

BRIEFING NOTE

MOTION: For the Council to Support the Campaign For Proportional Representation.

Council notes that:

- First Past the Post (FPTP) originated when land-owning aristocrats dominated parliament and voting was restricted to property-owning men.
- In Europe, only the UK and authoritarian Belarus still use archaic single-round FPTP for general elections. Meanwhile, internationally, Proportional Representation (PR) is used to elect parliaments in more than 80 countries. Those countries tend to be more equal, freer and greener.
- PR ensures all votes count, have equal value, and those seats won match votes cast. Under PR, MPs and Parliaments better reflect the age, gender and protected characteristics of local communities and the nation.
- MPs better reflecting their communities leads to improved decision-making, wider participation and increased levels of ownership of decisions taken.
- PR would also end minority rule. In 2019, 43.6% of the vote produced a government with 56.2% of the seats and 100% of the power. PR also prevents 'wrong winner' elections such as occurred in 1951 and February 1974.
- PR is already used to elect the parliaments and assemblies of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. So why not Westminster?

Council therefore resolves to instruct the CEO to write to H.M. Government calling for a change in our outdated electoral laws to enable Proportional Representation to be used for general elections.

PROPOSERS:

Cllrs Lenox, Dowding, Bannon, Blaikie and Wood.

OFFICER BRIEFING NOTE

The Single Member Plurality voting system, often known as "first past the post", is the method of voting currently used to elect Members of Parliament. 'First past the post' is a simple system to use. The candidate who gets more votes than any of the other candidates will be declared the winning candidate.

Proportional Representation describes electoral systems in which candidates win seats in a parliament more or less in proportion to the votes cast. For example, if a party gained 40% of the total votes, a perfectly proportional system would allow them to gain 40% of the seats.

As the motion indicates, a change in the Parliamentary voting system would require a change in the law.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no comments to make.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no comments to make.