

INFORMATION SHEET: STV/FPP and 2019 POLL

Q: How does a Single Transferable Vote (STV) election work?

Answers:

- 1 It's a bit like several voting steps are rolled into one.
(Think of the step by step ballots that eventually choose the Pope, or the leader of the Conservative Party (UK) or the National Party (NZ). In effect the least popular candidate is eliminated at each step, in order to clearly identify the most popular candidate.)
- 2 Numbered voter preferences in STV provide an equivalent of step-by-step ballots. Voters number their choices (1, 2, 3 ...) and as few as they wish--but at least 1 to be valid.
- 3 Candidates have to achieve a certain quota (proportion) of votes cast to be successful. The quota is calculated by a formula based on:
 - > the total number of votes cast
 - > the total number of candidates
 - > the number of vacancies
- 4 Candidates with the least votes are eliminated as part of the step-by-step calculations.
- 5 Current ward and community board systems are not affected; the only change is how successful candidates are selected.

Q: Why Is it called Single Transferable Vote?

Answers:

- 1 **Single Vote:** Each voter votes only once, and has only one vote. But voters also indicate their preferences for more than one candidate, by numbering them.
- 2 **Transferable:** When several elimination steps are needed to identify a successful candidate, numbered preferences means that votes can be transferred--as indicated by the voter.

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## FACTS about the 2019 Tasman District FPP/STV POLL

- The process and options are covered by New Zealand local government legislation. Holding a poll is an option in the law; Tasman councillors could have chosen it in 2017.
- STV is being adopted by a growing number of New Zealand councils (including Marlborough) and all health boards. More info from this official site: [www.stv.govt.nz](http://www.stv.govt.nz)
- Because electors appoint and employ their council representatives, it is appropriate that the electors should choose the voting system.
- STV votes are more complicated to count than FPP, but computers now easily count them.
- Candidates have to achieve a true majority to be elected under STV. (Computers do the actual counting as part of an authorised, certified process.)
- STV results can't be strategically affected, e.g. by candidates standing to split the vote.
- Using STV would simplify our voting papers and avoid confusion with the current tick/numbering mix in Tasman.
- No electoral system is perfect; all have advantages and disadvantages.
- The decision of the poll (either way) will take effect in 2022.
- TDC will mail out the poll voting papers with the other voting papers.

## Other Information

- (1) The Local Electoral Act 2001 allows two voting system options for New Zealand local authorities: First Past the Post (FPP) or Single Transferable Vote (STV).

Each local authority uses one or other system in all their elections; they cannot use more than one system.

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*from the [www.stv.govt.nz](http://www.stv.govt.nz) website:*

- (2) In 2019, 11 of the 78 New Zealand local authorities will elect their representatives under the STV voting system. These are:

- Kaipara District Council
- Tauranga City Council (*1st time*)
- Ruapehu District Council (*1st time*)
- New Plymouth District Council (*1st time*)
- Palmerston North City Council
- Kapiti Coast District Council
- Porirua City Council
- Wellington City Council
- Greater Wellington Regional Council
- Marlborough District Council
- Dunedin City Council

The other local authorities will be using the FPP voting system.

Two local authorities are holding voting system polls in 2019. Their electors are selecting which voting system will be used from the 2022 election:

- Tasman District Council (*resulting from a valid elector petition*)
- Whanganui District Council (*resulting from a 2017 council decision*)

- (3) STV is not new; it's been around since the 1850s. In New Zealand it was used for elections to the Christchurch City Council between 1917 and 1933, and for Woolston Borough Council in 1917 and 1919.

In the New Zealand private sector, Fonterra use STV for their Board of Directors and Shareholders' Council elections. DairyNZ's Board of Directors and the Victoria University of Wellington's Court of Convocation also use STV.

Overseas, STV elections are currently held in the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, Malta, and Australia (for Senate elections and state Legislative Councils).

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### Questions?

More information about STV: [www.stv.govt.nz](http://www.stv.govt.nz)

*and from [lizthomaspost@gmail.com](mailto:lizthomaspost@gmail.com)*

Information about the poll on Tasman District Council website: <http://tinyurl.com/yygdte97>

**More detailed advantages and disadvantages**

Tabled document  
MUR 19-09-17.

| FPP                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | STV                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
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| <p><b>FPP: casting votes</b><br/>FPP is a straightforward system of voting. FPP is familiar to most people.</p> <p>"Tactical" voting is possible; votes can be used with a view to preventing a candidate from winning in certain circumstances.</p> <p><b>FPP: counting votes</b><br/>FPP is a straightforward system for counting votes.<br/>Votes can be counted in different locations and then aggregated.<br/>Election results are usually announced soon after voting ends.</p> <p><b>FPP: election results</b><br/>Official results show exactly how many people voted for which candidates.</p> <p>Results are easy to understand.</p> <p>A 'block' of like-minded voters can determine the election of multiple candidates in multi-member wards/ constituencies, without having a majority of the votes, thereby 'over-representing' themselves.</p> <p>The overall election results will not be proportional to voters' wishes, and will not reflect the electoral wishes of the <i>majority</i> of voters, only the <i>largest group</i> of voters who may not be the majority.</p> <p>In single-member elections, the winner is unlikely to have the majority of votes, just the largest group of votes.</p> <p>There will be more "wasted" votes (votes that do not contribute to the election of a candidate).</p> | <p><b>STV: casting votes</b><br/>STV is a less straightforward system of voting. There is a need for more information for people to understand the STV ranking system of candidates.</p> <p>It is virtually impossible to cast a "tactical" vote under STV. As a result, voters are encouraged to express their true preferences.</p> <p><b>STV: counting votes</b><br/>STV vote counting requires a computer program (the STV calculator).<br/>Votes must be aggregated first and then counted in one location.<br/>Election results will usually take a little longer to produce.</p> <p><b>STV: election results</b><br/>Official results will identify which candidates have been elected and which have not and in which order. They do not show how many votes candidates got overall, as all successful candidates will have the same proportion of the vote (the quota). This information, at stages of the count, can still be requested.<br/>Results can be easy to understand if presented appropriately.<br/>STV moderates 'block' voting as each voter casts only one single vote, even in multi-member wards/ constituencies.</p> <p>The overall election results reflect the wishes of the majority of voters in proportion to their support for a variety of candidates.</p> <p>In single-member wards/constituencies, the winner will have the majority of votes (preferences).</p> <p>Every vote is as effective as possible (depending on the number of preferences indicated) meaning there are fewer "wasted" votes and more votes will contribute to the election of a candidate than under FPP.</p> |

# ELECTORAL SYSTEMS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

Under the Local Electoral Act 2001 there are two electoral systems for local government elections, Single Transferable Vote (STV) and First Past the Post (FPP).

The Act provides Councils with the opportunity of reviewing their electoral system that is to be used for the next two triennial elections.

Tasman District Council has historically used the FPP system.

In 2002 electors in Tasman demanded a poll on electoral systems, the results of which were in favour of retaining the FPP system.

On 7 September 2017 Tasman District Council resolved to retain the FPP electoral system for the 2019 and 2022 triennial elections, and publicly notified this decision, outlining that electors had the right to demand a poll to countermand this decision.

Council has subsequently received a valid demand for a poll in July 2019, and a poll on electoral systems will now be held in conjunction with this year's Council elections. The result of this poll will determine what electoral system Tasman District Council will use for the next two elections, i.e. 2022 and 2025.

## ELECTORAL SYSTEMS

### First Past the Post (FPP)

This electoral system requires voters to place ticks on voting documents next to the names of the candidates they wish to be elected. For example, if there is an election to select three councillors for a ward, and there are seven candidates standing, voters would place a tick next to the three candidates they prefer.

### Single Transferable Vote (STV)

This electoral system requires voters to rank their candidates in their order of preference. For example, if there is an election for three councillors for a ward, and seven candidates were standing, voters would rank the seven candidates by placing a "1" against their most preferred candidate, "2" by their next preferred candidate, and so on until they have ranked as many candidates as they want to, up to the seventh one. In this system the number of vacancies and number of votes determines the "quota" a candidate must reach to be elected. STV is broadly a proportional representation system.

## ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF EACH SYSTEM

No electoral system is perfect. Both FPP and STV have advantages and disadvantages.

Overall the advantages of STV relate to the people who get elected using STV. The system potentially achieves:

- Broad proportionality (in multi-member wards)
- Majority outcomes in single-member elections
- More equitable minority representation
- A reduction in the number of wasted votes.

The disadvantages of STV relate to:

- The public being less familiar with the system and possibly finding it harder to understand
- Matters of process such as the way votes are cast and counted (for example perceived complexity may discourage some voters)
- The information conveyed in election results.

The advantages of FPP, on the other hand, relate to the simplicity of the process including the way votes are cast, counted and announced.

The disadvantages of FPP relate to:

- The results of the election, including the generally 'less representative' nature of FPP councils
- The obstacles to minority candidate election
- The number of wasted votes.

Deciding which electoral system is best for the district may come down to deciding which is more important: process, or outcome. Unfortunately, neither electoral system can claim to achieve well in both.

To: Mr Chairman & Members of the Community Board. From: Ian Williamson

1 I notice in reading through the Agenda for our meeting today on page 48 the first item dated as Aug 20, 19 having the S/P No. 50985 has been issued for my enquiry regarding the repainting of the Heritage S/L's near the footpath of Motueka Museum. As an update on progress I have received a phone call from Lynn Hall of TDC and she will send me a copy of her research notes to follow up the repainting procedure with Steve Elkington.

2 Recent comments in the media by Adrian Orr the Reserve Bank Manager are suggesting the Government should be spending more of its money on infrastructure while finance is available and interest rates are very low. Could I suggest a fresh approach be made to Damien O'Connor our local Labour MP to remind him of the desperate need of our "High Street Upgrade" especially with the prospect of a major Mussell Harvesting Project being developed at the Tatakohu Harbour and the subsequent increase in heavy trucks passing through Motueka & of necessity using our aged Motueka Bridge, a very narrow passageway.

Thankyou Mr Chairman.

Tabled document.  
MCB 19-09-17

~~Press 26.07.19 p. 11~~ X

### Criticism over Twyford 'spite'

**Thomas Coughlan**

National MPs are fuming after Transport Minister Phil Tywford declined their requests to meet with NZTA officials, including one from Judith Collins.

Twyford received 38 requests for in-person meetings with NZTA officials between February 2018 and June 2019, he declined eight, all from National MPs.

The others, from a mix of Labour, Green, and National MPs were all approved.

National Transport spokesperson Chris Bishop said it showed "spite" from the minister to only decline National MPs.

Electorate MPs often request meetings with NZTA officials to discuss transport projects in their electorates and to push for constituency projects.

But each of these meetings is subject to the approval of the minister of transport.

Bishop said the minister was blocking local MPs from doing their jobs. "The minister shouldn't be preventing MPs from talking about projects in their local area," he said.

Twyford denied allegations of politicisation.

"Plenty of opposition MPs have had meetings and we take it on a case-by-case basis, just like the former government did," Twyford said.

