

Labour Amendment: Proportional Representation

Proposer: Councillor Elin Weston Dawn Barnes

Seconder: Councillor Emine Ibrahim Scott Emery

Council notes:

- First Past the Post is the established electoral system used in the United Kingdom for general elections;
- The benefits and disadvantages of First Past the Post have been debated widely;
- One of those benefits is the capacity of First Past the Post to deliver clear electoral outcomes, supporting the formation of Governments able to deliver their electoral pledges through Parliament.
- The Liberal Democrats long-term commitment to electoral reform was rejected by voters in a UK-wide referendum on the parliamentary voting system;
- The recent General Election returned a majority Labour government with a credible plan to rebuild the UK after 14 years of austerity implemented by Conservative and Conservative-Liberal Democrat governments;
- While the Labour Party conference in 2022 voted in favour of introducing Proportional Representation, the new Labour Government's priority should be repairing the damage of the past 14 years, implementing its legislative agenda and rebuilding our country in the interests of those who are most in need.
- ~~First Past the Post 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 First Past the Post for general elections;~~
- ~~The Labour Party conference in 2022 voted overwhelmingly in favour of introducing Proportional Representation, and polling has shown that over 80% of Labour Party members are in favour of its introduction;~~
- ~~The Liberal Democrats have a long term commitment to introducing a Proportional Representation system;~~
- ~~Proportional Representation is already used to elect the Scottish and Welsh Parliaments and the Northern Ireland and London Assemblies;~~
- ~~PR ensures all votes count, have equal value, and that seats won match votes cast.~~

Council believes that:

- The urgency of the challenge to rebuild our public services and our country by delivering its electoral pledges should be the focus of ~~The the~~ Labour Government;
- This focus should not be diminished by a diversion of resources towards ~~s~~ changing the voting system;
- The English Devolution Bill announced in the King's Speech has the potential to enhance decision-making by ~~mayors, combined authorities and~~ local authorities, ~~and deliver change for the communities they represent and serve;~~
- Working with the Labour Government to deliver this Bill and their legislative programme for change is a better use of Council resources and will be of greater benefit to Haringey residents.
- ~~Turnout would be higher under a proportional system where people felt like their votes mattered;~~
- ~~Proportional Representation would improve the quality of decision-making, thereby benefiting all residents.~~

Council resolves to:

- Support the development of proposals for greater devolution within England;
- Write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government outlining the Council's support for the principle of the Bill and committing to engaging with any consultation processes as the English Devolution Bill progresses.
- ~~Join the 'Councils for PR' campaign~~
- ~~Write to H.M. Government calling for a change in our outdated electoral laws and to enable Proportional Representation to be used for UK general and local elections.~~