



Our Ref: MFC/1307  
Your Ref: Legal/CC/JG

David Isaac CBE  
Equality and Human Rights Commission  
Fleetbank House  
2-6 Salisbury Square  
London  
EC4Y 8JX

16 May 2018

Dear David

Thank you for your letter of 14 May and thoughtful response to my explanation of the way in which Cabinet Office has worked with local authorities, the Electoral Commission and the Association of Electoral Administrators to implement and test voter ID at the local authority elections on 3 May.

As you acknowledge I, of course, place great importance on promoting equality and diversity. I suggest it would be timely for us to discuss how we continue to develop the inclusivity in democratic processes which is so important, while underpinning confidence in our democratic processes and the security and resilience of the electoral system.

Electoral fraud is not a victimless crime. The impact of electoral fraud on voters can be significant and takes away their right to vote as they want, whether through intimidation, bribery or by impersonating someone and casting their vote. There is undeniable potential for people to cast other people's votes unless their identity is checked at the polling station. As the Electoral Commission has said: "The majority of people in communities affected by electoral fraud are victims rather than offenders. The people who are likely to be the victims of electoral fraud can be described as vulnerable in a number of different ways".

Of course, our shared concerns should and must extend beyond voter ID and it would be helpful to update you on our analysis of the responses to our Call for Evidence on Accessibility to Elections. That process will enhance our shared understanding of the barriers disabled people face in registering to vote and voting, and how these can be addressed. A report of key findings and recommendations will be produced in partnership with the Cabinet Office chaired Accessibility of Elections Working Group.

I would look forward to hosting you at the Cabinet Office. I understand your office will be in touch shortly.

Yours sincerely,

**Chloe Smith MP**