside the Cabinet Office, the Electoral Commission and their Electoral Management Software (EMS) suppliers delivered voter ID and postal vote pilots as part of the Electoral Integrity Project (EIP). Five LAs participated in pilots with the aim to inform future design of the ID requirements and delivery mechanism for implementing the Government’s manifesto commitment for the national roll out of voter ID requirements in polling stations across Great Britain. Three LAs piloted measures to improve the security of the postal and proxy vote process.

Three models of ID were trialled at polling stations - the poll card model in Watford and Swindon, the mixed ID (photographic and non-photographic) model in Gosport and Bromley, and the photographic ID model in Woking. Three other sites, Peterborough, Tower Hamlets and Slough, piloted the postal/proxy vote process.

The models trialled were based on recommendations made by Sir Eric Pickles in his independent review into electoral fraud. We measured the impact of the voter ID requirement through a number of evidence strands: a pre and post election day public opinion survey; a polling station staff survey; data collected at polling stations; cost data collected by LAs; and qualitative interviews with electoral service teams in the participating LAs. We measured the impact of the postal/proxy measures through: a post election day public opinion survey; cost data collected by LAs; and qualitative interviews with electoral services teams. These data sources have also been used by the Electoral Commission in their independent evaluation.

To fully assess the different dimensions of the ID requirement, Cabinet Office evaluated the pilots through four themes: Integrity; Democracy and Equality; Delivery; and Affordability.

Overall, Integrity measures consistently increased in the photographic ID model, and showed varied results across sites in the mixed ID and poll card models. Confidence in how to go about casting a vote and satisfaction with the process of voting significantly increased post election day in the photographic ID model. Levels of confidence significantly increased in one of the two poll card model sites (Watford), but satisfaction remained

INTEGRITY	DEMOCRACY & EQUALITY
<i>We aimed to understand the impact of the ID requirement on public confidence in the security of the electoral system.</i>	<i>We aimed to understand the impact of the requirement on people’s participation in the democratic process.</i>
DELIVERY	AFFORDABILITY
<i>We aimed to understand the best mechanisms for delivery of the policy.</i>	<i>We aimed to understand the additional costs of rolling out the requirement in Great Britain.</i>

unchanged. In contrast, confidence remained unchanged in both mixed ID models, yet satisfaction significantly increased in one of the two mixed ID models (Gosport).

The perception of the occurrence of electoral fraud at a local level has significantly decreased, and perception of electoral fraud at a GB level significantly increased in the photographic ID and mixed ID models (although Gosport remains unchanged on perceptions of fraud at a GB level). In contrast, perceptions of levels of electoral fraud at a local level

significantly increased in one of the two poll card model sites (Swindon), and at a GB level (Watford).

Democracy and Equality measures were consistent across each authority. Based on the public opinion survey there is no indication that the ID requirements impacted the reasons for not voting for any specific demographic group across the participating authorities. The predominant reason cited for not voting, among those reported they did not vote in the May 2018 local elections, in all pilot models was 'too busy/other commitments'.

The most cited communication channel for awareness of the pilot was predominantly the poll card for the poll card model and the mixed ID model sites, with only electors in the photographic ID model citing a leaflet from the local council as being the most referenced communication source. All models found direct local sources to be the most effective communication method.

The most popular ID used was a driving licence in both the photographic and the mixed ID models, with the passport being the second most popular. The poll card was most popular in the poll card model, with a driving licence being used as a second favourite option.

Based on feedback from electoral services teams, most of the pilot requirements were able to be delivered in conjunction with business as usual activities for an election. Piloting authorities highlighted the importance of having enough time to plan for the extra requirements. Most piloting authorities were able to integrate voter ID training into the standard training and guidance given to polling station staff.

Perceptions of election day were largely positive across all models, with polling station staff giving positive feedback on the process, particularly in the poll card sites.

LAs would largely pilot the same approach again, with one of the mixed models (Bromley) citing they would reduce the number of ID options. The poll card model sites reflected that their model would need less of a behaviour change, with one citing that electors already bring their poll card to vote (Watford).

The central role that Cabinet Office and the Electoral Commission play were seen as being integral to further pilots or national roll out. All local authorities stated that a communication campaign would have to be centrally delivered, with one set of requirements nationally.

In order to assess the affordability of each ID pilot model, we have produced estimates for the additional costs of rolling out each model for a national poll. We have standardised the costs to allow comparisons to be drawn, and have omitted costs that were pilot-specific. There is an inherent degree of uncertainty in these estimates, primarily due to the small sample of participating Local Authorities. This is particularly acute for the Poll Card model, which required the use of technology in polling stations which was developed specifically for this pilot.