

MOTION ON NOTICE

City Council September 2018



Conservative Attempts to Stop People Voting

“Plymouth City Council supports The Salvation Army, AGE UK, The Royal National Institute of Blind People, Stonewall, The National Union of Students and numerous other groups in opposing the Conservative Government’s plans to make voting in British elections more difficult by requiring photo identification at Polling Stations.

In 2017, only 28 allegations of identity fraud were made out of nearly 45 million votes being cast, representing a potential problem of 0.00006222% if all the allegations were true. To date only one successful prosecution has been seen. As introducing these plans for General Elections is estimated at around £20 million, we believe £700,000 to address each allegation is somewhat excessive. This appears to be a calculated Conservative attempt to put barriers in the way of ordinary people wanting to vote for the representatives of their choice. Around 3.5 million adults (7.5% of voters) have no photo identification and 11 million have no passport or driving licence.

In pilots of the plans in five Council areas, 350 voters were turned away because they did not have sufficient identification documentation. There is no way of knowing how many others didn’t bother to go because they knew or assumed they would not be allowed to vote.

Voting in elections should be actively encouraged, not made more difficult as the Conservative Government wants, particularly for those from minorities and poorer parts of the UK.

To this end we ask the Audit and Governance Committee to examine what these plans mean for Plymouth voters, and what steps can be taken to increase, not decrease, the number of voters taking part in our elections.”

Proposed by Councillor Stevens

Seconded by Councillor Wheeler