

22 Additionally, there should be a review of the chosen boundaries and allocation methodology after experience of two elections under the new scheme.

Considering the cost and resource implications of reforming the electoral system and Assembly boundaries – see 14 above

APPENDIX: LIST OF DETAILED SUGGESTIONS

I have tried to keep technical details to a minimum in this submission. I should be happy to give evidence, written or oral, enlarging on any of these suggestions if required.

- a Seat numbers: allow 3-seat constituencies, especially in sparsely-populated areas. Evidence from Scotland – and the recent election in Ireland – show that systems with 3–4 or 3–5 seat constituencies provide a good degree of proportionality, with parties whose national support is 5% or lower gaining their fair share of seats.
- b Make some allowance for sparsely-populated and remote areas
Geographically, Wales divides fairly sharply between 9 LAAs with under 100 people/sq.km and 13 with over 200 people/sq.km. Also, many of the low-density LAAs are relatively remote from the seat of government, while overall they are distinctly a minority of the population. All this suggest that some modest positive discrimination in seat numbers might be appropriate.
Two international comparisons are of relevance here. In both Norway and Denmark geographical area is taken into account when allocating seats to areas. While in the European parliament, less populous countries are given ‘more than their fair share’ of seats – there is mathematical justification for this, considering voting power in a collection of independent units of unequal size⁷.
- c Seat allocation: use criterion of minimising proportional departure from parity (as is done in allocating Congressional seats to states in the US), rather than Saint-Lague.
- d Use e-counting (see 11)
- e To inform and engage voters, ensure that count information is well-presented both live at the count and subsequently. See e.g. presentation of Scottish council election results at https://www.macs.hw.ac.uk/~denis/stv_elections/SC2017/
- f Use Meek STV rather than Weighted Inclusive Gregory (see 12). Consider allowing voters to express equal preference (see 13).
[See sections 3 and 4 of <https://www.macs.hw.ac.uk/~denis/stv/fine-tuningSTV.pdf>]
- g Permute order of candidates on the ballot paper – or as a minimum, reverse order on alternate ballots (see 13).

⁷Penrose, LS (1946) ‘The elementary statistics of majority voting’, *J Roy Statist Soc* **109**, 53–57