

Council

19 July 2021

Motion B	Proposed by: Councillor Willingham	Seconded by: Councillor Clark
	<p>This council notes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">* The UK Government revealed in the Queen’s speech, on 11 May, its intention to introduce laws requiring all eligible voters to show voter ID in all future elections. * The UK Government claims this is to tackle electoral fraud. <p>This council further notes, however, that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">* The Electoral Commission has stated that there is “no evidence of large-scale electoral fraud.” * That between 2017 and 2019, there were just 6 convictions and 12 police cautions relating to electoral fraud – the majority of which did not relate to ID fraud. * That nearly 10 per cent of eligible voters do not have the necessary identification at present, and that previous trials of voter ID saw many hundreds of voters disenfranchised – including 750 people during the 2019 trials. <p>This council believes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">* The proposed legislation is a solution to a problem that doesn’t exist and only serves to make it harder for some sections of Britain’s electorate to vote – most notably minority groups and young voters. * The greater priority should be encouraging voter registrations within those groups that are typically under-represented during elections. <p>This council therefore resolves to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">* Write to the Prime Minister and the Minister for the Cabinet Office outlining this Council’s firm belief that the voter ID reforms proposed in the Queen’s speech are an illiberal barrier to democratic participation. * Work with scrutiny to investigate ways the Borough Council can encourage more people to participate in future elections in Cheltenham – with a particular focus on the next Borough Council elections in 2022 and 2024.	