

First Past the Post to be introduced for all local mayoral and police and crime commissioner elections

Today, Minister for the Constitution and Devolution Chloe Smith has announced measures to apply the tried and tested system of First Past the Post to the election of council and 'metro' mayors across England, and to Police and Crime Commissioners across England and Wales.

In this May's London Mayoral elections, the Supplementary Vote system saw hundreds of thousands void, wasted or blank votes cast, reflecting voter confusion and the complex system. Supplementary Vote also means that a 'loser' candidate can win on second preferences. In 1931, Winston Churchill described transferable voting as "the decision is to be determined by the most worthless votes given for the most worthless candidates."

First Past the Post is the world's most widely used electoral system. The change to First Past the Post will further strengthen the accountability of elected mayors and PCCs to their electorate, making it easier for voters to express a clear choice. The person chosen to represent a local area should be the one who directly receives the most votes.

Chloe Smith, Minister for the Constitution, said:

Britain's long-standing national electoral system of First Past the Post ensures clearer accountability, and allows voters to kick out the politicians who don't deliver. First Past the Post is fair and simple – the person with the most votes wins.

Kit Malthouse, Minister for Policing, said:

We are strengthening the accountability and role of Police and Crime Commissioners, to help cut crime and deliver on the people's priorities.

Luke Hall, Minister for Local Government, said:

Elected mayors can provide strong leadership, and must be held to account at the ballot box. The supplementary vote is an anomaly which confuses the public and is out of step with other elections in England, both local and national. Moving to First Past the Post will make it easier for voters to express a clear choice.

The government will be bringing forward amendments to the Elections Bill to deliver these changes.

The changes will be implemented for the election of combined authority 'metro' mayors, the Greater London Authority mayor, elected council mayors, across England; and Police and Crime Commissioners across England & Wales.