



**Information Governance Team**

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24 May 2023

Dear Sir/Madam

**Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)**

**Request ID: FOI518263688**

Thank you for your request for information relating to May 4 Local Elections Voter ID.

You have requested the following information:

**I am writing to request that under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) you provide details of any measures in place during the May 4 Local Elections in relation to the new requirements under the Election Act 2022 to present photo ID at polling stations.**

**1. Whether the authority had personnel stationed either outside or inside polling stations on 4th May 2023 for the purpose of reminding potential voters that they need to have valid photo ID, ii) whether any potential voters who decided not to continue to enter the polling station as a result of this interaction were counted towards the total number of voters refused a ballot/turned away due to the new Voter ID regulations and iii) whether this figure will be published?**

We can confirm that Julie Newman Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer for Coventry City Council under Section 35 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 is a separate to her appointment as Chief Legal Officer and, although appointed by the council, the Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer's responsibilities and duties are personal. As such an Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer does not carry out the duties on behalf of the local authority but in their own personal capacity.

A list of public bodies and local authorities that are subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act is included in Schedule 1 to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 which can be

viewed here:

<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. It follows that the Returning Officer, Electoral Registration Officer or any other person appointed under the Act are not subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

In the interests of transparency, we are able to provide the following response to your query.

Whether the authority had personnel stationed either outside or inside polling stations on 4th May 2023 for the purpose of reminding potential voters that they need to have valid photo ID, ii) whether any potential voters who decided not to continue to enter the polling station as a result of this interaction were counted towards the total number of voters refused a ballot/turned away due to the new Voter ID regulations and iii) whether this figure will be published?

In the stations with an electorate of more than 1,000 we did include staff to act as 'Meet and Greet' this member of staff was to be situated inside the polling station near the door. The purpose of that member of staff was to remind people of the need to have photographic ID (it was not their role to review the photographic ID or request to see it). They were there to answer any questions which arose from the reminder and also provide support to electors with disabilities in enabling them to exercise their vote.

Anyone who did not proceed at this point was not recorded and therefore there is no figure to publish and are advising you as per Section 1(1) of the Act.

I can confirm that we have published the figures which we were required to record by the Electoral Commission on our website:

<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/elections-voting/coventry-city-council-elections-4-may-2023/9>

The supply of information in response to a FOI/EIR request does not confer an automatic right to re-use the information. You can use any information supplied for the purposes of private study and non-commercial research without requiring further permission. Similarly, information supplied can also be re-used for the purposes of news reporting. An exception to this is photographs. Please contact us if you wish to use the information for any other purpose.

For information, we publish a variety of information such as: [FOI/EIR Disclosure Log](#), [Publication Scheme](#), [Facts about Coventry](#) and [Open Data](#) that you may find of useful if you are looking for information in the future.

If you are unhappy with the handling of your request, you can ask us to review our response. Requests for reviews should be submitted within 40 days of the date of receipt of our response to your original request – email: [infogov@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:infogov@coventry.gov.uk)

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our review, you can write to the Information Commissioner, who can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or email [icocasework@ico.org.uk](mailto:icocasework@ico.org.uk).

Please remember to quote the reference number above in your response.

Yours faithfully

**Information Governance**