

Rother District Council

Report to - Council
Date - 21 September 2022
Subject - Motion – Council Motion – Proportional Representation

Motion submitted by Councillor C.A. Bayliss

1. First Past the Post (FPTP) originated when land-owning aristocrats dominated parliament and voting was restricted to property-owning men.
2. In Europe, only the UK and authoritarian Belarus still use archaic single-round FPTP for general elections. Meanwhile, internationally, Proportional Representation (PR) is used to elect parliaments in more than 80 countries. Those countries tend to be more equal, freer and greener.
3. PR ensures all votes count, have equal value, and those seats won match votes cast. Under PR, MPs and Parliaments better reflect the age, gender and protected characteristics of local communities and the nation. MPs better reflecting their communities leads to improved decision-making, wider participation and increased levels of ownership of decisions taken.
4. PR would also end minority rule. In 2019, 43.6% of the vote produced a government with 56.2% of the seats and 100% of the power.
5. PR is already used to elect the parliaments and assemblies of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. So why not Westminster?
6. Council therefore resolves to write to H.M. Government calling for a change in our outdated electoral laws to enable Proportional Representation to be used for general elections.