Request

I would like to request the following information under the Freedom of Information Act, in relation to your council:

1) How many people were turned away for not having a form of valid ID to vote at local elections on May 4th by clerks inside polling stations?

2) How many people were turned away for not having a form of valid ID to vote at local elections on May 4th by greeters outside/on the door at polling stations?

3) How many people returned to polling stations with a valid form of ID after being turned away for not having one?

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.

Please note: The Electoral Commission will be publishing a post poll analysis of Voter ID, using the data they have collected from all relevant Returning Officers. We believe initial findings are due at the end of June, with a more detailed report available in September, which will include recommendations.