

MEETING	COUNCIL
DATE	7 Mawrth 2024
REPORT TITLE	Consultation Process - Single Transferable Vote ("STV") for Cyngor Gwynedd elections
PURPOSE	The objective of this report is to seek the Council's approval for a consultation process and decision timetable.
CABINET MEMEBR	Cllr Menna Trenholme – Cabinet Member for Corporate Support and Legal
AUTHOR	Iwan Evans – Head of Legal Services

RECOMMENDATION FOR DECISION

- 1.1 That the Council approves the proposed timetable and process for holding the consultation on a change to a Single Transfers Vote regime for elections to Cyngor Gwynedd from 2027.**
- 1.2 Delegates the preparation and conduct of the consultation to the Head of Legal Services in consultation and the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Legal and the Head of Corporate Support (*Head of Democratic Services*).**
- 1.3 That the consultation document be prepared in consultation with the leaders of the Council's political groups.**

2. Background

- 2.1 Section 5 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 allows any First Council to choose between two Local Government voting systems for First Councils :
 - Simple majority system ("first past post")
 - Single Transferable Vote System

This option is available to each of Wales' 22 First Councils individually. At its meeting on the 7th of December 2023 the Council decided that:

"..... the Council instigates a process which could lead to the adoption of a Single Transferable Vote System for Cyngor Gwynedd elections."

[Item 11 - Option to Adopt Single Transferable Vote System for Cyngor Gwynedd Elections.pdf \(llyw.cymru\)](#)

The aim of this report is to seek Council's approval for the consultation process and decision timetable.

3. What is the process for changing the system?

3.1 Specific steps need to be followed if an alternative system is to be adopted .

Before a decision is made to change the ordinance and not the intention must be consulted with;

- Every local government elector in the area
- Every town/community council
- Any other persons it considers appropriate to consult with

The Council is required to consult with all local government electors in the area as well as all town and community councils. This is seen as an issue that appropriately should be consulted with these groups as they represent the main stakeholders in the local elections processes. This will represent a very broad group of persons to provide a response to the intention and there are no other "persons" or groups of other "persons" who obviously need to be specifically consulted with on this matter. This will involve one off postal costs.

3.2 This means that we will be writing would be lettering with electors to seek their views It is intended to prepare a consultation document that will objectively summarise the options and characteristics of the systems. This will be supported by more detailed information and links to Electoral Commission materials on the Council's website. It is recommended that the conduct of the process be delegated in accordance with the recommendation. However, it is also recommended that the contents of the consultation document be subject to specific consultation with the leaders of each the political groups.

3.3 Having consulted on the intention a special meeting of the Full Council must be called specifically for this decision only. 21 days' prior notice notice must be given of the meeting. In order to adopt a motion to change the system change the number of members in favour must be at least two-thirds of the number of seats on the Council which is 46/69. Please note, not two-thirds of members present at the meeting, but two-thirds of all Member seats on the Council.

3.4 This is the proposed timetable for the process holding attention to electoral periods to ensure a decision before 15 November 2024, which is the last day on which a decision can be reached if the regime change is to be made before the 2027 election.

	Action	Date
1.	Start of the consultation	Week commencing 6 May 2024
2.	Consultation Closes	21 June 2024
3.	Last date of publication of notice– of 21 days to call a special meeting of the Plenary Council	28 Awst 2024 fan hwyraf

4.	Hold a meeting of the Full Council to consider the conclusions of the consultation and reach a final decision whether not to adopt a PSD regime	19 Medi 2024
5.	Notify the Welsh Ministers and the Democracy and Local Boundary Commission within 14 days of the decision, if it is decided to change to the STV system	

3.5 If the Council adopted a Single Transferable Vote system, then this would result in a local boundary review by the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission Wales to move to a County-wide multi-member seating regime. This will be based on wards ranging from between 3 and 6 members.

3.6 The boundary review process will be for the Commission, and not the Council, following the statutory regime that applies to the review of Chief Councils' electoral arrangements. The Council will have the opportunity to state its views as a key statutory consultee at several stages of the journey leading to the preparation of the Commission's final report to the Minister. It will inevitably, not be possible to hypothesize on the outcome of the boundary review process until this process begins to identify possible options.

4. Impact Assessment

There are no direct implications of the recommendations in this report. However, should the Council decide to move forward with any changes to local electoral arrangements, a full equality and diversity impact screening exercise would be required. This would also be incorporated into the consultation process.

5. Well-being of Future Generations Act

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The act imposes a welfare duty on public bodies aimed at achieving 7 of the goals of a voice which is a prosperous, resilient, healthier, more equal Wales with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture where the Welsh language thrives and is responsible at a global level. The Work will be carried out keeping attention to these and according to requirements and the 5 ways of working.

Statutory Officers

Chief Finance Officer

It is inevitable that there will be costs attached to undertaking a public consultation, but the decision sought is consistent with the Council's previous decision."

Monitoring Officer

Report Author