

MINUTE EXTRACT

ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21 SEPTEMBER 2017

20. NOTICE OF MOTION – FAIR VOTES

The Chair reported that at the meeting of the Council held on 10 July 2017 (minute 34 refers) the following Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Pat Cleary and seconded by Councillor Stuart Kelly was referred by the Civic Mayor to this Committee for consideration -

FAIR VOTES

“Council believes that a Parliament that more accurately reflects the views of the nation, enabling people to feel that their votes count, is more likely to develop an economic, social and environmental agenda that benefits Wirral’s residents.

Following the recent general election, this Council agrees that the 'First Past the Post' voting system:

- has again failed to live up to its reputation to provide strong and stable government;
- has again yielded a wildly disproportionate allocation of seats with, for example, the Democratic Unionist Party gaining 10 seats from 292,316 votes compared with 12 seats from 2.4 million votes for the Liberal Democrats;
- has spectacularly failed to match votes to seats with 27,930 votes required to elect one MP from the Scottish National Party compared with 525,371 votes to elect one Green Party MP.

This Council:

- (a) recognises that a robust democracy must include a fair voting system and that nobody should be disenfranchised because of where they live;
- (b) applauds the many groups and organisations campaigning for fair votes including the Electoral Reform Society, Make Votes Matter and the Labour Campaign for PR;
- (c) notes that the Single Transferable Vote system is already used for local elections in Scotland and in both Northern Irish local elections and the Northern Ireland Assembly while proportional electoral systems are used to elect the devolved parliaments and assemblies in Scotland, Wales and London;
- (d) therefore calls for the introduction of a proportional voting system
 - (i) for local elections in England and Wales;
 - (ii) for Westminster elections; and

(e) directs that a copy of this motion be forwarded to the Leaders of all political parties represented in the UK Parliament”.

In accordance with Standing Order 7(6) Councillor Pat Cleary had been invited to attend the meeting in order for him to explain the Motion.

Councillor Cleary elaborated on the Motion and highlighted the need for a fairer voting system and increased representation from women and those from an ethnic minority background into politics.

Members debated the Motion and a number of views, both for and against proportional representation were expressed.

RESOLVED:

(7:6 on the Chair’s casting vote) (One abstention) the Motion was put and lost.