

MOTION ON NOTICE



Date of Council Meeting: 27 March 2023

Title of Motion:

An assessment of the impact of the UK Government's Election Act 2022 on voting rights and voter suppression in Plymouth

Motion Narrative and Action Required:

The Council notes:

The requirement of the Elections Act 2022 for voters to provide accurate and specific types of photo identification at polling stations is a well-known cause of concern. It may disproportionately impact certain groups of voters, including young people, the elderly, those on low incomes, and those from ethnic minority backgrounds.

It is essential that this Council assesses the impact of this legislation following the May 2023 election and takes all possible measures to ensure that no Plymouth resident is disenfranchised from voting in the future as a result of this legislation.

The Council believes that it is essential to ensure that all Plymouth residents are able to exercise their right to vote and that no one is disenfranchised as a result of the Election Act 2022. We call on the Government to reconsider the provisions of this legislation and to take steps to encourage engagement with democracy.

The Council therefore resolves:

Therefore, this Council calls for officers to prepare a report for consideration at the Audit and Governance Committee concerning the impact of the Election Act 2022 on Plymouth's elections in May 2023. This report should set out:

1. An assessment of the impact of the Election Act 2022 on Plymouth residents and its election officials.
2. All actions being taken by the Council, the Returning Officer and the elections team to support people at future elections, including measures to provide information and support to those who may struggle to meet the new identification requirements.
3. Any additional resources and costs thereof that may be required to ensure that all Plymouth residents are able to exercise their right to vote in future local elections.
4. This report should be presented at the September 2023 meeting of Audit and Governance Committee, to allow sufficient time for the Council to take any necessary actions ahead of the May 2024 elections.

Proposer: Cllr Lauren McLay
Seconder: Cllr George Wheeler