

## FOI 202500470457 – Annex

### 1. Excerpt from minute of meeting – Scottish Parliament Political Parties Panel – 12 November 2024.

Remainder of document out of scope of request.

4.1. [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)] provided an update the Commission's voter ID report at the UK Parliament general election (UKPGE). The research shows there was 90% awareness of requirement to show ID in Scotland, however The Commission had concerns about uptake and awareness of Voter Authority Certificates and found that many certificates issued were not used. 0.09% of those who tried to vote at a polling station in Scotland were not able to because of the ID requirement. However, a majority of those turned away came back with accepted ID. The Commission also carried out public opinion research to understand why certain individuals did not vote in Scotland, around 5% of whom said this was due to the Voter ID requirement.

### 2. Excerpt from briefing pack for Minister for Parliamentary Business – Scottish Elections (Representation and Reform) Bill – 16 December 2024

Remainder of document out of scope of request.

#### Voter ID – Overview

- The Scottish Government has consistently opposed the introduction of voter ID as a barrier to participation.
- While the number of people turned away at the General Election for lack of ID was small, anyone losing a vote is of concern.
- It is also not known how many people did not vote due to not having relevant ID, or not knowing if they did. An Electoral Commission public opinion survey found that 4% of people who said they did not vote at the general election gave an unprompted reason related to the ID rules (10% when given a list of reasons).

While voter ID was required for English local elections in May 2023 and 2024, the only experience of voter ID in Scotland prior to 4 July 2024 was for the Rutherglen and Hamilton West by-election on 5 October 2023.

#### Recent Communications

- On 12 November the Minister for Parliamentary Business wrote to the new UK Minister responsible for elections, Rushanara Ali MP, setting out the Scottish Government's opposition to voter ID and raising concerns about the impact for 2026 Scottish Parliamentary elections.
- On 19 September the Minister for Parliamentary Business wrote to the Electoral Commission asking what action it will take to ensure that voters at the Scottish

Parliament Election 2026 are not put off by the misapprehension that they need voter ID for the Scottish parliamentary elections. The EC have confirmed they will develop tailored communication materials.

### Voter ID – new UK Government

- The new UK Government has undertaken to improve how voter ID works by addressing inconsistencies and ensuring that legitimate electors are able to vote.
- UK Minister Rushanara Ali MP told Parliament on [13 November](#):  
“We are carefully and thoroughly reviewing the voter ID rules and evaluating how they impacted citizens during the general election. Work is already under way on that evaluation, using data gathered at polling stations, along with public opinion surveys and qualitative research involving electors and the electoral sector.”; and  
“As part of our commitment to expand the voter franchise to 16 and 17-year-olds, we will need to consider whether the identification requirements may be more difficult for younger voters to meet...We look forward to understanding better what is different about the needs of that younger demographic, in terms of patterns of ownership of identity documents. We are considering that as part of our work towards expanding the franchise.”
- In October 2024 the UK Government laid a statutory instrument in Parliament to add the HM Armed Forces Veteran Card to the list of photographic identifications accepted in polling stations as voter ID.

### Voter ID – background

The Elections Act 2022 introduced photographic voter ID requirements for UK Parliamentary General Elections, local elections in England and Police and Crime Commissioner elections in England and Wales. A range of existing forms of ID are valid, and voters without ID can apply for a Voter Authority Certificate free of charge.

In bringing forward the change the then UK Government cited experience in Northern Ireland, where voters have been required to produce personal identification before voting in polling stations since 1985, with photographic identification being required since 2003.

[Further references in this document refer to the content of these publicly available documents:

Electoral Commission report on voter ID at the 2024 UK general election:

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/research-reports-and-data/our-reports-and-data-past-elections-and-referendums/voter-id-2024-uk-general-election>

Legislative Consent Memorandum – Elections Bill – September 2021 - <https://www.parliament.scot/-/media/files/legislation/bills/lcms/elections-bill/splcms068.pdf> ]

### **3. Excerpt from SOLACE briefing document - 29 November 2024**

Remainder of document out of scope of request.

2.4 - ROs and their teams will be well aware of the challenges that were faced during the UK General Election... A short notice election to a very tight timescale would always have presented a challenge but having a date of Election in the school holidays exacerbated these problems. The new Regulations around Voter ID, the UK Government portal for registration and new rules on postal vote handling added to the challenge.

### **4. Excerpt from briefing for Permanent Secretary, meeting with Electoral Commission – 14 November 2024**

Remainder of document out of scope of request.

### **Experience of the 2024 UK Parliamentary General Election and challenges ahead of the Scottish Government and local government elections in 2026 and 2027**

- The EC published a report on the administration and running of the UK Parliamentary General election (UKGE) on 13 November. This found that the UKGE was well run. The EC found on voter ID, that improvements are needed to make it easier for those who do not have photo ID to vote.
- On voter ID, which was used for the first time at the UK election, the Minister for Parliamentary Business wrote to Mr Rangarajan asking what action the EC will take to ensure that voters at the Scottish Parliament Election 2026 are not put off by the misapprehension that they need voter ID for the Scottish parliamentary elections. The EC confirmed they will develop tailored communication materials.
- The Minister for Parliamentary Business on 12 November wrote to the new UK Minister responsible for elections, Rushanara Ali MP, setting out the Scottish Government's opposition to voter ID and raising concerns about the impact for 2026 Scottish Parliamentary elections

[Further references in this document refer to the content of this publicly available document:

Electoral Commission report on voter ID at the 2024 UK general election:

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/research-reports-and-data/our-reports-and-data-past-elections-and-referendums/voter-id-2024-uk-general-election>]

## **5. Excerpt from briefing for Minister for Parliamentary Business – Inter-Ministerial Group on Elections – 12 February 2025**

Remainder of document out of scope of request.

**Voter ID:** you wrote to Rushanara Ali on 12 November to reiterate your concerns around voter ID. The letter highlighted the Electoral Commission's separate report on voter ID at the general election, which found that that 4% of people who said they did not vote stated that their decision was linked to the ID requirement.

## **6. Excerpts from email chain – Voter ID news release – November 2024**

Remainder of emails out of scope of request.

**From:** [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)]

**Sent:** 15 November 2024 17:10

**To:** [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)] Minister for Parliamentary Business 2024

[MinisterPB@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterPB@gov.scot)

**Cc:** [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)]; [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)]; [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)]

[REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)] [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)] [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)] [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)] ; Luke Mcbratney

[Luke.Mcbratney@gov.scot](mailto:Luke.Mcbratney@gov.scot) ; [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)] ; [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)];

[REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)] ; [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)] [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)] ;

[REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)] ; [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)] [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)] ;

[REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)] ; [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)] [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)] ;

Communications Finance and Local Government

[CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot](mailto:CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot) ; Spads Admin

[Spads\\_Admin@gov.scot](mailto:Spads_Admin@gov.scot) [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)] [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)]

[REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)] ; [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)] [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)] ;

[REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)]

**Subject:** Re: For clearance: Voter ID news release

Hi

I am afraid that I am away from my laptop for the evening but I have pasted some lines below. Apologies if the formatting is awry! I can check in later tonight / in the morning if more is needed?

Thanks

[REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)]

**Experience of the 2024 UK Parliamentary General Election and challenges ahead of the Scottish Government and local government elections in 2026 and 2027**



Good afternoon Mr Hepburn / PO,  
As requested, please find a news release to publicise the Voter ID letter. We will send this to journalists today, under embargo till Sunday. We will then publish both the release and letter on Sunday.

Grateful for your consideration.

Many thanks

[REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)]

[REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)]

The Scottish Government, St Andrew's House, Edinburgh

Mobile: [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)] | Portfolio Media inquiries: [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)]

[www.gov.scot/news](http://www.gov.scot/news)

## **Call to scrap UK voter ID requirements Policy 'creates barriers' in democratic process.**

Requirements for voter identification brought in by the previous UK Government should be scrapped, the Minister for Parliamentary Business has said.

Jamie Hepburn has highlighted evidence from the Electoral Commission that the new requirements kept potential voters away from the ballot box at the recent UK Parliamentary election, and fears misunderstanding around the need for ID could have a similar impact in Scotland.

In a letter to Rushanara Ali MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Housing, Communities and Local Government), he asked for the UK Government to consider scrapping voter ID requirements.

### **Background**

Please find the letter attached as a PDF. [available online at [Voter ID: Letter to UK Government - gov.scot](#)]

## **7. Excerpt from minute of meeting between Minister for Parliamentary Business and the Electoral Management Board for Scotland – 28 Nov 2024**

Remainder of document out of scope of request.

There was some discussion of issues applying across the UK. This included divergence between certain rules and approaches to elections held by the different UK administrations... There was also discussion of the challenges and negative impacts of the Voter ID requirements in UK Parliament elections.

## **8. Internal email highlighting Constitution Unit public event - 24 February 2025**

**From:** [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)]

**Sent:** 24 February 2025 10:01

**To:** EFD : Elections <DLCEABEFDE@gov.scot

**Cc:** [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)]

**Subject:** FW: How have voter ID requirements affected British elections?

Hi all,

Interesting reading in the article below, in case you've not seen. Have asked if the Scottish Election Study has gathered similar Scotland-level data to the below and will let you know when I hear back.

Best wishes,

[REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)]

**From:** The Constitution Unit Blog <[donotreply@wordpress.com](mailto:donotreply@wordpress.com)

**Sent:** 21 February 2025 06:01

**To:** [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)]

**Subject:** How have voter ID requirements affected British elections?

The July general election was the first UK-wide vote since new voter ID rules were introduced by the Elections Act 2022. Ralph Scott and Edward Fieldhouse examine recent data to show what voter groups are without an accepted form of voter ID and how the...

[Read on blog](#) or [Reader](#)

[The Constitution Unit Blog](#)

[Read on blog](#) or [Reader](#)

### [How have voter ID requirements affected British elections?](#)

By **The Constitution Unit** on February 21, 2025

*The July general election was the first UK-wide vote since new voter ID rules were introduced by the Elections Act 2022. **Ralph Scott** and **Edward Fieldhouse** examine recent data to show what voter groups are without an accepted form of voter ID and how the new rules affected turnout. They argue that the list of permissible forms of ID should be expanded and that more needs to be done to educate electors about the rules.*

[Continue reading](#)

**9. Internal email highlighting Institute for Government public event - 15 April 2025**

**From:** [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)]

**Sent:** 15 April 2025 09:08

**To:** [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)]

**Subject:** FW: Register now: How does the electoral system need to change before 2029?

Hi[REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)], hope you're well – saw the below and remembered you'd said you were working on elections, hopefully it's useful.

**From:** IfG events <[events@instituteforgovernment.org.uk](mailto:events@instituteforgovernment.org.uk)>

**Sent:** 15 April 2025 09:05

**To:** [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)]

**Subject:** Register now: How does the electoral system need to change before 2029?

IfG EVENTS

INSTITUTE  
FOR  
GOVERNMENT

## How does the electoral system need to change before 2029?

Monday 19 May | 13:00–14:00



Lewis Baston



Matteo Bergamini



Professor Jane Green



John Pullinger



Dr Hannah White



Dear [REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)],

Labour's 2024 manifesto set out a number of big changes aimed at strengthening democratic participation, such as improving voter registration, addressing inconsistencies in voter ID rules and extending the franchise to 16 and 17 year olds.

Twenty-five years after the introduction of the [UK's political finance regime](#), and a billion pounds of donations later, the manifesto also committed to "strengthening the rules around donations to political parties" – something that has become more pressing as high-profile actors flirt with introducing significant sums of money into the UK's party funding system.

So what difference would these proposed changes make to the UK electoral system? Can they reignite voter confidence and engagement in the democratic process? What are the lessons learnt from the 2024 general election about turnout, the voter ID requirement, and candidate abuse and intimidation? And what should the government prioritise to [ensure the electoral system is ready](#) for the next general election in 2029 and able to address growing threats?

To reflect on last summer's election and to discuss how the government's plans will affect the way elections work, we are joined by an expert panel:

- **Lewis Baston**, Political journalist and author
- **Matteo Bergamini**, Founder and CEO of Shout Out UK
- **Professor Jane Green**, Co-Director of the British Election Study
- **John Pullinger**, Chair of the Electoral Commission

The event will be chaired by [Dr Hannah White](#), Director and CEO of the Institute for Government.

We'd be delighted if you could join us on **Monday 19 May 2025**, from **13:00 to 14:00**, in person at the [Institute for Government](#) or online. Please register via the button below. If this event isn't quite right for you, please forward to a colleague who may be interested.

[Register now](#)

[Register now](#)

Kind regards,  
[IfG Events Team](#)

[Click here to decline](#)

[here to decline](#)

[Click](#)

## 10. Letter from Minister for Parliamentary Business to Vijay Rangarajan

Minister for Parliamentary Business  
Ministear airson Ghnothaichean Pàrlamaideach  
Jamie Hepburn MSP/BPA



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

T : 0300 244 4000  
E : scottish.ministers@gov.scot

[REDACTED Section 38(1)(b)]

Our Reference: 202400431148

Your Reference: Letter from Vijay Rangarajan to Minister for Parliamentary Business CCM:0550051

19 September 2024

Dear Vijay,

Thank you for your letter of 9 September 2024 and for providing an advance copy of the Electoral Commission's report on the implementation of voter ID at the 2024 UK Parliamentary general election. As you know, the Scottish Government opposed the voter ID requirements brought in by the last UK Government. We were concerned that it would result in some people losing their vote and your report confirms that this does indeed seem to have been the case.

I was also concerned to note the finding from your public opinion research that around 4% of people who said they did not vote at the UK general election stated that their decision was related to the voter ID requirement. This confirms that it has put some people off voting. Looking ahead to the Scottish Parliament election in May 2026, there must be concern that some people may think that ID will be required to vote in that election. This could act as a barrier to some exercising their right to vote. Consequently, I would be interested to hear about your plans to address this issue as part of your public awareness campaign in the run up to the election.

I look forward to hearing from you on this point in due course and would be happy to meet to discuss both it and other matters of interest further.

JAMIE HEPBURN

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)

Tha Ministearanna h-Alba, an luchd-comhairleachaidh sònraichte agus Rùnaire Maireannach fo chumhachan Achd Coiteachaidh (Alba) 2016. Faicibh [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)

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[www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)



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