

Item 1: STV/FPP & Establishment of Māori Wards

SESSION TYPE: Briefing

PURPOSE/DESIRED OUTCOME:

The primary purpose of the session is to provide an overview of the two systems of electoral voting available to Queenstown Lakes District Council for the October 2028 triennial local authority elections. This matter requires a Council decision by 12 September 2026 under the Local Electoral Act 2001. Similarly should a Council wish to establish a Māori Ward, the same deadline to resolve to do so exists. This session is a briefing to inform those upcoming decisions and to enable any questions and clarifications necessary to inform that decision.

DATE/START TIME:

Tuesday, 21 July 2026 at 1.00pm

TIME BREAKDOWN:

Presentation: 10 minutes
Questions: 20 minutes

PRESENTERS:

Jon Winterbottom - Democracy Services Manager
Jane Robertson - Senior Democracy Services Advisor & Deputy Electoral Officer

Prepared by:



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Title: Democracy Services Manager
14 July 2026

Reviewed and Authorised by:



Name: Meaghan Miller
Title: General Manager, Corporate Services
14 July 2026

ATTACHMENTS:

A	Presentation Slides: Electoral Systems & Māori Ward
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Electoral Systems and Māori Ward

4 August 2026

Context – Electoral system

- > Under the Local Electoral Act 2001 (LEA) section 27(1) a local authority may, no later than 12 September in the year that is two years before the year of a triennial election (2028), resolve the specific electoral system to be used for the next two triennial elections. That decision continues unless a new decision of Council resolves otherwise.
- > Once a decision is made by Council, public notice must be given of the decision (LEA s28) including notice that electors may demand a poll on the electoral system to be used (LEA s29).
- > Council last made a decision on this matter at a meeting on 31 August 2023.



Electoral Systems – FPP and STV

- > For local authority elections in Aotearoa New Zealand, councils can choose between two systems:
 - > First Past the Post (FPP)
 - > Single Transferable Vote (STV)
- > Both are permitted under the LEA with STV used by 15 councils and PPF by 63 councils throughout New Zealand in the 2025 local election.

**QLDC has
always
used FPP**

First Past the Post

> How it works

- > Voters place a tick beside their preferred candidate(s), up to the number of vacancies available. The candidate(s) with the highest number of votes are elected.
- > Example: If there are three Councillor positions available, voters may vote for up to three candidates. The three candidates receiving the most votes are elected, regardless of whether they have majority support.

> Advantages

- > Simple and easy to understand for voters.
- > Simple to count and administer, with results generally available more quickly.
- > Familiar system that many voters have used throughout their lives.

> Disadvantages

- > Can produce less representative outcomes, particularly in multi-member elections
- > May disadvantage minority groups or smaller communities of interest.
- > Creates a larger number of “wasted votes” because votes for unsuccessful candidates do not influence the result.
- > Candidates can be elected without majority support if the vote is split among candidates.
- > The 'ballot' effect of alphabetical order is minimised through random order on voting papers.

Single Transferable Vote

> How it works

> Instead of ticking candidates, voters rank candidates in order of preference (1, 2, 3, 4, etc.). Candidates must reach a quota of votes to be elected. Surplus votes from elected candidates and votes from eliminated candidates are transferred according to voters' next preferences until all positions are filled.

> Example: A voter may rank:

1. Candidate A
2. Candidate B
3. Candidate C

If Candidate A is elected with more votes than needed, or is eliminated, the voter's vote can transfer to their next preferred candidate.

Locally STV is
used by Dunedin
City Council
(since 2004) and
Otago Regional
Council (2025)

Single Transferable Vote

> Advantages

- > Reduces “wasted votes” because preferences can continue to influence the outcome.
- > Produces outcomes that better reflect the preferences of a broader range of voters.
- > Can provide more proportional representation in the multi-member wards.
- > Improves opportunities for minority groups and communities of interest to gain representation.
- > Encourages candidates to appeal to a wider range of voters because second and third preferences matter.

> Disadvantages

- > More complex for voters to understand and use than FPP.
- > Counting is significantly more complex and requires specialised computer processing (i.e. less likely to be done “in house”).
- > Results can take longer to finalise.
- > The system can be more difficult to explain to the public, which may affect voter confidence.

Summary

Feature	FPP	STV
Voting method	Tick preferred candidates	Rank candidates in order of preference
Simplicity	High	Moderate
Ease of counting	High	Low
Representation of voter preferences	Lower	Higher
Number of “wasted votes”	Higher	Lower
Minority representation	More difficult	Better
Proportional outcomes	Limited	Better in multi-member wards
Time to determine result	Faster	Slower

LGNZ and DIA research shows now statistical effect of either choice on voter turnout

Questions and Discussion

Context – Māori Wards

- > Under the LEA section 19Z a local authority may, at any time, resolve that the district be divided into one or more Māori wards for electoral purposes.
- > If made no later than 12 September of the year that is two years before the next triennial election (2028), the resolution takes effect for that election.
- > If made at any other time after this date, it is effective for the next but one triennial election.
- > Once a decision is made by Council, public notice must be given of the decision (LEA s19ZA) including notice that electors may demand a poll on the electoral system to be used (LEA s19ZB).

Calculation of number of Māori wards and general ward members

- > LEA Schedule 1A Clause 2 - The number of members to be elected by the electors of 1 or more Māori wards of the district of a territorial authority (**Māori ward members**) is to be determined in accordance with the following formula:

$$nmm = mepd \div (mepd + gepd) \times nm$$

- > Where:

- > nmm is the number of Māori ward members
- > mepd is the Māori electoral population or estimated Māori electoral population of the district
- > gepd is the general electoral population or estimated general electoral population of the district
- > nm is the proposed number of members of the territorial authority (other than the mayor).

Historically
QLD's Māori
electoral
population has
not justified a
Māori ward

Calculation for QLDC

- > Based on 2025 estimates from the Local Government Commission (which are from 2023 statistics):

$$0.23 = 1,370 \div (1,370 + 52,500) \times 11$$

- > Based on this calculation, the current representation arrangements combined with the ratio of Māori electoral population to general electoral population indicate that there is no statistical potential for creating a Māori ward. This will be noted in the forthcoming Council paper and no decision is required.

Based on
Electoral
Commission
estimated
statistics
(provisional) as at
31 May 2025

Questions and Discussion