

SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL

27 AUGUST 2014

AGENDA ITEM D6

ELECTORAL SYSTEM FOR 2016 ELECTIONS – VOTING SYSTEM

Purpose of Report

To consider the voting system for the 2016 elections.

Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Council:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Resolve to retain the First Past the Post (FPP) electoral system for the 2016 local authority elections.*

1. Executive Summary

Traditionally, FPP has been the only electoral system used for all Local Government elections.

The only other option is Single Transferrable Vote (STV).

In accordance with the Local Electoral Act 2001 (LEA) consideration of the voting system is required before 12 September two years before the next triennial elections, i.e. before 12 September 2014.

During 2003, a poll of electors was held; the preferred option was FPP, with 1,994 votes and STV 1,207 votes.

2. Discussion

2.1 Timetable

The following is a full timetable, however if the resolution is made as recommended, then only the first two steps are required (unless a poll is demanded by electors).

By 12 September 2014	A Local Authority <u>may</u> resolve to change the electoral system from the system used for the 2013 triennial election	Section 27 of the LEA
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By 19 September 2014	A Local Authority <u>must</u> give public notice of the right of 5% of the electors to demand a poll on the future electoral system for the next two triennial elections, and if a resolution has been made by a local authority by 12 September 2014, then this must be included in the notice	Section 28 of the LEA
By 18 December 2014	A 90 day period <u>must</u> be given following the public notice allowing electors to gather sufficient signatures to demand that a poll be held to change the electoral system for the next two triennial elections	Section 30 of the LEA
By 28 February 2015	A local authority <u>may</u> resolve to undertake a poll of electors on a proposal that a specified electoral system be used for the next two triennial elections	Section 31 of the LEA
By 21 May 2015	If a successful demand has been received by 18 December 2013 to hold a poll, or a resolution has been made by a local authority by 28 February 2015, then a poll <u>must</u> be held within 82 days of notification	Section 33 of the LEA

2.2 Options available

There are three options presently available:

1. Make a decision as recommended and publicly notify it (as per steps 1 and 2 above).
2. Defer a decision and simply resolve to hold a poll of electors. This decision to hold a poll could be made anytime prior to 28 February 2015.
3. Do nothing, and simply notify the public notice by 19 September 2014.

2.3 Cost implications

A poll would cost in the order of \$15,000 to \$20,000. There is no budget set aside for a poll.

If it was decided to change to STV, the election running cost would increase by approximately 27% over the 2013 election processing cost, or approximately \$10,000. This would need to be included in the budget for the 2016 year.

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