MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL

Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee

Date: Tuesday, 10 January 2023
Time: 2.00 pm
Venue: Council Antechamber, Level 2, Town Hall Extension

This is a **Supplementary Agenda** containing additional information about the business of the meeting that was not available when the agenda was published.

Access to the Antechamber

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Membership of the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee

Councillors - Simcock (Chair), Andrews, Davies, Good, Kirkpatrick, Lanchbury, B Priest, Rowles and Wheeler

Supplementary Agenda

Further Information

For help, advice and information about this meeting please contact the Committee
Officer:

Charlotte Lynch
Tel: 0161 219 2119
Email: charlotte.lynch@manchester.gov.uk

This supplementary agenda was issued on **Wednesday, 4 January 2023** by the
Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit, Manchester City Council, Level 2, Town Hall
Extension, Manchester, M60 2LA

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee – 10 January 2023

Subject: Election Act 2022

Report of: The Chief Executive

Summary

To outline the planning and governance arrangements for the implementation of the Elections Act in Manchester, with specific focus on voter registrations, polling station accessibility and voter ID requirements.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to note:

- The progress that is being made by the Elections Team and the Election Steering Group in relation to changes that will be introduced by the Election Act 2022 for the Local Elections 4 May 2023.
- The communication plan for local residents with regard to the changes for the May 2023 polls
- The changes that will be introduced for polls after the local elections 2023.

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city
The legislative changes brought about by the Elections Act, will have a negative impact on achieving the zero-carbon target across the city.   To date the changes will require a greater number of polling stations across the city to handle longer transaction times, as a result more staff will be travelling across the city to work in stations, some staff are required to use their cars for the role they carry out on polling day.   In addition, it is understood that more paperwork will be required in stations to capture voter information to report back to Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC).   The Electoral Services unit are aware of the impacts the Elections Act changes will bring and will continue to actively try to reduce the impact wherever possible.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments
An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed by DLUHC for the changes brought about by the Elections Act 2022. Full details can be found here Elections Bill equality ass (parliament.uk) It is believed that the introduction of Voter ID in polling stations brought about by the implementation of the Elections Act could impact on protected or disadvantaged groups. The Electoral Services Unit is working with Equalities Specialists in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team to review and update the existing Equality Impact Assessments for Polling Stations across the city with regards to both Accessibility and Voter ID in Polling Stations. Voter Authority Certificates (free Voter ID requests) will be completed via a new Government Portal and has not been included as part of the Equality Impact Assessment as this is not a site or process that the Electoral Services unit have control over.

Manchester Strategy outcomes	**Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy**
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The Our Manchester Strategy sets out the vision for the city to 2025. Local elections provide the opportunity for eligible Manchester residents to elect Councillors to represent them and therefore to influence how the strategy is delivered.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue

The introduction of the Electoral Integrity Programme will place a burden on the local authority in various ways, including, for example, the time administrative staff will need to process applications for Voter Authority Certificates, additional equipment that may be required for some offices or polling stations, and additional poll clerks that will need to be hired for polling day. DLUHC are responsible for providing funding for this additional burden.

Funding will be provided through a hybrid approach comprising of grant payments and Justification Led Bids (JLB). Grants will enable a proportion of the allocation to be distributed via a single grant payment. Justification Led Bids will release funds retrospectively on the basis of evidence of spend.

Manchester have now received their initial grant funding of £79,496. A further grant payment will be provided in April 2023 of £127,431 and again in April 2024 – amount still to be confirmed. The JLB window for local authorities to retrospectively claim additional funding will be in Summer/Autumn 2023 and 2024.

At this stage it is difficult to project the additional costs with any certainty however it is anticipated that the grants and the payments received from the JLB will not cover the full costs of the implementation of the Elections Act. In order to ensure that progress will not be delayed due to lack of funding £200k underspend in the Elections budget in 2021/22 has been carried forward to provide cashflow support until the funding is received

Financial Consequences – Capital

None

Contact Officers:

Name: Fiona Ledden
Position: City Solicitor
Telephone: 0161 234 3087
E-mail: fiona.ledden@manchester.gov.uk

Name: Clare Travers-Wilkins
Position: Electoral Services Corporate Delivery Manager
Telephone: 0161 219 6949
E-mail: clare.travers@manchester.gov.uk

Name: Tricia Rigby
Position: Electoral Services Team Leader
Telephone: 0161 234 3283
E-mail: tricia.rigby@manchester.gov.uk

Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents

are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

Draft SI's – Voter ID Laid 03 November 2022
Elections Act Implementation Timeline
Process map – Voter Authority Certificate application process
Process map – Polling Station Process, Vote in person

1.0   Introduction and Background

1.1   The Elections Act 2022 has been introduced to make new provision for and amendments to existing electoral law, which claims to ensure that UK elections remain secure, fair, modern, inclusive, and transparent. This allows the Government to meet some of its 2019 manifesto commitments.

1.2   A significant number of different legislative changes relating to both electoral registration and the delivery of elections will come into effect over the next two years. This will impact on the delivery of the Local Elections in 2023, the Local and Mayoral Elections in 2024, and the next Parliamentary General Election, which could happen any time up until January 2025. (Please note - It is anticipated that if a Parliamentary General Election was called after autumn 2023, this would take place on new constituency boundaries). These changes will place significant additional responsibilities and resourcing pressures on Electoral Registration Officers (ERO) and Returning Officers (RO), and their local authorities in the widest sense.

1.3   The main changes and timescales for their implementation are:

1.4   The changes planned for May 2023 include:
- Voter ID – Requirement for voters to show an approved form of photo ID at polling stations before a ballot paper is issued.
- Accessibility Provisions – These relate to the requirement to provide reasonable equipment to assist voters with disabilities in polling stations,

1.5   Further provisions will come into effect from July 2023 onwards, and these include

- Allowing all British citizens living overseas to vote in UK Parliamentary elections, regardless of when they left the UK, with applications required every 3 years
- Enabling electors to apply online for an absent vote, with both online and paper applications requiring the applicant's identity to be verified
- Requiring postal voters to reapply every three years, replacing current rules of refreshing their signature every five years
- Further limit to the number of people an elector may act as proxy for
- Restricting the handling of postal votes – political campaigners will no longer be permitted to handle postal votes, and the number of postal votes an individual can hand in at a polling station will be limited.
- EU citizens - a review of the eligibility to vote for some EU citizens

1.6   A Schedule setting out the planned changes and their scheduled implementation is attached at Appendix A

1.7   This report will set out the work to implement the planned changes, focussing on those that need to be in place for May 2023, namely the Voter ID requirements and Accessibility provisions.

1.8   The report also includes the planned approach to communications and ensuring that all residents are aware of the planned changes so they are able to vote.

2.0   The Planned Changes for May 2023

2.1   <u>Voter ID</u>

2.1.1   The Voter ID requirements and will be implemented for the May 2023 polls. Requirement for voters to show approved form of photo ID at polling stations before a ballot paper is issued. A list of suitable ID can be found in Appendix B

2.1.2   The voter registration / application service for a Voter Authority Certificate (VAC) will be provided centrally by the government digital service, similar to registering to vote. The application process will be handled by a separate portal that is not linked to the Electoral Management System.

2.1.3   Whilst full details of how the process will operate are awaited, it is understood that once an application is made, a real time ID check takes place, using national records. The application is then made available to the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) in the relevant local authority area. Elections staff will then need to determine and process the application before it can be authorised. This will involve checking the applicant is registered to vote (via an API register checking service linked to the ERO's Electoral Management Software provider) and that their photograph is of an acceptable quality. In more complex cases, it will involve checking whether additional identity documents such as uploaded household bills are acceptable forms of evidence of identity. Once an application is approved, the VAC will be printed centrally through a government print contract and despatched directly by Royal Mail. The Voter Authority Certificate will be an A4 paper certificate, with built in security features.

2.1.4   The deadline for applications to be made by electors will be 6 working days ahead of polling day. After this cut off, there will also be a provision in exceptional circumstances to enable the ERO to issue a temporary certificate up to 5pm on polling day, where an elector has not received their Voter ID. Electors who report their existing acceptable ID as lost, stolen, destroyed or damaged beyond use after the application date will be able to appoint an emergency proxy up until 5pm on polling day.

2.1.5   The new government portal is expected to accept applications from electors from the 16 January 2023. An online training session has been delivered by DLUHC for all administrative staff (Wednesday 14 December) demonstrating the portal. Repeat sessions will be held in January for those unable to attend, but access to the portal is not expected until the new year.

2.1.6   Written training information has not been provided to date, however once training documentation has been received, Senior Elections officers, will work through applications to design how the process will work in practice and

subsequently create training guides that can be distributed across the team. A number of dedicated focus sessions will be held by Senior Elections Officers to work through the processes step by step to ensure a full understanding is gained by all staff, prior to processing applications independently. Experienced Officers will be on hand throughout, to assist and support newer staff members who lack knowledge of the overall process.

2.1.7 Work is well underway within the Council to plan the 'front door' access, and what is required for the electors' journey and processing of their enquiry. The initial point of contact will be with the Contact Centre/Customer Service Centre. Work has already commenced to consider anticipated transaction and call volumes, the type of enquiries expected, as well as training and support. Work has also been undertaken to review historic demand placed on the Customer Contact Centre over various time periods and covering different types of elections. This work will inform the additional resource required to meet this expected demand. Recruitment for four additional staff members has already started to ensure the demand can be met.

2.1.8 Alongside this, work is being undertaken on the Electoral Registration Officer functions, focusing on the back office processes for dealing with VAC applications, as well as Returning Officer functions which includes changes to statutory notices such as poll cards, and what the changes will mean for polling day requirements (inclusive of staffing, management and the setting up of polling stations), command and control arrangements taking into account the increased number of queries Voter ID will generate from stations.

2.1.9 DLUHC have advised that transaction times in polling stations will be longer. The elections team have reviewed the likely implications and considered electors in person and the turnout for a local only poll.

2.1.10 To determine what transaction volumes could look like, modelling work has been undertaken with the support of Performance, Research and Intelligence (PRI) to support workstreams one and two to estimate demand, by looking at the city's demographics and characteristics, overlaid with electoral turnout and funding assumption transaction times for processing applications. This information is being used to model resourcing requirements for both workstreams, with a focus on requirements between January and May 2023, and to support the communications and engagement work required.

2.1.11 Staff numbers have been increased per station to allow for the addition requirements of Voter ID and reporting requirements. An additional five stations have been added to polling places where historical information shows a larger turnout. As yet, the detail of the 'customer journey' in a station has not been finalised and shared by central government, nor have the processes that staff will be required to take, to check ID and capture the necessary information.

2.1.12 All staff will receive a variety of training once the information has been received to make them aware of new processes and procedures to enable

them to confidently deliver an efficient and effective service with their polling station.

2.2   Accessibility

2.2.1   The Assistance with Voting for Persons with Disabilities (Principal Area, Parish and Greater London Authority Elections) (Amendments) Rules 2022 came into force on 29 December 2022 and will apply to elections held after 3rd May 2023. These rules introduce a requirement of Returning Officers to provide "equipment as it is reasonable to provide for the purposes of enabling, or making it easier for, relevant persons to vote independently". These rules also make changes to who will be allowed to be a companion of a disabled voter.

2.3   Reasonable equipment and processes at Polling Stations

2.3.1   The Elections Strategic Lead for Greater Manchester is currently leading on a project to seek a consistent approach at all Polling Stations across the ten Greater Manchester Districts. An officer from the Manchester elections team and an Equalities Specialist Officer from Policy, Performance and Reform are involved with these discussions and meetings are taking place with GM Disabled persons groups to take their views on what can be delivered and how to communicate these provisions to disabled voters.

2.3.2   Draft reasonable equipment provisions suggested by the Electoral Commission and legislative provisions that are being considered as a consistent approach across GM polling stations are detailed below. Those items marked with an asterix* are already routinely provided in Manchester Polling stations.

- Large sample copy of ballot paper displayed in polling station and sample hand held copies for voters to use*
- Tactile Voting Device to assist visually impaired voters to mark their vote on a ballot paper*
- Braille copy of ballot paper*
- Ramps to allow access and egress where required and relevant signage for access *
- Appropriate lighting *
- Chair / seating for voters who cannot stand for long periods
- Magnifiers to increase size of text on a document *
- Polling booth at wheelchair level*
- Name badges for polling station staff so voters are clear who are members of staff
- Here to help signs
- Large chunky pencils
- Pencil grips
- Where available, parking spaces for disabled voters*
- Temporary doorbells where doors are closed and where it may be difficult to get assistance from staff – or workable alternative
- Access to audio versions of ballot papers

- Hearing loops where available / temporary provision to be considered
- Electors may use any specialist devices or Apps that electors may bring with them require to assist them to cast their vote independently*

2.3.3 Other considerations that are also being looked into:
- What can be provided in all stations versus on request in relation to more specialist equipment
- Guide about voting and what assistance is available – including easy read / web versions
- Message on poll cards to request adaptations / equipment

2.3.4 Training for all staff working in Polling Stations to increase awareness / understanding / purpose of equipment.

2.3.5 The Electoral Commission are currently undertaking a statutory consultation from 5 December 2022 until 16 January 2023, on the guidance document they are required to provide to Returning Officers to assist in these provisions.

2.4 <u>Companions of disabled voters</u>

2.4.1 Current rule states that a companion of a disabled elector must also be a registered elector over the age of 18. From 4 May 2023 polls, disabled voters who make a declaration in the Polling station, that they require assistance, will be able to bring any person over the age of 18 as a companion to assist them to cast their vote, thus removing the requirement of being registered to vote.

2.5 <u>Community Engagement and Communications</u>

2.5.1 In order to support the changes outlined for May 2023, a comprehensive communications and engagement campaign is required from January 2023, following the launch of the VAC application portal (expected to go live on 16 January 2023) through to polling day on 4 May 2023.

2.5.2 The EC has responsibility for promoting public confidence and participation in democratic processes, to ensure their integrity and to ensure that voters have all the information they need to vote. EROs also have a responsibility to have in place effective local public engagement strategies to identify people who are not registered and encourage them to register to vote, whilst ROs are responsible for taking appropriate steps to encourage the participation of electors in elections.

2.5.3 Ahead of the local elections in 2023 and once the VAC application portal is in operation, the EC will be running a high-profile national campaign focusing on raising awareness of the requirement for Voter ID, targeting those who may not already have the required photographic ID, so they understand how/where to apply, and ensuring electors know they need to take Voter ID with them in order to vote.

2.5.4 It is proposed that there is GM wide approach to amplify the EC's national campaign to ensure that the key messages are consistently disseminated

widely across Greater Manchester, with each local authority contributing a proportion to purchase GM wide advertising channels to supplement Electoral Commission messaging at a local level.

2.5.5   This will include making EC partner materials accessible to a wider audience, for example, additional language translations and/or accessible formats. Effective local engagement activity will be required at a neighbourhood level, utilising local knowledge and local community networks via Neighbourhood Teams, to ensure engagement with underrepresented groups and key target audiences. Learning and experience from previous city-wide engagement activities will be taken on board to ensure a sound approach.

2.5.6   The local campaign will mirror the EC's campaign timings and will commence in GM once the VAC portal goes live (this is expected to go live on 16 January 2023).

2.5.7   A GM wide channel plan has been drafted to ensure coverage across local channels in all 10 local authority areas. A Manchester specific channel plan will sit alongside this with a focus on Manchester only advertising sites, digital channels, community networks, free and partner channels.

2.5.8   A communications plan has been drafted and the approach shared with GM colleagues. The Local Elections 2023 communications approach can be found in Appendix C

2.6   Governance and Capacity

2.6.1   A Strategic Elections function has been established, based at Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) to provide the 10 Greater Manchester districts and GMCA with specialist knowledge and dedicated strategic resource for the next 2 years. The purpose of this function is to provide GM authorities with the knowledge and understanding to prepare for the extensive and complex legislative changes arising from the implementation of the Elections Act 2022, including voter ID requirements, overseas electors' 'votes for life' and online postal vote applications. In addition, the wider implications arising from the Dissolution and Calling of Parliament Act 2022 and the outcomes of the current Parliamentary Boundary review

2.6.2   An Elections Act Steering Group has been in place since June 2022 to provide support to the Elections team. The work is supported by a clear project plan covering two phases – Phase one from now until May and Phase two from May onwards. A number of wider services support this work including HROD, ICT, Comms, Neighbourhoods, PRI, risk and finance, working through the significant interdependencies that exist across the different workstreams to ensure these are reflected in the thinking. As part of wider work, the Elections Strategic Lead for Greater Manchester is also in attendance at this Steering Group focusing on areas where close joint working arrangements are desirable for consistency.

2.6.3 The resource requirements in the core elections team are being strengthened with additional resource of 6 to support the work required. In addition, a 'bank' of internal MCC staff are also being recruited to provide additional capacity and assist with managing peaks in demand as and when required for example in the 6-week election period.

2.6.4 Resources to aid engagement will be provided, these will include:
- A printable leaflet for voters (Translation and easy read will be available)
- A summary 2-sided leaflet
- A guide for staff and volunteers
- Posters and social media assets

2.6.5 Wider partner materials are also being developed by the EC which are aimed at specific demographic audiences – those most at risk of not having acceptable photographic ID and so needing to be aware of the free voter ID option, such as 85+, the homeless, people with sight-loss or learning disabilities – which have been co-created with key charities and NGOs.

2.6.6 The staffing requirements for May 2023 poll are currently under review, taking into consideration, that there is the potential that additional stations may be needed due to the anticipated increase of transactions times, hence more staff required.   Staff who have worked in previous elections will be contacted and allocated to roles from early January. Staff have been notified of next year's poll via Broadcasts, encouraging staff members without a role to get in touch.

2.6.7 As Elections is a corporate priority it is a requirement for staff to work or be available if necessary. For this reason staff are made aware that leave should not be booked for both Polling day and the Count. A withdrawal process will be in place for exceptions, which is managed by HR in conjunction with Strategic Leads.

2.6.8 Initially members will be briefed at the start of the year on the changes that are being implemented as part of the Elections Act. Focus will be initially around the changes that will affect May 2023 polls. The Member Working Group will also be re-established to provide regular updates as more information becomes available.

3.0   Recommendations

3.1   The Committee is recommended to note:

1. The progress that is being made by the Elections Team and the Election Steering Group in relation to changes that will be introduced by the Election Act 2022 for the Local Elections 4 May 2023.
2. The communication plan for local residents with regard to the changes for the May 2023 polls
3. The changes that will be introduced for polls after the local elections 2023.

4.0   Appendices

Appendix A - Scheduled implementation plan of the provisions of the Election Act

Appendix B - List of Acceptable ID

Appendix C - Local Elections 2023 communications approach

Election Act Implementation Timescales

	Voter ID	Accessibility measure	EU citizens review of registration rights	Online Absent Voting	Overseas online application process	Postal vote handling rules	Postal and proxy voting rules – 3 year refresh	Other considerations
	Requirement for voters to show an approved form of photo ID at polling station before a ballot paper is issued: Electoral Returning Officers to issue free Voter Authority Certificates to eligible residents without valid photo ID	Extend accessibility: Returning Officer to take reasonable steps to provide support to voters with disabilities in polling stations	Change to voting and candidacy arrangements for EU voters All EU citizens will have their eligibility reviewed, those determined ineligible under the new provisions will be removed from the relevant electoral register	Enable electors to apply online for an absent vote. New requirement for both online and paper applications for the applicants identity to be verified	The 15 years limit will be removed and all British citizens who were previously registered or resident in the UK will be enfranchised and entitled to register in respect of the last UK address they were registered or resident at	Political campaigners will be banned from handling postal votes and a limit will be placed on the number of postal votes a person can hand in at a polling station	Absent voters will need to make a new application every three years	
January 2023	✅	❌	❌	❌	❌	❌	❌	Government Voter Certificate portal goes live
May 2023	✅	✅	❌	❌	❌	❌	❌	Local Elections

July 2023	✅	✅	✅	✅	✅	❌	❌	Annual Canvass Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries – final recommendations
September 2023	✅	✅	✅	✅	✅	✅	❌	Statutory review of polling places
December 2023	✅	✅	✅	✅	✅	✅	✅	Publish electoral register with Parliamentary boundary changes
May 2024	✅	✅	✅	✅	✅	✅	✅	Local and Mayoral Elections
September 2024	✅	✅	✅	✅	✅	✅	✅	Annual Canvass
Dec 2024 – Jan 2025	✅	✅	✅	✅	✅	✅	✅	Latest date UKPGE can be held

List of Acceptable ID

The Elections Act sets out in Schedule 1 the list of photographic identification documents that will be accepted. This list is replicated below. The Act also makes provision for the list to be amended in future as necessary.

Please note - Expired ID is acceptable providing the photo is still a good likeness.

Identity Document	Notes
A United Kingdom passport	n/a
A passport issued by an EEA state or a Commonwealth country	n/a
A licence to drive a motor vehicle granted under— 15(i) Part 3 of the Road Traffic Act 1988, or (ii) the Road Traffic (Northern Ireland) Order 1981 (SI 1981/154 (N.I. 1));	This includes provisional driving licences
A driving licence issued by any of the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or an EEA state;	n/a
A biometric immigration document issued in accordance with regulations under section 5 of the UK Borders Act 2007	n/a
An identity card bearing the Proof of Age Standards Scheme hologram (a PASS card)	A wide range of identity documents are PASS accredited including: ● CitizenCard ● Bracknell Forest Council ecard ● My ID Card ● Milton Keynes all in 1 MK Card ● NUS Totum ID Card ● Validate UK Card ● Young Scot Card ● Southwark Proof of Age London Card ● One ID 4 U Card
A Ministry of Defence Form 90 (Defence Identity Card);	Commonly known as a MOD90 21
Any of the following concessionary travel passes: Funded by the UK Government: - Older Person's Bus Pass - Disabled Person's Bus Pass - Oyster 60+ Card - Freedom Pass Funded by the Scottish Government - National Entitlement Card Funded by the Welsh Government - 60 and over Welsh Concessionary Travel Card - Disabled Person's Welsh Concessionary Travel Card Issued under the Northern Ireland Concessionary Fares Scheme - A Senior SmartPass;	This list was updated following the introduction of the Elections Bill. It now exhaustively sets out all concessionary travel cards that will be accepted, to avoid any confusion amongst electors.

- A Registered Blind SmartPass or Blind Person's SmartPass; - A War Disablement SmartPass or War Disabled SmartPass; - A 60+ SmartPass; - A Half Fare SmartPass	
A badge of a form prescribed under section 21 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 or section 14 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons (Northern Ireland) Act 1978 (blue badge scheme);	n/a
An electoral identity document issued under section 13BD (electoral identity document: Great Britain);	Previously referred to as the Voter Card; now called the Voter Authority Certificate
An anonymous elector's document issued under section 513BE (anonymous elector's document: Great Britain) the holder of which has an anonymous entry at the time of the application for a ballot paper;	n/a
An electoral identity card issued under section 13C (electoral identity card: Northern Ireland);	n/a
A national identity card issued by an EEA state.	n/a

Local Elections 2023 communications approach

Campaign approach

In order to support the changes outlined for May 2023, a comprehensive communications and engagement campaign is required from January 2023, following the launch of the VAC application portal (expected to go live on 16 January 2023) through to polling day on 4 May 2023.

The Electoral Commission (EC) has responsibility for promoting public confidence and participation in democratic processes, to ensure their integrity and to ensure that voters have all the information they need to vote.

Ahead of the local elections in 2023 and once the VAC application portal is in operation, the EC will be running a high-profile national campaign focusing on raising awareness on voter ID, as well as their usual registration and local elections campaigns.

Electoral Commission campaign

The EC will be running a two phased campaign focusing on four key campaign strands:

1. Voter ID campaign aimed at all adults aged 18+ in England.
2. Voter ID campaign aimed at adults 18+ in England where local elections are taking place.
3. GOT 5?' register to vote campaign.
4. Voter ID campaign targeted specific key groups that are likely to have no form of photo ID and need proactive targeting. These have been identified as:
    o People aged over 85
    o Trans and non-binary people
    o People with disabilities
    o Ethnicities with low ID ownerships, including the Gypsy, Roma and Traveler communities
    o People registered as anonymous voters
    o Homeless people and people living in refuges

Campaign timings

Phase 1: Mass awareness phase
A 6-week full channel campaign between 9 January – 19 February 2023 in line with the launch of the voter ID online portal.

Phase 2: Local urgency phase
4 x two-week bursts of campaign activity between February and early May 2023, in areas where there are elections in May 2023.

- Burst 1:   27 February – 12 March 2023
- Burst 2:   20 March – 2 April 2023
- Burst 3:   10 April – 23 April 2023

- Burst 4:   1 May – 4 May 2023

Got 5?' will run alongside phase two of the voter ID campaign, utilising different channels so they are not competing for space with each other.

Campaign channels

The EC will be rolling out their campaign through a mixture of 60% online channels and 40% offline, utilising:
- TV advertising and Video on Demand (ITV, Sky and Channel4 and ads between videos on You Tube for example)
- Outdoor advertising sites
- Digital display
- Radio advertising
- Adverts on Spotify
- Regional newspapers
- Social media
- Gaming advertising
- Google search

For Manchester, the EC has confirmed that they will be booking:
- Advertising space in the Manchester Evening News
- Advertising on bus rears
- Roadside 48 sheets and 6 sheets (both digital and static).

Electoral Commission assets/literature

The EC will be providing partner packs for use by local authorities that will include:

- A printable leaflet for voters (available in Urdu, Punjabi, Romanian & Polish, plus easy read)
- Summary 2-sided insert leaflet
- A guide for staff and volunteers
- Posters (formatted for professional and in-house print)
- Template web copy and social media assets
- Press materials, including a template press release

Wider partner materials are also being developed which are aimed at specific demographic audiences – those most at risk of not having acceptable photographic ID and so needing to be aware of the free voter ID option, such as 85+, the homeless, people with sight-loss or learning disabilities – which have been co-created with key charities and NGOs.

The EC is working with the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) and the Deaf Association to produce information on the changes to ensure greater accessibility for voters.

Translations

The EC will be translating their local authority information pack into Polish, Romanian, Punjabi and Urdu. These languages have been chosen as they reflect the most common main languages identified by the 2021 census.

In addition, the information pack targeted at the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities will be translated into Slovak, Czech and Bulgarian providing a suite of literature in following seven languages:

1. Polish
2. Romanian
3. Punjabi
4. Urdu
5. Slovak
6. Czech
7. Bulgarian

The EC will also be producing their voter ID booklet into Easy Read, large print, Braille and will be producing short videos in British Sign Language

Manchester / Greater Manchester campaign

Campaign approach and timings

To ensure that the key messages are consistently disseminated widely across Greater Manchester and for use at a local level, it is proposed the 10 local authorities in Greater Manchester work together on a joint campaign with each local authority contributing a proportion to purchase GM wide advertising channels to supplement Electoral Commission messaging at a local level.

This will include making EC partner materials accessible to a wider audience, for example, additional language translations and/or accessible formats.

Effective local engagement activity will be required at a neighbourhood level and with different communities to ensure engagement with hard-to-reach cohorts and key target audiences. This will need to be designed and undertaken by each local authority using consistent materials utilising local knowledge and local community networks.

Campaign phasing

It is proposed that the local campaign timings will mirror the Electoral Commission's campaign where possible. It is proposed that local activity take place in phases as follows (exact dates of campaign activity tbc):

Phase 1 – Voter ID: 16 January–19 February 2023*
Phase 2 – Register to vote, how to vote and voter ID: 6 March–17 April 2023
Phase 3 -- Logistics of voting and voter ID: 18 April–23 April 2023
Phase 4 – Voter ID reminder and accessibility: 24 April–4 May 2023

*For Phase 1 in GM this will start once the VAC portal is live and focus on using EC messages in the first instance.

Campaign objectives and sequencing of messaging

The objectives around Voter ID mirror the EC campaign objectives. In addition, the GM/Manchester campaign will focus on registration, election deadlines, logistics of voting and accessibility as outlines below.

Dates	Objective(s)	Audience	Channel(s)
Phase 1 – Voter ID			
16 Jan – 19 Feb 2023	• Ensure that electors know that they will now be asked for photo ID when they go to vote on 4 May. • Communicate the forms of ID that will be accepted • Ensure that electors understand that if they don't an acceptable form of ID, they can apply for a free Voter Authority Certificate • How to apply for a voter Voter Authority Certificate via the portal	All adults aged 18+. Key target audiences without ID.	Social media Council channels Partners channels Paid social media
Phase 2 – Register to vote, how to vote and Voter ID			
6 March - 17 April 2023	• Ensure that residents know that the local elections are taking place on 4 May • Encourage people to register to vote online before the registration deadline of 17 April via www.gov.uk/register-to-vote • Highlight the different ways to vote and the associated deadlines • Encourage those wishing to vote by post to apply early • Highlight the different ways to vote (postal, proxy) and prompt people who may be working away or on holiday on 4 May to apply. • Applying for a Voter ID card - Voter ID portal • How to get support to apply for Voter ID • Support available at local libraries – free wifi, data and free use of computers • How to apply for Voter ID offline	All adults aged 18+ Key target audiences without ID. Electors with disabilities.	Out of home advertising Social media Digital adverts Digital screens Mobile adverts Dax radio Local Newspaper adverts Paid social media

	• How to apply for Voter ID without a fixed address • Raise awareness about accessible voting and what is available and how to make a request		
Phase 3 – Logistics of voting & Voter ID			
18 – 23 April 2023	• Ensure that residents know that the local elections take place on 4 May • Ensure that electors are aware that 32 seats are up for election, one candidate per ward (different messages for the six GM authorities with all out elections) • Ensure that people know where to go and cast their vote and signpost to the online polling station finder. • Assure electors that polling stations are safe places to vote in • Ensure that electors know what to expect at the polling station in terms of Voter ID • Raise awareness about accessible voting and what is available and how to make a request	All electors registered to vote. Key target audiences without ID Electors with disabilities.	Out of home advertising Social media Digital adverts Digital screens Mobile adverts Dax radio Local Newspaper adverts Paid social media
Phase 4 – Voter ID reminder & accessibility			
24 April – 4 May	• Ongoing VAC awareness and particularly around application VAC deadlines • Ensure that electors know what to expect at the polling station in terms of Voter ID • Raise awareness about accessible voting and what is available • Ensure electors know what accessibility/assistance support is available to them at the polling station and how to access it/make a request.	All electors registered to vote. Electors with disabilities.	Social media Partner channels Website

Key target audiences

For Manchester and Greater Manchester, there will be a focus on key target audiences who may have moved home and may need to re-register at their new address and those that have multiple compounding factors making them less likely to have photographic ID.

- University & college students
- Recent home movers
- People aged over 85
- Trans and non-binary people
- People with disabilities
- People who are economically inactive
- People without qualifications
- Groups and communities where we perceive low ID ownerships, including minority ethnic communities, the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities
- Homeless people and people living in refuges

Manchester/GM specific literature and translations

As with all Elections campaigns, MCC will adapt EC literature for our local audience, adding the date of the local election, adapting messaging where required and creating a suite of print ready pdfs that will be shared across GM.

MCC will also translate the Local Authority pack (leaflet for voters, posters, digital and social media resources) into the following languages, providing a suite of literature in 14 languages, including the top 10 languages requested in Greater Manchester.

1. Arabic
2. Urdu
3. Chinese
4. Bengali
5. Farsi
6. Portuguese
7. French
8. Spanish
9. Polish
10. Romanian
11. Punjabi
12. Slovak
13. Czech
14. Bulgarian

Accessibility

As mentioned above, there will be new provisions to ensure greater accessibility for electors in polling stations. A set of accessibility standards is being worked up and will be shared with GM leads. The ambition is to have one set of accessibility standards for GM authorities so that consistent accessibility provisions, equipment and adjustments are in place for all electors across the ten authorities.

Manchester/GM channels

The EC will be buying advertising space with both JC Decaux and Clear Channel in Manchester, providing good visibility across out of home and allowing us to focus campaign spend on other local and GM wide channels.

The Greater Manchester wide paid elements below are subject to all GM local authorities contributing to a central advertising budget.

Channel	Elements
OOH	TfGM Metrolink network across 7 LAs (excluding Wigan, Stockport and Bolton) - tba Outdoor poster sites across the 93km network Internal coving adverts across 120 trams Bus network interchange poster sites across GM Digital adverts on tfgm.com Digital 48 sheets on major roads
	Ocean ad JC Decaux digital screens
	Bus rears – tba (if not booked by EC)
DAX radio	DAX radio adverts (GM wide) - tba
Digital	Digital screens
	Local Facebook groups
	Boosted social posts to key audiences
Mobile phone & App ads	Targeted mobile display to reach the key audiences with demographic targeting to GM
MEN print & digital	MEN Digital Package – tbc (if not booked by EC) Digital adverts In your area native ads Sponsored content editorial Social media promotion Print adverts in MEN publications: MEN (Manchester) Rochdale Observer Saturday Heywood & Middleton Guardian (Oldham) Stockport Express
Local press advertising	Tameside Advertiser Bolton Evening News Bury Times Oldham Chronicle Salford City News Wigan Observer & Wigan Post
Publication	Asian Leader

Council Channels	Social media channels including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.
	Council resident e-bulletins/newsletters
	Insert with and message inside CT booklet
	Internal staff communications with presence in e-bulletins and on the intranet
	Website image on front page of the Council's website and links on other targeted pages.
	Libraries
	Age Friendly Manchester channels
	Disability groups via the Equalities team
Youth Council	Youth Council
Toolkits for Stakeholders	Social care teams, Early Help Hub etc....
	Manchester Covid Health Equality Monitoring Group
	MACC - VSCE organisations
	Citizen's Advice Manchester
	Registered Housing Providers
	Carer's network
	CHEM member networks
	South Asian Sounding Board
	Black, African Caribbean Sounding Board
	Partner networks
Partner publications	MLCO neighbourhood newspapers
Housing Associations	One Manchester Housing Association Northwards Housing Association Southway Housing Association Wythenshawe Housing Association/Parkway Green Adactus
Businesses /business networks in the city	Toolkits and messages to be shared with big employers in the city to disseminate the information to staff.
	CityCo, Chamber, Growth Company
Local networks	Community networks to share toolkits
	Neighbourhood engagement teams
	Parks & Leisure staff
VCSE	OMVCS - Our Manchester Voluntary & Community Sector MACC
Health channels	GP surgeries – screens/notice boards
	Pharmacies – notice boards
Supermarkets	Work with local neighbourhood teams to get posters/literature into local supermarkets in target wards

Media relations	Media outlets

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