

Vote of Confidence?

02/06/2011

A response from Wandsworth Council:

Recommendation 1

The Government needs to change the Electoral law to ensure that people are not disenfranchised because of queues. In the meantime the Cabinet Office should come forward with guidance as to how Returning Officers can best prepare polling staff to deal with any late surge of voters.

First sentence recommendation sounds good in principle but the practicalities of achieving this to enfranchise people in queues could encounter problems in administering. We agree to recommendation in the second sentence.

Recommendation 2

Returning Officers should have three separate strands of election work to support the effective management of delivery of postal votes, running the poll and running the count.

We agree to this recommendation.

Recommendation 3

All boroughs should conduct surveys of hourly voting totals to support analysis of voting trends.

We agree to this recommendation.

Recommendation 4

Staffing resources for polling stations should be deployed in a more effective fashion reflecting data on hourly voter flows through the polling station.

This recommendation sounds good in theory but because of the peaks and troughs in the working day it may be difficult to organise.

Recommendation 5

Returning Officers need to provide appropriate training and robust capacity planning to ensure polling staff and managers can respond effectively to the needs of the electorate, including provision for changing staffing numbers in the instance of voter surges.

We agree to this recommendation.

Recommendation 6

London Elects should set out in its response to this report the key strands of its training strategy for polling staff. In particular, how it will support election

staff to ensure that there is a consistent approach to contingency planning (including dealing with a late surge in voters) for the 2012 GLA elections.

We agree to this recommendation.

Recommendation 7

London Elects should set out in its response to this report the key strands of its communication strategy. This should include how members of the public will be informed what the ballot paper will look like when they come to vote, how it will communicate with Londoners' whose first language is not English and how it will highlight the time of the polls closing.

We agree to this recommendation.

Recommendation 8

London Elects should set out in its response to this report the advice it will give to polling staff as to how to deal with groups that gather close to polling stations, to ensure that there is no possible intimidation of people as they make their way to vote.

We agree to this recommendation.

Recommendation 9

The Cabinet Office should conduct a review into the provision of postal votes to ensure that they are being used for the purposes intended.

We do not understand the rationale behind this question as the current legislation enables postal votes on demand.

Recommendation 10

The Government should, at the earliest opportunity, bring forward legislation to repeal that provision in the CRAG Act that requires Returning Officers to begin counting within four hours of the close of the poll.