



Newham Voting for Change Press release 22nd October 2020 For immediate release

Following a decision by Newham Council on Wednesday, in May 2021 the residents of Newham will have the opportunity to make a democratic decision about how they are governed, in the long-awaited referendum on local government.

The referendum will take place on 6th May 2021, at the same time as the London Assembly and London Mayor elections. The question on the ballot will ask Newham voters to choose between a council run by an executive Mayor and a cabinet, or a committee system made up of committees of elected councillors.

Newham Voting for Change welcomes the council's decision that the choice on the ballot paper will be between the Mayoral model and the committee system. This is a genuine choice between an executive model, in which decisions are made by the Mayor and a small group of councillors who make up the Cabinet, and a real alternative where all decisions are agreed by committees made up of elected councillors.

Speaking for Newham Voting for Change, Cllr John Whitworth said: "The Mayor promised this referendum as part of her manifesto in 2018 and we're very pleased that the date and the ballot question have now been confirmed. Newham voters will get a meaningful choice between the current system and a more open, inclusive and democratic system in which all councillors get a say in determining Council policy."

Another spokesperson for the campaign, Josephine Grahl, said: "We set up Newham Voting for Change to make the positive arguments for the committee system: a co-operative, democratic system which gives a stronger voice to the elected councillors and residents of Newham. This is a real alternative to the Mayoral model and we hope Newham residents will support our campaign."

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Notes for editors

Newham Voting for Change is a campaign group made up of Newham residents and councillors campaigning for the committee structure in the local governance referendum.

According to advice from Newham Council, the question on the ballot paper in May 2021 will be:

How would you like the London Borough of Newham to be run?

- *By a mayor who is elected by voters. This is how the council is run now.*
- *By one or more committees made up of elected councillors. This would be a change from how the council is run now.*