

House of Commons: Written Statement (HCWS65)

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

Written Statement made by: **Minister for Building Safety, Fire and Democracy (Samantha Dixon)** on 21 May 2026.

Commencing the provisions of the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act

When elected mayors were first established by the Local Government Act 2000, they were elected using the Supplementary Vote system. This system, which is suitable for the election of single executive office holders, such as mayors ensures a broader level of support for the person elected.

This voting system for mayoral elections was changed following the Elections Act 2022, which removed the Supplementary Vote system and replaced this with a simple majority (First Past the Post) system. This Government has always been clear that Supplementary Vote is the more appropriate system for electing mayors.

The English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026, which received Royal Assent on 29 April 2026, reintroduces the Supplementary Vote system for Mayoral and Police and Crime Commissioner elections. It was the clear intention of the Government, as stated during parliamentary passage of the Act, that this return to Supplementary Vote would be implemented ahead of any future relevant elections after May 2026. The Government is conscious that there is now a possible scenario in which a Mayoral election may need to be held in Greater Manchester in the coming months, subject to the outcome of the parliamentary by-election in the Macclesfield constituency.

We are therefore taking action to seek parliamentary approval to deliver that change in all scenarios. I have today laid the legislation necessary to support the implementation of these measures for Combined Authority Mayors and Combined County Authority Mayors. The *Combined Authorities (Mayoral Elections) (Amendment) Order 2026*, which makes the required changes to conduct rules, ballot papers, postal voting statements, and guidance and instructions to voters, will now be considered by Parliament under the affirmative procedure. Relevant changes to the secondary legislation governing conduct of elections for local authority mayors, the Mayor of London and Police and Crime Commissioners will be brought forward as soon as possible later this year.

The Government's intention, subject to the approval of Parliament, is for the secondary legislation to be in force by 19 June 2026.

We will work with the Electoral Commission and local authorities to support implementation of this change, to ensure all rules are clear and understood, and to support clear communications with electors.