



CORPORATE AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 20TH FEBRUARY 2024

**SUBJECT: NOTICE OF MOTION – YES TO PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON
SCRAPPING FIRST PAST THE POST**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE
SERVICES**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Corporate and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the Notice of Motion as set out in paragraph 5.1 of the report and make an appropriate recommendation. In accordance with Rule 11(3) of the Constitution.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 A Notice of Motion has been received from Councillor K. Etheridge and is supported by Councillors L. Whittle, A. Angel, N Dix, G. Ead, C. Elsbury, A. Farina-Childs, S. Kent, C. Mann, B. Owen, J. Reed, and J. Roberts.
- 2.2 The Notice of Motion meets the criteria set out in the Council's Constitution and in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure is now referred to Corporate and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee for consideration, prior to its consideration by Council if supported by the scrutiny committee.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Corporate and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider the Notice of Motion as outlined in paragraph 5.1 and make an appropriate recommendation.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 In accordance with the Council's Constitution.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 Notice of Motion

In his Notice of Motion Councillor Etheridge calls on Council to introduce a public

consultation on scrapping the first past the post and bringing in the single transferable vote at the next local election in 2027.

- 5.2 Councillor Etheridge also notes that colleagues in Powys and Gwynedd Council have voted to say yes to a public consultation on First Past the Post.
- 5.3 Officers have provided the following information in relation to the notice of motion:
- 5.4 Presently Councillors are elected to principal councils, like Caerphilly CBC, using a simple majority system commonly known as first past the post. Each Council will continue to use this method unless it decides to change to a system known as the Single Transferable Vote (STV). The power to change the voting system only applies to Principal Councils – Town and Community Councils would continue to use the current system.
- 5.5 Before exercising the power to change the Local Authority must consult Local Government Electors, Community Councils, and any other interested parties. Such a change would need to be considered by a Special meeting of Full Council and require a resolution supported by a two thirds majority. If a Council opts to change the voting system, it must use the new one for the next two rounds of ordinary elections. To change the voting system for the next set of Local Government Elections in 2027 a resolution must be made before 15 November 2024.
- 5.6 Large multi-member wards - Should the Council adopt STV then a full review of all County Borough wards would need to be conducted by the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission. Provisions for initial reviews outlined in the Act requires that if a Council adopts STV the number of Councillors for each electoral ward is to be no less than three, but no more than 6.
- 5.7 Counting Votes – there is no provision for electronic counting in the rules. Therefore, counting at a STV election will be a lengthy and complex process. Counts using STV could take up to 3 days to complete.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 As a notice of motion is a procedural matter and must be dealt with in accordance with Council's Constitution, no assumptions have been made.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 This report does not require an Integrated Impact Assessment as it relates to a procedural matter under the Councils Constitution.
- 7.2 The procedural rules regarding a Notice of Motion are contained within Council's Constitution. The Council's Constitution sets out the framework for the decision-making roles and responsibilities.
- 7.3 However the outcome of the Notice of Motion and any subsequent reports arising from it may require an Integrated Impact Assessment.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 If the Council decides to adopt STV there will be significant costs ranging from organising a large public consultation, assisting the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission to conduct a review of the wards within the county borough, printing costs for ballot papers and training events for polling day and the subsequent count.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no personnel implications associated with this report.

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 As this is a procedural notice of motion, there has been no consultation undertaken.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government Act 2000

Author: Emma Sullivan (Senior Committee Services Officer)

Appendices: Appendix 1 Signed copy of Notice of Motion.