

Communications and engagement campaign for 2024

## **Local Elections and GM Mayoral Election communications approach**

### **Campaign approach**

In order to support the changes outlined for May 2024, a comprehensive communications and engagement campaign is required from January 2024 through to polling day on 2 May 2024.

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 and the GM Mayoral Election in May 2024, the EC will run a high-profile national campaign, like the one they ran in 2023, focusing on raising awareness on voter ID, Voter Authority Certificates, and electoral registration.

### **Electoral Commission campaign**

The EC will be running a two phased campaign:

**Phase one – 8 January until 24 April** (the deadline to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate). Focusing on raising awareness of Voter ID, Voter Authority Certificates, and registration.

**Phase two - 25 April - 2 May** - Focusing on reminding voters to bring photo ID to polling stations on polling day.

### **Electoral Commission target groups**

The EC has identified the following key target groups who are less likely to have an eligible form of photo ID:

- People aged over 85
- Trans and non-binary people
- People with disabilities
- Ethnicities with low ID ownerships, including the Gypsy, Roma, and Traveler communities
- People registered as anonymous voters
- Homeless people and people living in refuges
- Young people
- BAME communities

### **Electoral Commission assets/literature**

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

- A printable leaflet for voters
- A guide for staff and volunteers
- A voter ID guide for electors, including information related to specific target audiences
- Posters (formatted for professional and in-house print)
- Template web copy and social media assets

- Press materials, including a template press release
- Animated videos
- BSL videos
- Audio files
- Braille content

### **Translations**

The EC will be translating some of their literature, but they have not yet confirmed which languages they will be covering. The Council will supplement these assets, translating literature into the key languages most requested in Manchester, should they not be provided by the EC.

### **Local and Mayoral Campaign approach and timings**

For the 2023 Local Elections in addition to the Manchester Campaign, a GM wide communications strategy/ channel plan was in place to amplify and complement the EC’s national campaign. This approach was also used at the last Local and Greater Manchester Combined Authority Mayoral Election in 2021 and ensured that key messages were consistently disseminated widely across the 10 Greater Manchester local authority areas. On both occasions this process has worked well and has been agreed for May 2024 polls.

A communications strategy has been drafted and the approach shared with GM colleagues (Heads of Comms and CLOs across GM). Once approved at this level this will be shared with Returning Officer’s for final approval. Further details about this year’s offer will be shared, once finalised.

### **Campaign phasing – Manchester**

It is expected that local activity take place in four phases as follows:

Phase 1 – late January – 10 February 2024

Phase 2 – 11 February 2024 – 16 April 2024 (registration deadline)

Phase 3 – 17 April 2024 - 24 April 2024 (VAC deadline)

Phase 4 – 25 April 2024 – 2 May 2024

### **Campaign objectives and sequencing of messaging – Manchester**

The objectives around Voter ID mirror the EC campaign objectives, promoting Voter ID and VACs and ensuring that people who need to, know where and how to apply for a VACs. There is greater focus this year on the different types of Elections eg, Local Elections, Combined Authority Mayoral Elections, and the Parliamentary Election, with confirmation that Voter ID will be a requirement for all.

In addition, the Manchester campaign will focus on registration, election deadlines, logistics of voting and accessibility as outlines below.

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Objective(s)</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Channel(s)</b>
<b>Phase 1 – Voter ID</b>			
<b>Late Jan –</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that electors know that they will now be asked for</li> </ul>	All adults aged 18+.	Social media

<b>10 Feb 2024</b>	<p>photo ID when they go to vote on 2 May.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate the forms of ID that will be accepted</li> <li>• Ensure that electors understand that if they don't an acceptable form of ID, they can apply for a free Voter Authority Certificate</li> <li>• How to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate via the portal</li> </ul>	<p>Key target audiences without ID.</p>	<p>Council channels Partners channels Paid social media</p>
<b>Phase 2 – Register to vote, how to vote and Voter ID</b>			
<b>11 Feb - 16 April 2024</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that residents know that the local elections are taking place on 2 May</li> <li>• Encourage people to register to vote online before the registration deadline of 16 April via <a href="http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote">www.gov.uk/register-to-vote</a></li> <li>• Highlight the different ways to vote and the associated deadlines</li> <li>• Encourage those wishing to vote by post to apply early</li> <li>• Highlight the different ways to vote (postal, proxy) and prompt people who may be working away or on holiday on 2 May to apply.</li> <li>• Applying for a Voter ID card - Voter ID portal</li> <li>• How to get support to apply for Voter ID</li> <li>• Support available at local libraries – free wifi, data and free use of computers</li> <li>• How to apply for Voter ID offline</li> <li>• How to apply for Voter ID without a fixed address</li> <li>• Raise awareness about accessible voting and what is available and how to make a request</li> </ul>	<p>All adults aged 18+</p> <p>Key target audiences without ID.</p> <p>Electors with disabilities.</p>	<p>Social media Digital adverts Digital screens Mobile adverts Paid social media</p>
<b>Phase 3 – Logistics of voting &amp; Voter ID</b>			

<b>17 – 24 April 2024</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that residents know that the Local and Mayoral Elections take place on 2 May</li> <li>• Ensure that electors are aware that 32 seats are up for election for local polls, one candidate per ward</li> <li>• Ongoing VAC awareness and particularly around the VAC application deadline (24 April)</li> <li>• Ensure that people know where to go and cast their vote and signpost to the online polling station finder.</li> <li>• Ensure that electors know what to expect at the polling station in terms of Voter ID</li> <li>• Raise awareness about accessible voting and what is available and how to make a request.</li> </ul>	<p>All electors registered to vote.</p> <p>Key target audiences without ID</p> <p>Electors with disabilities.</p>	<p>Social media Digital adverts Digital screens Mobile adverts Paid social media</p>
<b>Phase 4 – Voter ID reminder &amp; accessibility</b>			
<b>25 April – 2 May 2024</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that electors know what to expect at the polling station in terms of Voter ID</li> <li>• Raise awareness about accessible voting and what is available</li> <li>• Ensure electors know what accessibility/assistance support is available to them at the polling station and how to access it/make a request.</li> </ul>	<p>All electors registered to vote.</p> <p>Electors with disabilities.</p>	<p>Social media Partner channels Website</p>

### Key target audiences

For 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
- BAME communities

### Manchester Channels

Manchester communications channels are listed in the table below.

Channel	Elements
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
Publication	Asian Leader
Council Channels	Social media channels including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.
	Council resident e-bulletins/newsletters
	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
VFCSE	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