

Research Briefing

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By Mark Sandford

Directly-elected mayors



Summary

- 1 Elected mayors: legal provisions
- 2 Referendums
- 3 Electing a mayor
- 4 Other types of mayor

Appendix 1: List of elected local authority mayors

Appendix 2: List of elected metro-mayors

Appendix 3: Mayoral referendum results

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Contents

Summary	4
1 Elected mayors: legal provisions	5
1.1 Introduction of elected mayors	5
1.2 Governance options: England	6
1.3 Governance options: Wales	7
2 Referendums	8
2.1 Mandated referendums	8
2.2 Petitions	8
2.3 Referendum timings	9
2.4 Referendum procedures	10
3 Electing a mayor	11
3.1 Election timings	11
3.2 Mayoral functions	11
3.3 Electoral systems	12
3.4 Abolishing local authority mayors	13
3.5 County mayors	13
4 Other types of mayor	15
4.1 ‘Metro-mayors’	15
4.2 Mayor of London	15
4.3 Lord mayors and town mayors	16
Appendix 1: List of elected local authority mayors	17
Appendix 2: List of elected metro-mayors	18
Appendix 3: Mayoral referendum results	19

Summary

Directly-elected mayors in England and Wales were introduced by the [Local Government Act 2000](#). A directly elected mayor and a cabinet is one of three different ‘political management arrangements’ available to local authorities: the others are a leader and cabinet, and the traditional ‘committee system’, where decisions are made by policy committees and approved by full council. Elected mayors may be introduced in England and Wales, but there is no legislative power to do so in Scotland or Northern Ireland.

Initially, an elected mayor could only be created following a referendum in favour in the relevant local authority. Since 2007, local authorities have also been able to create an elected mayor via a resolution in full council.

The majority of referendums on creating elected mayors have resulted in ‘no’ votes. As of May 2024, 13 local authorities have elected mayors (see Appendix 1). This figure does not include the Mayor of London and ‘metro-mayors’ elsewhere in England, which are created via separate legislation and have different powers from those of local authority mayors.

Elected mayors do not have powers over and above those available to non-mayoral local authorities.

Information on the Mayor of London is available in the briefing paper [The Greater London Authority](#). Information on the directly-elected ‘metro-mayors’ elsewhere in England is available in the briefing paper [Devolution to local government in England](#).

1 Elected mayors: legal provisions

1.1 Introduction of elected mayors

The power to create directly-elected mayors of local authorities was introduced into England and Wales by the [Local Government Act 2000](#). Adjustments were made by the [Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007](#) and the [Localism Act 2011](#). A directly elected mayor and a cabinet is one of three different ‘political management arrangements’ available to local authorities: the others are a leader and cabinet, and the ‘committee system’, where decisions are made by policy committees and approved by full council.¹

The rationale for elected mayors – and for separate executives in local authorities more generally – was to make it clearer to councillors and public alike where the responsibility for a particular decision lay. Both the 1997-2010 Labour government, and the then Conservative opposition, favoured increasing the numbers of directly-elected mayors, although more local referendums have rejected the idea than have favoured it. The Labour Government expressed disappointment in the 2006 local government white paper, *Strong and Prosperous Communities*, that only 12 local authorities had by then adopted the “strongest leadership model, an elected mayor”.²

Local authority mayors do not have additional powers over and above those available in authorities using the leader and cabinet model or the committee system.

Members of Parliament may become local authority mayors and retain their position as an MP, though none have yet chosen to do so. Of the current local authority mayors, Sir Peter Soulsby, mayor of Leicester, has previously been an MP. Ian Stewart, mayor of Salford from 2012 to 2016, had also previously been an MP.

Local authorities in Scotland and Northern Ireland are not covered by these provisions, and have no power to introduce a directly-elected mayor. Similarly, these provisions do not apply to parish and town councils in England or community councils in Wales.

¹ Guidance on the issues that local councils may wish to take into account when considering a change in governance arrangements is available from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny’s publication [Rethinking Governance for the 20s](#).

² DCLG, [Strong and Prosperous Communities](#), 2006, p. 55

The Mayor of London and ‘metro-mayors’ elsewhere in England have been established via separate legislation: the [Greater London Authority Act 1999](#) and the [Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016](#) respectively. They have different powers from those of local authority mayors.

1.2 Governance options: England

In England, local authorities have three options for political management arrangements. These are a mayor and cabinet, a leader and cabinet, or the committee system. The [Local Government Act 2000](#) also introduced a ‘mayor and council manager’ system, but this was abolished in 2007.³

Authorities may hold a referendum on switching to any of these systems from their existing system. Prior to 2007, a referendum was required in order to establish a directly-elected mayor. This may now be done via a resolution in full council.⁴ Once a local authority has switched systems, certain amounts of time must elapse before a further change can be made (see section 3.2 below).

Before 2011, the committee system was only available to authorities with a population under 85,000. The Localism Act 2011 removed this prohibition, and also permitted a referendum to be held on switching to a committee system.⁵ In the wake of this change, a number of authorities switched back from the leader and cabinet system to the committee system.⁶

Local authorities operating a leader and cabinet or mayoral system are required to establish at least one overview and scrutiny committee to hold the executive to account (see the Library briefing paper on [Overview and scrutiny in local government](#)). Local authorities operating the committee system are not required to do this, though many do. Similarly, local authorities operating the committee system are not required to elect an official ‘leader’, though many do so.

³ See [Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007](#), schedule 3. The only authority that adopted this system was Stoke-on-Trent. When the system was abolished, Stoke held a further referendum, in which the electorate opted for a leader and cabinet instead of a mayor and cabinet system.

⁴ This change was introduced in part 3 of the [Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007](#).

⁵ Liverpool and Leicester city councils introduced a mayoralty by resolution in full council. Four authorities have switched to a committee system following a referendum; see Appendix 3

⁶ Some incomplete data showing which councils operate which system is provided by the [Open Council Data website](#): see the sheet ‘Latest council totals’.

1.3

Governance options: Wales

In Wales, the [Local Government \(Wales\) Measure 2011](#) adjusted the provisions of the 2000 Act to provide that:

- The only permissible forms of executive are a leader and cabinet or a mayor and cabinet (i.e. the committee system may not be used);
- A referendum is required either to establish or abolish an elected mayor (in practice, together with the previous provision, this means that governance arrangements in Wales can only be modified via a referendum);
- Holding a referendum on proposed new executive arrangements is subject to their approval by the Welsh Ministers;
- The length of time that must elapse between referendums is five years, whereas it is ten years in certain scenarios in England (see section 2.3 below).

2 Referendums

A local authority may choose to hold a referendum on whether to establish a directly-elected mayor, or on changing a council's form of governance to a leader and cabinet system or the committee system. It may also be directed to do so by the Government, or be obliged to do so if a valid petition is submitted. The result of a mayoral referendum is binding on a local authority.

2.1 Mandated referendums

In 2002 the then Government required Southwark Council to hold a referendum on a directly-elected mayoralty. The mayoralty was rejected.

In 2012 the then Government required ten city councils outside London to hold a referendum on a directly-elected mayoralty. This had been a Conservative Party manifesto commitment at the 2010 general election, and it became a commitment in the Coalition's programme for government.⁷ The city councils covered were: Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield, Bradford, Manchester, Bristol, Wakefield, Coventry, Nottingham and Newcastle-upon-Tyne.⁸ Liverpool and Leicester, which would have been covered by the Government's requirement, had already resolved to adopt a mayoralty (in December 2010 and February 2012 respectively). The referendums took place on 3 May 2012. All but one (Bristol) rejected a mayoralty.

2.2 Petitions

Local electorates have had the right to petition for the creation of a directly-elected mayor since the passing of the Local Government Act 2000.⁹ Since the passage of the [Localism Act 2011](#), a petition may also be presented to introduce a leader and cabinet system or committee system. As of 2022, 18 referendums have been held as a result of petitions (see Appendix 3).

⁷ Conservative Party, [Invitation to join the Government of Britain](#), 2010, p.76; [The Coalition: our programme for government](#), 2010, p.12

⁸ See DCLG, [Localism Bill: creating executive mayors in the 12 largest English cities: impact assessment](#), January 2011, p.8. The city of Sunderland was not included, despite having a larger population than Newcastle-upon-Tyne, because it had held a referendum in October 2001 which had rejected a mayoral system.

⁹ See the [Local Authorities \(Referendums\) \(Petitions\) \(England\) Regulations 2011](#) (SI 2011/2914).

The minimum threshold for a valid petition is 5% of local government electors registered in the local authority's area. Each local authority must publish its "verification number", i.e. the number of electors which represents 5% of registered electors, each year.¹⁰ The formalities of a petition, e.g. the requirement for each sheet to contain the name of the local authority and the constitutional change which is being sought, are also set out in regulations.¹¹

The signatures on the petition must be collected over a maximum period of 12 months. Each signature must be dated; any signature which is over 12 months old is not counted when determining whether the verification number has been met.

Once a petition has been validated, the referendum must be held 'no later than' the next 'ordinary day of election'. This is the first Thursday in May each year (irrespective of the electoral cycle in the local authority in question).¹² If this is less than four months away, the referendum must be held a maximum of six months after the date on which the petition is received. A local authority is free to choose to hold the referendum earlier than this if it so chooses.¹³

The legislation is not clear on whether an electronic petition to create a mayor would be valid. Regulation 10 of the [Local Authorities \(Referendums\) \(Petitions\) \(England\) Regulations 2011](#) makes references to 'each sheet' of the petition, but it does not contain any specific provisions about electronic petitions. It is for the local authority in question to decide whether a petition meets the legal requirements for validity.

The required petition statement is set out in a schedule to the regulations. However, it is advisable for would-be petitioners to seek advice from the local authority on the petitioning process, including such matters as the precise wording to be used.

2.3 Referendum timings

Where a local authority resolves to hold a referendum, there are no statutory provisions regarding the timing of the referendum, and no requirement for it to coincide or not to coincide with elections.¹⁴ There are timing provisions for referendums triggered by petitions (see section 2.2 above).

A local authority which has changed its governance arrangements as a result of a referendum can only make a further change following a further

¹⁰ Ibid., regulation 4

¹¹ Ibid., regulation 10

¹² The regulations use the definition of 'ordinary day of election' found in section 37 of the Representation of the People Act 1983.

¹³ See paragraph 16 of the [Local Authorities \(Referendums\) \(Petitions\) \(England\) Regulations 2011](#) (SI 2011/2914).

¹⁴ See [section 9MA of the Local Government Act 2000](#) (inserted by the Localism Act 2011)

referendum.¹⁵ Where a local authority has held a referendum on its governance arrangements, a further referendum may not be held for ten years (five years in Wales). Conversely, where a mayor has been created by resolution of the council, five years must elapse before the council may resolve to abolish the mayor.¹⁶ However, there is no time limit on holding a referendum (whether initiated by the council or by a petition) to reverse a decision made by a resolution.

The [Localism Act 2011](#) prevented a local authority from holding a second referendum if it had been required by the Government to hold a referendum and then voted for an elected mayor. This provision was removed by section 20 of the [Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016](#). Bristol City Council was the only authority affected by this provision.

2.4

Referendum procedures

Section 9MA of the [Local Government Act 2000](#) provides that, where a referendum is proposed, the authority must draw up ‘proposals for the change’, which must include a timetable for implementation; transitional arrangements; and if the proposed change is to an executive structure, what responsibilities will be exercised by the executive.

The local authority must publish a notice of the referendum at least 56 days before it is held. This must include a description of the proposals for change and how to obtain copies of them; the date of the referendum; the question to be asked; the expenses limit applying to campaigners; and whether the referendum will be combined with any other poll.¹⁷

If the notice is published more than 74 days before the referendum, a second notice containing the same information must be published between 28 and 55 days in advance of the referendum.¹⁸

The required wording of a referendum is set out in schedule 1 of the [Local Authorities \(Conduct of Referendums\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#).

¹⁵ Local Government Act 2000 s9M (2) (b), inserted by schedule 2 of the Localism Act 2011

¹⁶ Local Government Act 2000 s9KC (4), inserted by schedule 2 of the Localism Act 2011

¹⁷ See regulation 4 of the [Local Authorities \(Conduct of Referendums\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#)

¹⁸ Ibid., regulation 4 (4-5)

3 Electing a mayor

3.1 Election timings

The first election of a directly-elected mayor may take place separately from elections to the council, either in May or October. The second election of the mayor must take place alongside a council election. The standard length of a mayoral term is four years: the mayor's first term may be shortened (to a minimum of 23 months) or lengthened (to a maximum of 67 months) to achieve this.¹⁹

If an elected mayor resigns or dies, a by-election must be held within 35 days of the resignation or death.²⁰ The successful candidate in that by-election would then serve the remaining term of office of the mayor who had resigned, rather than a four-year term of their own.²¹ However, when a vacancy occurs in the office of mayor less than six months before a scheduled election, the office remains vacant until that election.²² For instance, in Liverpool City Council, the former mayor Joe Anderson stepped aside from his office in early December 2020, following his arrest on charges of bribery and witness intimidation. The then deputy mayor, Wendy Simon, acted as mayor until the end of Mr Anderson's term of office in May 2021.

3.2 Mayoral functions

In an authority with a directly-elected mayor, certain functions cannot be exercised by the mayor. These are set out in the [Local Authorities \(Functions and Responsibilities\) \(England\) Regulations 2000](#). Most, but not all, of the functions that cannot be exercised by a mayor relate to planning, licensing or elections. Those functions remain the responsibility of the full council. The 2000 regulations also list functions that cannot be the sole responsibility of the mayor and those that may, but need not, be the responsibility of the mayor.

A directly-elected mayor is legally required to appoint a deputy mayor, and this person must be one of the members of the cabinet.²³ The deputy mayor is

¹⁹ See the [Local Authorities \(Elected Mayors\)\(Elections, Terms of Office and Casual Vacancies\)\(England\) Regulations 2012](#) (SI 2012/336), regulations 3 and 4

²⁰ As above, regulation 9

²¹ As above, regulation 11

²² As above, regulation 9 (2) (b)

²³ See [Localism Act 2011 schedule 2](#)

required to step in if the elected mayor becomes unable to act, or the office of mayor becomes vacant (for instance, through the elected mayor resigning or dying).²⁴

Directly-elected mayors do not automatically obtain additional statutory functions over and above those available to local authorities without a directly-elected mayor. However, the Government has agreed a small number of ‘county devolution deals’ with local authorities, in which new directly-elected mayors will take on some powers that are currently available to ‘metro-mayors’ (see sections 3.5 and 4.1 below).

3.3 Electoral systems

Up to 2021, local authority mayors were elected using the Supplementary Vote system. This requires electors to vote using two crosses: one in a column for the voter’s first choice candidate, and one in a column for the second choice candidate. The first choices are counted, and the two candidates with the most first-choice votes go through to a run-off. Then, the second choice votes for other candidates are examined, and where those voters have voted for one of the top two as their second choice, their vote is reallocated. The candidate with the largest number of votes following this process is the winner.

A candidate who finished second after the first-choice votes are counted could, therefore, attract enough ‘transfer’ votes to overhaul the candidate who finished first after the first round of voting.

If one candidate attracted more than 50% of the first-choice votes, that candidate wins and no run-off takes place (as it would be impossible for the second-placed candidate to overhaul them via second-choice votes). If only two candidates stand in a Supplementary Vote election then the First Past the Post system is used.

On 16 March 2021, the Home Secretary announced that the Government planned to change the voting system for all Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC), Combined Authority Mayors, and the Mayor of London, from the supplementary vote system to the first past the post system.²⁵ This followed a commitment in the 2017 Conservative manifesto.²⁶ It was implemented via section 17 of the [Elections Act 2022](#). The change came into force for the mayoral elections held in May 2023.

²⁴ As above

²⁵ [HCWS849](#), 16 March 2021

²⁶ Conservative Party, [Forward Together: Our Plan for a Stronger Britain and a Prosperous Future](#), 2017, p43. The issue is not mentioned directly in the 2019 Conservative manifesto, [Get Brexit Done: Unleash Britain’s Potential](#), 2019

3.4 Abolishing local authority mayors

The procedures for abolishing a local authority mayor are the same as those for establishing one. Abolishing a mayor comprises a ‘change in governance arrangements’. This may be driven either by a referendum or by a resolution of the full council. As noted in section 2.3, where a referendum was used to establish new governance arrangements, a referendum must also be won before any further changes can take place. A mayoralty established by a resolution of the council can be abolished by a resolution of the council, as in Liverpool in 2022 (see below).

A mayor cannot themselves either unilaterally decide to abolish their own position, or veto a proposal to abolish their post.

Nine authorities have held referendums on whether to retain their mayoral system, of which five have voted to retain the mayor and four to abolish it (see Appendix 3). Voters have chosen to retain elected mayoralties via referendums in Doncaster (2012), Middlesbrough (2013), North Tyneside (2016), Newham (2021) and Tower Hamlets (2021).

Where a decision is taken to abolish a mayoralty, the law states that the sitting mayor serves out their term.²⁷

Table: Former mayoralties			
Council	Cause	Date of decision	Mayoralty abolished
Stoke-on-Trent	Referendum	23/10/2008	08/06/2009
Hartlepool	Referendum	15/11/2012	05/05/2013
Torbay	Referendum	05/05/2016	05/05/2019
Liverpool	Resolution	20/07/2022	04/05/2023
Copeland	Abolition of authority	n/a	01/04/2023
Bristol	Referendum	05/05/2022	02/05/2024

3.5 County mayors

Though the term ‘mayor’ is normally associated with an urban area, legislation permits any local authority in England and Wales to establish a directly-elected mayor.

As part of the ‘devolution deal’ process in 2022-23, Norfolk and Suffolk county councils both agreed devolution deals with the Government that would see the county council establish a directly-elected mayor. The first elections to

²⁷ [Local Government Act 2000](#) section 9L (6), inserted by the Localism Act 2011. In Liverpool, the term of the last elected mayor, Joanne Anderson, was changed from three years to two (2021-23), leading to the mayoralty to be abolished as of May 2023 instead of May 2024: see the [City of Liverpool \(Scheme of Elections and Elections of Elected Mayor\) Order 2021](#)

these mayoralities are expected to take place in May 2025. Cornwall also agreed a devolution deal including a directly-elected mayorality, but withdrew from the deal following a public consultation.²⁸

These local authority mayoralities will have additional powers conferred on them as agreed in their devolution deals: thus they will exercise more powers than other local authority mayors. Further information is available in the Library briefing paper [Devolution to local government in England](#).

²⁸ Cornwall Council, [Consultation on the proposed Cornwall Devolution Deal](#), February 2023

4 Other types of mayor

4.1 ‘Metro-mayors’

Metro-mayors are elected chairs of ‘combined authorities’, covering the area of multiple local councils. They are established under different legislation from local authority mayors and hold powers that are distinct from those of local authorities, relating to matters such as economic development, planning and transport. A list of current metro-mayors can be found in Appendix 2. Further details of the devolution deals are available in the Library briefing paper [Devolution to local government in England](#).

Metro-mayors are legally distinct from local authority mayors. They are chairs of ‘mayoral combined authorities’, established via Orders under the [Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016](#). The referendums and petitioning legislation discussed in this note does not apply to metro-mayors. The 2016 Act permits them to be introduced in England only.

The combined authorities – and hence the mayors themselves – cover more than one local authority area. In some council areas (e.g. Liverpool, Salford, Middlesbrough), there is both a local authority mayor and a combined authority mayor (the latter covering a wider area).

Metro-mayors may also be Members of Parliament. Dan Jarvis MP was mayor of the Sheffield City Region from 2018 to 2022, and a number of other metro-mayors have been MPs prior to being elected as metro-mayors. However, metro-mayors with police and crime responsibilities cannot become MPs, or remain MPs once elected. This is because legislation prevents individuals from holding the position of MP and police and crime commissioner simultaneously.²⁹

4.2 Mayor of London

The powers of the Mayor of London derive from the Greater London Authority Acts rather than general local government legislation (see the Library briefing paper [The Greater London Authority](#)). The Mayor of London holds the majority of executive powers within the Greater London Authority, and their relationship to the London Assembly is not the same as local authority mayors’ relationship to their council. The Mayor also has ultimate

²⁹ See s67 and s70 of the [Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011](#)

responsibility for transport, policing and fire services in Greater London. However, the boroughs run most public services in London.

4.3

Lord mayors and town mayors

Where a directly-elected mayor is introduced, an existing ‘lord mayor’ or civic mayor will continue to exist separately. This type of mayor carries out a ceremonial role and is normally the chair of the local authority, not its leader or part of its executive. The legislation described in this briefing has no effect on this type of office. A small number of mayoral authorities, such as Tower Hamlets and Lewisham, have renamed their chair the ‘Speaker’ to distinguish the roles more clearly.

Parish and town councils may also choose to style the chair of the authority as ‘town mayor’. This too is a ceremonial role, and does not have executive leadership responsibilities.

This can mean that some areas, such as Middlesbrough, can have three office-holders with the title of ‘mayor’. Where there is a civic mayor and a council leader, the council leader leads the executive and thus the council, and the civic mayor undertakes a ceremonial role.

Appendix 1: List of elected local authority mayors

Local authority	Name	Party	Next election
Bedford BC	Tom Wootton	Conservative	2027
LB Croydon	Jason Perry	Conservative	2026
Doncaster MBC	Ros Jones	Labour	2029
Leicester CC	Sir Peter Soulsby	Labour	2027
LB Hackney	Caroline Woodley	Labour	2026
LB Lewisham	Brenda Dacres	Labour	2026
LB Newham	Rokhsana Fiaz	Labour	2026
LB Tower Hamlets	Lutfur Rahman	Aspire	2026
Mansfield DC	Andy Abrahams	Labour	2027
Middlesbrough BC	Chris Cooke	Labour	2027
North Tyneside MBC	Karen Clark	Labour	2029
Salford CC	Paul Dennett	Labour	2028
Watford BC	Peter Taylor	Liberal Democrat	2026

Appendix 2: List of elected metro-mayors

Combined authority	Name	Party	Next election
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough	Paul Bristow	Conservative	2029
Greater Lincolnshire	Andrea Jenkyns	Reform UK	2029
Greater Manchester	Andy Burnham	Labour	2028
East Midlands	Claire Ward	Labour	2028
Hull & East Yorkshire	Luke Campbell	Reform UK	2029
Liverpool City Region	Steve Rotheram	Labour	2028
North-East	Kim McGuinness	Labour	2028
Sheffield City Region	Oliver Coppard	Labour	2028
Tees Valley	Ben Houchen	Conservative	2028
West Midlands	Richard Parker	Labour	2028
West of England	Helen Godwin	Labour	2029
West Yorkshire	Tracy Brabin	Labour	2028
York & North Yorkshire	David Skaith	Labour	2028

Appendix 3: Mayoral referendum results

Referendums on elected mayors						
Council	Result	Date	For	Against	Turnout	Type of ballot
Berwick-upon-Tweed	No	7 Jun 2001	3,617	10,212	63.8%	
Cheltenham	No	28 Jun 2001	8,083	16,602	31.0%	All postal
Gloucester	No	28 Jun 2001	7,731	16,317	30.8%	All postal
Watford	Yes	12 Jul 2001	7,636	7,140	24.5%	All postal
Doncaster	Yes	20 Sep 2001	35,453	19,398	25.0%	All postal
Kirklees	No	4 Oct 2001	10,169	27,977	13.0%	Normal
Sunderland	No	11 Oct 2001	9,593	12,209	10.0%	Normal
Hartlepool	Yes	18 Oct 2001	10,667	10,294	31.0%	All postal
Lewisham	Yes	18 Oct 2001	16,822	15,914	18.0%	All postal
North Tyneside	Yes	18 Oct 2001	30,262	22,296	36.0%	All postal
Sedgefield	No	18 Oct 2001	10,628	11,869	33.3%	All postal
Middlesbrough	Yes	18 Oct 2001	29,067	5,422	34.0%	All postal
Brighton and Hove	No	18 Oct 2001	22,724	37,214	31.6%	All postal
Redditch	No	8 Nov 2001	7,250	9,198	28.3%	All postal
Durham City	No	20 Nov 2001	8,327	11,974	28.5%	All postal
Harrow	No	7 Dec 2001	17,502	23,554	26.0%	All postal
Harlow	No	24 Jan 2001	5,296	15,490	36.4%	All postal
Plymouth	No	24 Jan 2001	29,559	42,811	39.8%	All postal
Southwark	No	31 Jan 2002 Mandated	6,054	13,217	11.2%	Normal
Newham	Yes	31 Jan 2002	27,263	12,687	25.9%	All postal
West Devon	No	31 Jan 2002	3,555	12,190	41.8%	All postal
Shepway	No	31 Jan 2002	11,357	14,435	36.3%	All postal
Bedford	Yes	21 Feb 2002 Petition	11,316	5,537	15.5%	Normal
Newcastle-under-Lyme	No	2 May 2002	12,912	16,468	31.5%	Normal
Oxford	No	2 May 2002 Petition	14,692	18,686	33.8%	Normal
Hackney	Yes	3 May 2002	24,697	10,547	31.9%	All postal
Stoke-on-Trent	Yes	3 May 2002 Petition	28,601	20,578	27.8%	Normal
Mansfield	Yes	3 May 2002 Petition	8,973	7,350	21.0%	Normal
Corby	No	26 Sep 2002 Petition	5,351	6,239	30.9%	All postal
Ealing	No	11 Dec 2002 Petition	9,454	11,655	9.8%	
Ceredigion	No	20 May 2004 Petition	5,308	14,013	36.3%	
Isle of Wight	No	5 May 2005	28,786	37,097	62.4%	
Torbay	Yes	14 Jul 2005	18,074	14,682	32.1%	
Fenland	No	14 Jul 2005 Petition	5,509	17,296	33.6%	
Crewe and Nantwich	No	4 May 2006 Petition	11,808	18,768	35.3%	
Darlington	No	27 Sep 2007 Petition	7,981	11,226	24.7%	
Stoke-on-Trent (leader)	No	23 Oct 2008	21,231	14,592	19.2%	

In Stoke-on-Trent's 2008 referendum, a Yes vote was for a leader and cabinet; a No vote was for a mayor and cabinet.

Corby was the last all-postal ballot to be held.

Sources: Colin Rallings and Michael Thrasher, *British Electoral Facts 1832-2006*; local authority websites;

House of Commons Library, Local Elections 2012, RP12/27

Referendums on elected mayors

Council	Result	Date	For	Against	Turnout
Bury	No	3 Jul 2008 Petition	10,338	15,425	18.3%
Tower Hamlets	Yes	6 May 2010 Petition	60,758	39,857	62.1%
Great Yarmouth	No	5 May 2011 Petition	10,051	15,595	36.0%
Salford	Yes	26 Jan 2012	17,344	13,653	18.1%
Birmingham	No	3 May 2012 Mandated	88,085	120,611	27.7%
Bradford	No	3 May 2012 Mandated	53,949	66,283	35.2%
Bristol	Yes	3 May 2012 Mandated	41,032	35,880	24.1%
Coventry	No	3 May 2012 Mandated	22,619	39,483	26.2%
Leeds	No	3 May 2012 Mandated	62,440	107,910	30.3%
Manchester	No	3 May 2012 Mandated	42,677	48,593	24.7%
Newcastle-Upon-Tyne	No	3 May 2012 Mandated	24,630	40,089	32.0%
Nottingham	No	3 May 2012 Mandated	20,943	28,320	23.8%
Sheffield	No	3 May 2012 Mandated	44,571	82,890	32.1%
Wakefield	No	3 May 2012 Mandated	27,610	45,357	28.3%
Doncaster (retain)	Yes	3 May 2012	42,196	25,879	30.7%
Hartlepool (retain)	No	15 Nov 2012	5,177	7,366	18.0%
Middlesbrough (retain)	Yes	26 Sep 2013	8,674	6,455	15.1%
Copeland	Yes	22 May 2014 Petition	12,671	5,489	33.9%
Bath and North East Somerset	No	10 Mar 2016 Petition	8,054	30,557	29.0%
North Tyneside (retain)	Yes	5 May 2016	32,546	23,703	36.6%
Torbay (retain)	No	5 May 2016	9,511	15,846	25.3%
Guildford	No	13 Oct 2016 Petition	4,948	20,639	24.9%
Newham (retain)	Yes	6 May 2021	45,960	36,424	37.7%
Tower Hamlets (retain)	Yes	6 May 2021	63,029	17,951	41.8%
Croydon	Yes	7 Oct 2021	47,165	11,519	21.0%
Bristol (retain)	No	5 May 2022	56,113	38,439	28.6%
Plymouth	No	17 Jul 2025 Petition	19,840	18,044	19.1%

In Bath and North East Somerset's 2016 referendum, the choices were between a leader (councillor chosen by other councillors) OR a mayor

In North Tyneside's 2016 referendum, the choice was between option A (a mayor) and B (one or more committees made up of elected councillors)

In Torbay's 2016 referendum, the choice was between a mayor OR a leader who is an elected councillor chosen by a vote of the other elected councillors

Sources: local authority websites, "North Tyneside to keep mayor after more than 32,000 people vote to retain position", *Chronicle* newspaper, 6/5/2016

Referendums to change from cabinet to committee system

Council	Result	Date	For	Against	Turnout
Fylde	Yes	22 May 2014 Petition	11,934	8,706	34.2%
West Dorset	Yes	5 May 2016 Petition	16,534	8,811	32%
Sheffield	Yes	6 May 2021	89,670	50,516	

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