

## Request

I am writing to request that under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) you provide details of any awareness campaigns in place in relation to the new requirements under the Election Act 2022 to present photo ID at polling stations. In your response, please provide as much of the following detail as possible without exceeding your cost limit.

- a) What is the total budget that is to be spent on awareness campaigns, ii) what is the spend up to the 28th February 2023?
- b) How much of the total budget is local authority funded and how much is funded by central government?
- c) How many days have council staff spent on the awareness campaign?
- d) What assessment did you make of the number/% of residents who were unaware of the requirement to present photo ID at polling stations before your campaign started?
- e) What target have you set for the number/% of residents who are aware of the need for Photo ID, ii) how are you measuring it and iii) what is your latest estimate of the number/% of residents who are aware of the need for photo voter ID?
- f) Which, if any, groups have been identified as the most difficult to communicate the new requirements under the Election Act 2022 to?
- g) How much extra time has been set aside for training polling station staff who will be present at the local election polling stations on the 4th May 2023 on the new requirements under the Election Act 2022 to present a photo ID at polling stations?
- h) What additional planning have you undertaken with the local police force to ensure that polling stations staff are kept safe in the event that voters raise concerns regarding having to show photo ID?
- i) What guidance have you received from central government regarding the safety of polling station staff on polling day?
- j) How many questions or complaints from residents have you received regarding the new requirements for Voter ID under the Election Act 2022?

## Response

With reference to your request for information relating to this request, I would like to draw your attention to the distinction between the roles of the local authority and those of the Returning Officer for local elections.

The role of the Returning Officer is separate from that of the Chief Executive of the local authority and the responsibilities and duties associated with the former roles are personal to the postholder. A list of public bodies and local authorities that are subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act is available at the following website:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/schedule/1>

As you will see, the Freedom of Information Act does not list any person appointed under the Representation of the People Act 1983 (or related electoral legislation). It therefore follows that the (Acting) Returning Officer or any other person appointed under the 1983 Act (or related electoral legislation) such as the Counting Officer, are not subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

Therefore, as there is no statutory obligation to provide you with this information, I am on this occasion unable to supply any answers to your question.