



Watford Borough Council

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Mark Hughes
Cabinet Office
1 Horse Guards Road
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Enquiries to: Manny Lewis
Phone no: 01923 278185
Our reference:
Your reference:

Date: 13 August 2017

Dear Mark,

The Council requests that the Government includes Watford Borough as a local authority to pilot Voter Identification (Voter ID) at the local elections scheduled for May 2018 under Section 10 of the Representation of the People Act 2000.

We understand that the pilot scheme will require electors to provide a specified form of ID before they are able to cast their vote. Where an elector is unable to present the required form of ID they will be refused a ballot paper and will be unable to vote.

The purpose of the scheme is to trial various types of ID which may include photographic or non-photographic evidence. The Council's preferred type of ID to pilot would be bar coded poll cards plus both photographic ID and non-photographic ID in the absence of the poll card. We understand this is subject to approval by the Minister following further consultation with the Council, and we further understand that this process of consultation and approval will need to be completed by the time the Minister signs the relevant pilot Order.

The Council considers it meets the criteria as set out under Section 5.6 of the Prospectus issued in March 2017. Local elections, combined Mayoral and Borough Council elections are due to take place on 3rd May 2018 and the Council confirms it is able to demonstrate the following:

- *“there is local support for the pilot; the Elected Mayor, Dorothy Thornhill has given her support to the pilot. The election agents I consulted had a mixed view, there was some concern from them about the risk of voters being unable to vote as a*



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result of losing or forgetting the necessary ID.

- *an understanding of the Government's objectives for the project and how the pilot fits with these objectives;*
- *the feasibility of delivering the pilot within the available time frame;*
- *there are effective planning management arrangements in place and sufficient resources and capacity in the local authority to deliver the pilot, including availability of staff after the election to contribute to the evaluation process;*
- *any management of service supplier will be addressed;;*
- *an understanding of the contingencies you need to have in place – particularly to protect the security and integrity of the election;*
- *that there will be a clear and comprehensive communications plan covering all stakeholders;*
- *The Electoral Commission's evaluation process will be fully supported;*
- *the pilot has an effective business case and offers value for money;*
- *there is learning value to be gained from conducting the pilot and there is a clear means of testing the impact of the innovation;*
- *any innovation is at least as secure as conventional electoral practices; and*
- *the pilot will maintain public confidence in the electoral process, that key risks and issues have been identified, and that a plan has been drawn up for managing them."*

We would be pleased for the Government to announce our participation in the Voter ID pilots. I understand that the date for the initial announcement of the first tranche of piloting authorities will be in September, that this date will be fully communicated to us in advance, and our respective communication teams will work closely together in the lead-up to the announcement.

Yours sincerely,



Manny Lewis
Managing Director & Returning Officer